

RLA:ADN

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION AND THE FIRST LADY ON AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

JULY 13, 2000

CONTENTS

- I. SUMMARY OF THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S INITIATIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES
 - Economic:* Employment, earnings caps, health care, training, Presidential Taskforce
 - Education:* Individuals with Disabilities Act funding and enforcement
 - Health Care:* Family and medical leave, earnings caps, blocked the block-granting of Medicaid
 - Access:* Telecommunications, assistive technology, transportation, housing
 - Equality:* U.S. Supreme Court decisions; resources for ADA, Fair Housing Act, and IDEA; most diverse Administration in history
- II. SUMMARY OF THE FIRST LADY'S COLUMNS AND REMARKS ON AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES
 - Children with emotional and behavioral conditions*
 - Health care and jobs for Americans with disabilities*
 - White House conference on Mental Health*
 - Pediatric AIDS*
 - Epilepsy*
 - Association of Retarded Citizens*
- III. PRESIDENT'S JULY 1, 2000 PROCLAMATION FOR THE "SPIRIT OF ADA MONTH, 2000"
- IV. FULL DOCUMENT OF THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S INITIATIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- V. FULL TEXT OF THE FIRST LADY'S COLUMNS AND SPEECHES

SUMMARY OF THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

Note: items in bold indicate initiatives and accomplishments that DIRECTLY affect children.

ECONOMIC INITIATIVES (FY2001 BUDGET)

- Support establishing an Office of Disability Policy, Evaluation and Technical Assistance (ODPET) within DoL (p. 2)
- Within DoL create the National Disability Business Development Board, a federally chartered corporation to facilitate employment and business ownership for Americans with Disabilities (p. 3)
- \$1,000 tax credit for work-related expenses for persons with disabilities (p. 3)
- Provide individuals with disabilities who return to work life-time access to Medicare (p. 3-4)
- \$2.4 billion in Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants (a \$60.8 million increase) (p. 4)

ECONOMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 provides better health care options for people with disabilities who work (p. 4)
- July 1999 SSA increased the monthly earnings cap affecting benefits from \$500 to \$700 for beneficiaries who work (p. 4-5)
- October 1999 action plan to federal agencies for hiring persons with disabilities (p. 5)
- October 27, 1999 sponsored the first-ever "Disability Mentoring Day: Career Development for the 21st Century." This year, it will be on October 25. (p. 5)
- June 1999 signed executive order ensuring individuals with psychiatric disabilities are given the same hiring opportunities as persons with significant physical disabilities or mental retardation. (p. 5-6)
- June 1999 called for parity for mental health and substance abuse coverage in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Programs by 2001. (p. 6)
- Workforce Investment Act of 1998 included the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, which improve worker training and placement options for people with disabilities. (p. 6)
- March 1998 signed executive order establishing the Presidential Taskforce on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. Reports to the President periodically with policy recommendations to increase and aid employment for persons with disabilities. (p. 7)
- Inter-agency demonstration projects to expand job opportunities for persons with disabilities. (p. 7-8)
- **Extra Welfare to Work funds for long-term recipients, which includes persons with disabilities (p. 8)**

EDUCATION INITIATIVES (FY2001 BUDGET)

- **\$5.28 billion for Special Education Grants to States (\$290 million increase) (p. 8)**
- **\$45.2 million for State Improvement Grants for children with disabilities (\$10 million increase) (p. 8-9)**
- **\$26 million for the Parent Training and Information Centers program to meet the needs of under-served parents and families of children with disabilities (\$7.5 million increase). (p. 9)**
- **\$10 million for a Primary Education Intervention initiative to support projects with effective interventions and early identification for children with disabilities and significant reading challenges. (p. 9)**
- **\$8 million for State Technical Assistance Awards to help states comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (p. 9)**

EDUCATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **100 percent increase in funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (p. 9-10)**
- **Fought harmful amendments to IDEA (p. 10)**
- **Enforced IDEA in numerous Federal Court cases (p. 10)**

HEALTH CARE INITIATIVES (FY2001 BUDGET)

- **\$28 billion 10-year investment for long-term health care, including people with disabilities, children with special needs, and families who care for them. Centerpiece = \$3,000 tax credit for people with long-term care needs. (p. 10-11)**
- **Advocating for strong Patients' Bill of Rights (p. 11)**

HEALTH CARE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Family and Medical Leave Act, which allows workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a child or adult with a disability and other needs (p. 11-12)**
- **1997 created an optional program whereby states could allow people with disabilities who earn up to 250 percent of poverty to purchase Medicaid coverage. Oregon has done. (p. 12)**
- **Vetoed Republican proposal in the 104th Congress to block grant Medicaid (often the only form of health care available to persons with disabilities) (p. 12)**

ACCESS INITIATIVES (FY2001 BUDGET)

- **\$100 million for disability and technology research (\$13.5 million increase).** Includes \$5 million for an **Educational Technology Initiative**; \$3.4 million for an employment initiative; \$5.1 million for a Community Independence initiative; and \$15 million for alternative loan financing programs. (p. 13)
- \$58 million for Centers for Independent Living (20.8 percent increase) (p. 13)

ACCESS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- “ADA for the Information Age” July 1999 FCC adopted rules requiring telecommunications equipment and services be accessible to persons with disabilities (p. 13-14)
- **Assistive Technology Act of 1998, which re-authorized State Assistive Technology Centers (p. 14)**
- Changes to the Rehabilitation Act to strengthen obligations of federal agencies to provide accessible information technology to their employees and customers (p. 14)
- 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century on surface transportation (p. 14)
- Final regulations implementing the ADA provisions for public transportation accessibility (p. 14-15)
- \$75 million for Access to Jobs initiative, which facilitates transportation to jobs (p. 15)
- 1998 HUD statements, publications, and directives to increase housing options for persons with disabilities (p. 15)
- \$40 million in Section 8 housing funding for people with disabilities (p. 15)

EQUALITY INITIATIVES (FY2001 BUDGET)

- \$2.6 million increase in DoJ Civil Rights Division to enforce ADA (p. 15-16)

EQUALITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Supported and provided guidance to federal agencies on the June 1999 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, which ruled that unjustifiable institutionalization of a persons with a disability who, with proper support, can live in the community is discrimination. (p. 16)
- Increased resources for enforcing ADA, the Fair Housing Act, and IDEA (p. 16-17)
- Supports U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Bragdon v. Abbott*, which reinforces protections under ADA to persons with HIV/AIDS (p. 17)
- FY1999 \$40 million to HUD Fair Housing programs (\$10 million increase) (p. 17)
- July 1998 announcement that the FDR Memorial will include a statue that depicts FDR in his wheelchair (p. 17-18)
- Appointed most diverse Administration in History (p. 18)

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST LADY'S WORK ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

Note: in reverse chronological order

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| March 20, 2000 | Remarks at the Launch of a New Public-Private Effort to Improve the Diagnosis and Treatment of Children with Emotional and Behavioral Conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Thanks to Tipper Gore➤ Psychotropic drugs➤ Prescription drugs for children➤ NIMH fact sheet for parents➤ ED information kit for parents and teachers on ADHD➤ American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines on diagnosing and treating children with emotional and behavioral problems➤ NIMH \$5 million to study ADHD and Ritalin in preschoolers➤ FDA look at appropriate dosage levels for psychotropic drugs➤ Office of the Surgeon General Fall national conference on the treatment of children with behavioral and mental disorders |
| July 28, 1999 | "Talking It Over" Column on Americans with Disabilities, health care, and employment <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Unemployment and employment of persons with disabilities➤ National Taskforce on Employment of Adults with Disabilities➤ President's urging to Congress to pass Medicare and Medicaid health care options for persons with disabilities who work |
| June 7, 1999 | Remarks at the White House Conference on Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The science of mental health➤ Announced the NIMH announcement of the launch of two clinical trials for effective treatments for those with mental illness (\$61 million) |
| January 28, 1999 | Remarks at the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation Awards <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Elizabeth Glaser, 10th Anniversary of Foundation➤ Children with AIDS, mother to child transmission➤ Clinton Administration initiatives: for minority communities, for a vaccine, global efforts.➤ Announced \$40 million grant to support medical schools in training doctors who work specifically with children➤ Announced awards to 4 scientists |

- January 13, 1999 “Talking It Over” Column on epilepsy
- Numbers, facts
 - President’s budget includes 14 percent expansion for NIH. \$76 million for research of epilepsy.
 - FLOTUS in Chicago for a dedication of a new epilepsy center and a nationwide fundraiser for epilepsy research
 - Next year, NIH will convene first-ever administration conference on epilepsy (did/will this happen?)
 - CDC launch campaign to educate medical practitioners of need for early and accurate diagnosis
- October 9, 1993 Remarks to the 44th Annual Convention of the ARC
- Health care reform generally
 - Health care reform for persons with mental retardation, including home-based and community-based care, nondiscrimination, comprehensiveness, appropriateness, equity, and efficiency

**THE CLINTON
ADMINISTRATION'S
INITIATIVES AND
ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR
AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES**

THE WHITE HOUSE

Increasing Opportunities for Americans With Disabilities

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THE CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION A RECORD OF PROGRESS

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Mrs. GoreRecord of
ProgressThe Briefing
RoomGateway to
GovernmentContacting the
White HouseWhite House
for KidsWhite House
HistoryWhite House
Tours

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE:

Supporting Americans with Disabilities

"If we want to keep our economy growing with continued low inflation and low unemployment, we must draw on the untapped potential of our people.... Americans with disabilities who want to work shouldn't have to wait one more day."

-- President Bill Clinton

October 16, 1999

HISTORIC ECONOMIC GROWTH:

Moving From Record Deficits to Record Surplus. In 1992, the deficit was \$290 billion, a record dollar high. In 2000, we have a projected budget surplus of \$167 billion -- the largest dollar surplus on record (even after adjusting for inflation) and the largest as a share of our economy since 1951. This is the first time we have had three surpluses in a row in more than a half century.

Saving Social Security. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have coupled fiscal discipline with a commitment to preserve and protect Social Security. President Clinton fought for and signed bipartisan legislation to eliminate the confusing and out-dated retirement earnings test in order to encourage work and earnings for older Americans. Under the Clinton-Gore Administration, the life of the Social Security trust fund has been extended to 2034. President Clinton has proposed extending the program's solvency to at least 2054 by paying down the national debt and dedicating the interest savings to Social Security. The President has also pushed for measures to strengthen Social Security's benefits to reduce poverty among elderly women.

Nearly 22 Million New Jobs. 21.6 million new

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jobs have been created since 1993, the most jobs ever created under a single Administration -- and more new jobs than Presidents Reagan and Bush created during their three terms. 91 percent (19.7 million) of the new jobs have been created in the private sector, the highest percentage in 50 years.

The Unemployment Rate Was 3.9 Percent in April --the Lowest in More Than Three Decades.

The unemployment rate fell to 3.9 percent in April. The last time the unemployment rate was this low was in January 1970 -- more than thirty years ago. The unemployment rate has remained below 5 percent for 34 months in a row.

Lowest Inflation Since 1965. Inflation remains virtually non-existent, with the underlying core rate of inflation at 1.9 percent in 1999 -- the lowest rate since 1965. In the last four years the GDP price index has risen under two percent each year -- the lowest rate of increase since the early 1960s.

Fastest and Longest Real Wage Growth in Over Three Decades. In the last 12 months, average hourly earnings have increased 3.8 percent -- faster than the rate of inflation. The United States has had five consecutive years of real wage growth -- the longest consecutive increase since the 1960s. Since 1993, real wages are up 6.8 percent, after *declining* 4.3 percent during the Reagan and Bush years.

Highest Homeownership Rate in History. In 1999, the homeownership rate was 66.8 percent -- the highest ever recorded.

Lowest Poverty Rate in Two Decades. The poverty rate has fallen from 15.1 percent in 1993 to 12.7 percent in 1998. That's the lowest poverty rate since 1979 and the largest five-year drop in poverty in nearly 30 years (1965-1970).

*Economic
Initiatives*

EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY:

I. 2000 Legislative Priorities and FY2001 Budget Initiatives

Disability Office in the Department of Labor.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore support establishing an Office of Disability Policy, Evaluation and Technical Assistance (ODPET) within the Department of Labor (DOL), and improving access for adults with disabilities to employment services offered through the one-stop system. The President's FY 2001 budget includes \$20.56 million for ODPET, which was recommended by the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. Under the

leadership of an Assistant Secretary, ODPET's mission would be to dramatically increase the employment rate of people with disabilities by implementing a sustained, coordinated, and aggressive strategy to eliminate barriers and create meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This office would initially subsume the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (PCEPD) in an effort to reduce duplication and enhance coordination of Federal employment programs for people with disabilities. The office would work within DOL to ensure that all programs address the need to increase participation of people with disabilities in DOL training programs, with a targeted emphasis on those serving youth during FY 2001.

National Disability Business Development Board. Creation of ODPET would also establish the National Disability Business Development Board, a federally chartered corporation. The Board will be made up of America's business leaders, organized labor, rehabilitation and service providers, and disability-related organizations currently advising the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. The board would: work to improve the access of individuals with disabilities to financial institutions and commercial and business enterprises; provide incentives to, and collaborate with, the public and private sectors to ensure the necessary levels of resources/investments in employment initiatives for individuals with disabilities; and leverage funds for public awareness about disability and employment.

Tax Credit for Work-Related Expenses. In his FY 2001 budget, President Clinton renews his proposal for a \$1,000 tax credit for work-related expenses for people with disabilities. This tax credit was proposed last year but not supported by Congress. The credit would help workers with significant disabilities cover the formal and informal costs that are associated with employment, such as specialized transportation and technology. Like the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act, it would help ensure that people with disabilities have the tools they need to return to work by recognizing the extra costs associated with working.

Extending Medicare Access for People with Disabilities Who Work. The President and Vice President's FY 2001 budget builds on achievements enacted in the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act to ensure that individuals with disabilities have full opportunity to participate in

and contribute to our growing economy. The Administration has proposed removing an arbitrary four-and-a-half-year limit on Medicare coverage for people with disabilities who return to work, giving individuals with disabilities lifetime access to Medicare.

Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants. The Administration's FY 2001 budget includes \$2.4 billion, an increase of \$60.8 million, or 2.6 percent, to assist State VR agencies to improve the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities. A wide range of services is provided each year to about 1.2 million individuals with disabilities, and these funds will assist States to address the needs of this population.

Economic
Accomplishments

II. Record of Accomplishments

Enacted the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act. The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA) is an historic bill produced through the bipartisan efforts of President Clinton and Vice President Gore; Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, Roth, and Moynihan; leaders in the House of Representatives; and the disability community. On December 17, 1999, the President signed this historic bill into law at a ceremony held at the FDR Memorial. This legislation, which the President advocated since 1998, will help provide better health care options for people with disabilities who work.

TWWIIA will improve employment opportunities by: creating new options and incentives for states to offer a Medicaid buy-in for workers with disabilities; extending Medicare coverage for an additional 4 ½ years for people on disability insurance who return to work; creating a \$250 million Medicaid buy-in demonstration to help people whose disabilities have not yet progressed so far that they cannot work; and enhancing employment-related services for people with disabilities through the new "Ticket to Work" Program. TWWIIA also creates a Work Incentive Grant program to provide benefits planning and assistance, facilitate access to information about work incentives, and better integrate services to people with disabilities working or returning to work.

Increasing the Substantial Gainful Activity Amount. In July 1999, the Social Security Administration increased the monthly earnings guidelines from \$500 to \$700 per month, enabling beneficiaries with disabilities to earn more without

affecting their benefits. These guidelines are used to determine whether the work activities of a person with impairments, other than blindness, demonstrate that he or she is able to perform substantial gainful activity (SGA).

Directing Federal Agencies to Implement Plan for Hiring People with Disabilities. Since the beginning of the Clinton-Gore Administration, the American economy has added nearly 21 million new jobs, and unemployment is at the lowest level in three decades. Yet nearly 75 percent of individuals with significant disabilities are unemployed. Last year, Vice President Gore asked the Office of Personnel Management to develop a model plan to bring more adults with disabilities into the Federal workforce. On October 16, 1999, President Clinton released that action plan and directed the Federal government to implement it immediately. The plan, *Accessing Opportunity: The Plan for Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Government*, along with a companion Employment Guide, provides detailed resources for federal employees as they recruit, hire, train and promote people with disabilities. Under this plan, the Federal government -- the nation's largest employer with almost 1.8 million workers -- will do more to: recruit people with disabilities for positions at all levels of government; provide opportunities for students with disabilities; ensure career opportunities for people with disabilities; collect and maintain data to monitor success of people with disabilities in the federal workforce; and provide reasonable accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities.

Sponsoring "Disability Mentoring Day: Career Development for the 21st Century." On October 27, 1999, the White House sponsored the first-ever mentoring day for people with disabilities. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and Departments of Labor, Justice, Education, Transportation, and Defense also participated in the mentoring program, which was modeled after other "shadow" days. It also coincided with a reception hosted by OPM to celebrate the release of the *Plan* and *Employment Guide*. This year, the mentoring day will take place on Wednesday, October 25th. The White House encourages people from all across the country to participate in their local communities.

Expanding Hiring Opportunities for People with Psychiatric Disabilities. In January 1999, Tipper Gore announced that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) would explore measures to eliminate the stricter standards that are currently

applied to job applicants with psychiatric disabilities. On June 4, 1999, President Clinton signed an executive order ensuring that individuals with psychiatric disabilities are given the same hiring opportunities as persons with significant physical disabilities or mental retardation. On March 17, 2000, OPM issued proposed regulations to create a new Government-wide excepted appointing authority for persons with psychiatric disabilities. This authority will broaden the category of people who may non-competitively acquire competitive civil service status after two years of successful service, providing individuals with psychiatric disabilities the same hiring opportunities already offered to individuals with mental retardation and significant physical disabilities.

Mental Health Parity for Federal Employees.

Leading by example, in June 1999 President Clinton called for parity for mental health and substance abuse coverage in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) by 2001. The FEHBP is the largest employer-sponsored health insurance program in the country -- covering about 9 million people, including Federal employees, retirees, and their families -- and often serves as a model for other employers and the insurance industry. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will work with participating health plans to introduce managed behavioral health care components that incorporate proven techniques such as case management, authorized treatment plans, provider networks using effective screening and referral procedures, pre-certification, and disease management. OPM has eliminated lifetime and annual maximums in the Program, and negotiated with plans to move away from contractual day and visit limitations, high deductibles, co-payments, and coinsurance for mental health coverage.

Signed the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

On August 7, 1998, President Clinton signed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which included the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, helping to improve worker training and placement options for people with disabilities. WIA establishes better links between the vocational rehabilitation (VR) system and the general workforce development system. Job seekers with disabilities now have improved options for service through the mainstream worker training and placement system, and through the disability-specific VR system. WIA also strengthens the Rehabilitation Act by giving increased options to individuals with disabilities in developing VR plans.

Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities. President Clinton signed an Executive Order in March 1998 establishing the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. The Task Force is charged with creating a coordinated and aggressive national policy to move individuals with disabilities into gainful employment at a rate approaching that of the general adult population. The Task Force, chaired by the Secretary of Labor, continues its efforts to promote employment opportunities, and many of its recommendations have already been accepted and implemented by the President. The Task Force is analyzing the barriers to employment faced by people with disabilities and will report its findings with policy recommendations to the President on a periodic basis until its final report is presented on July 26, 2002.

Working on Innovative Strategies to Improve Employment of Adults with Disabilities. The Clinton-Gore Administration continues to develop innovative strategies to employ Americans with disabilities. The Social Security Administration (SSA), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Labor (DOL), and the Department of Education (DoED) are all participating in inter-agency demonstration projects to expand job opportunities for persons with disabilities. For instance, DoED has awarded six systems-change grants to establish models of improved cooperation and coordination between State Vocational Rehabilitation programs, public employment/employment training programs, and other related programs. The grants will help reduce barriers to employment and increase the capacity of States' overall employment system to serve individuals with disabilities. The focus of these systems change projects is increasing the employment rate of individuals with disabilities who are currently receiving support through public programs.

In addition, SSA is working under cooperative agreements with 12 states to develop innovative projects to assist adults with disabilities to reenter the workforce. This activity, the State Partnership Initiative, is designed to help states develop innovative and integrated statewide programs of services and supports for their residents with disabilities that will increase job opportunities and decrease dependence on benefits, including Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income. Moreover, the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (PCEPD) has worked to coordinate a

commitment by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Society of Human Resource Managers, and dozens of other private sector companies to support several initiatives advancing the employment of people with disabilities among employers. Initiatives include the formation of local and state employer-led groups advocating for the employment of people with disabilities, the launching of a nationwide campaign to advance the employment of persons with cognitive disabilities, and supporting PCEPD's career exploration and employment programs for youth with disabilities.

Creating New Tools to Help Families Move from Welfare to Work. Since enactment of the 1996 welfare reform law, millions of families have moved from welfare to work. Recognizing the special needs of some people with disabilities and other populations in moving from welfare to work, the 1997 Balanced Budget Act included \$3 billion to move long-term welfare recipients and low-income non-custodial fathers into jobs. To fully implement this initiative, the President's FY 2001 budget allows grantees an additional two years to spend Welfare-to-Work funds. It also proposes \$255 million for Fathers Work/Families Win grants to promote responsible fatherhood and support working families. The Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit provides tax incentives to encourage businesses to hire long-term welfare recipients. President Clinton has secured 110,000 new housing vouchers in the last two years to help welfare recipients and hard-pressed working families move closer to job opportunities, and this year he is proposing \$690 million for 120,000 new housing vouchers.

Education
Initiatives

EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

I. 2000 Legislative Priorities and FY2001 Budget Initiatives

State Grant Program. The Administration's FY 2001 budget includes \$5.28 billion, a \$290 million or 5.8 percent increase, for Special Education Grants to States. With passage of this increase, funding for the State Grant Program will have risen 127 percent since 1994. In FY 2001, the Grants to States program would provide an average of \$827 per child, an increase of 4 percent over the FY 2000 level. If approved, States will receive 13 percent of their average per pupil expenditures, or 11 percent of the excess costs, from the federal government for educating children with disabilities.

State Improvement Grants. The Administration's FY 2001 budget includes \$45.2 million for the State Improvement Grants, a \$10 million increase (or

28.4 percent) over FY 2000. This will provide funding for 28 existing awards to States as well as new awards to an estimated 15 States and territories. The State Improvement program would expand efforts to reform and improve State systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transitional services to improve results for children with disabilities.

Parent Training. The Administration's FY 2001 budget for the Parent Training and Information Centers program is \$26 million, a \$7.5 million increase, or 40.3 percent, above last year's level. The increase would be used to expand the size of the awards to existing State Parent Training and Information Centers, establish four new centers for a total of 103 across the country, and provide additional technical assistance to centers. Three of the new centers would be community centers operated by local parent organizations and focus on meeting the needs of underserved parents and families of children with disabilities.

Reading and Behavior. The President's FY 2001 budget includes a request for a \$10 million Primary Education Intervention initiative. This initiative will support projects that demonstrate effective interventions coupled with early identification to improve results for children with disabilities. The initiative would target children with significant problems in learning to read, and those exhibiting behaviors that have been found to lead to significant discipline problems or emotional disturbance as they get older. Research shows that early intervention is particularly effective for improving educational results for children, and these funds will allow more students to benefit from timely identification and service delivery.

State Technical Assistance Awards. Helping States comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is critically important, and the President's FY 2001 budget includes an \$8 million request for State Technical Assistance Awards that will help address this need. These technical assistance awards will be instrumental in improving State monitoring and complaint resolution systems, and to correct deficiencies found through State and Federal monitoring of the implementation of IDEA.

II. Record of Accomplishments

Supporting Quality Education for Children with Disabilities. In 1997, the President enacted a stronger Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), reaffirming our national commitment to

*Educational
Accomplishments*

provide a world class education for all our children by ensuring that our nation's schools are safe and conducive to learning, while scrupulously protecting the rights of students with disabilities. Funding for the basic IDEA grant program has increased by 100 percent under the Clinton-Gore Administration.

Fighting Unwise Amendments to IDEA. In the 105th Congress, the Majority in the House of Representatives attempted to amend the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to make it easier to expel children with disabilities who were judged by school officials to be potentially violent in school. These broad, subjective judgements could have resulted in inappropriate expulsion of large numbers of students with disabilities. The Clinton-Gore Administration, working with parents, successfully opposed these amendments.

Enforcing IDEA. The Clinton Administration has defended the rights of children with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in numerous Federal Court cases: *Cedar Rapids Community School District v. Garrett F.*; *Marie O. v. Edgar*; *Sacramento City Unified School District v. Holland*; *Hartmann v. Loudon County Board of Education*.

Health Care
Initiatives

**IMPROVING ACCESS AND QUALITY OF
HEALTH CARE:**

I. 2000 Legislative Priorities and FY2001 Budget Initiatives

Addressing the Nation's Multi-Faceted Needs for Long Term Services and Supports. The President's FY 2001 budget includes a \$28 billion, 10-year investment to tackle the complex problem of long-term care, which affects millions of elderly persons, people with disabilities, children with special needs, and/or the families who care for them. Its centerpiece is a \$3,000 tax credit for people with long-term care needs or their caregivers -- triple the amount proposed last year. It also seeks to address the way in which Medicaid policy and practice has inadvertently discriminated against people with long-term care needs who want to live in the community by making it much easier to provide coverage in nursing homes than in the community. This proposal would enable states to provide services to nursing-home qualified beneficiaries at 300 percent of the Supplemental Security Income limit (about \$15,000), without requiring a complicated and frequently time-consuming Federal waiver. This proposal contributes toward the goal of giving people who

need long-term services and supports the choice of remaining in their homes and communities. It costs \$140 million over 5 years, \$370 million over 10 years.

Expanding Coverage to Uninsured Americans.

In his FY 2001 budget, President Clinton has proposed a 10-year, \$110 billion initiative that would dramatically improve the affordability of and access to health insurance. The proposal would expand coverage to at least 5 million uninsured Americans and expand access to millions more. If enacted, these policies would be the largest expansion of coverage since Medicare was created in 1965.

Advocating a Strong Patients' Bill of Rights.

The President and Vice President have called for passage of the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights Act, to ensure that all Americans have essential protections, including: guaranteed access to needed health care specialists; access to emergency room services when and where needs arise; continuity of care protections to assure coverage if a patient's health care provider is dropped; access to a timely internal and independent external appeals process with a medical necessity standard; assurance that doctors and patients can openly discuss treatment options; and an enforcement mechanism that ensures recourse for patients who have been harmed as a result of health plan actions.

II. Record of Accomplishments

Extending Enforceable Patient Protections for Millions of Americans. Leading by example, the President directed all federal agencies to ensure that their employees and beneficiaries have the benefits and rights guaranteed under the proposed Patients' Bill of Rights. Eighty-five million Americans covered by federal health plans have the security of knowing they will have fair access to health care thanks to the President's work.

Providing Access to Health Care Services for Uninsured Workers. In 1999, the President proposed and won \$25 million in funding for a program to coordinate systems of care, increase the number of services delivered, and establish an accountability system to assure adequate patient care for uninsured and low-income individuals. This year, the President has proposed funding this initiative at \$125 million, representing a substantial down payment on the President's plan to invest \$1 billion over 5 years.

Supporting Families. President Clinton fought for

Health Care
Accomplishments

and enacted the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows workers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a child or adult with a disability, seriously ill family members, newborn or adoptive children, or their own serious health problems -- without fear of losing their jobs. Since its enactment, FMLA has benefited millions of Americans, and the President has expanded leave options for Federal employees. President Clinton has called for extending this benefit to 12 million more working families and has proposed expanding FMLA to allow workers to take up to 24 unpaid hours off each year for school and early childhood education activities, routine family medical care, and caring for an elderly relative.

Increasing Access to Health Care and Supporting Employment for Americans with Disabilities. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 created an optional program whereby States could allow people with disabilities who earn up to 250 percent of poverty to purchase Medicaid coverage. Oregon is the first state to take advantage of this policy, and they have created a program that will let individuals go to work and get or keep Medicaid. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala has asked every governor to seriously consider this program.

Passing Meaningful Health Insurance Reform. President Clinton signed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, which limits exclusions for pre-existing conditions, makes coverage portable, and helps individuals who lose jobs maintain coverage.

Protecting the Medicaid Guarantee for People with Disabilities. The Clinton-Gore Administration refuses to go backward on health care coverage for Americans with disabilities, rejecting proposals to end the Medicaid guarantee to meaningful health benefits for people with disabilities. The President vetoed the Republicans' proposal in the 104th Congress to block grant the Medicaid program, preserving Medicaid coverage for six million persons with disabilities. Medicaid is often the only form of health care available to people with disabilities and allows many children and adults to receive services at home rather than in institutions. Thanks to President Clinton, the 1997 Balanced Budget Act preserved the Federal guarantee of Medicaid coverage for populations who depend on it.

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY:

I. 2000 Legislative Priorities and FY2001 Budget

Access Initiatives

Initiatives

Assistive Technology Initiatives. The Administration's FY 2001 budget includes \$100 million (a \$13.5 million increase) for disability and technology research at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). NIDRR will launch a comprehensive technology initiative which includes: \$5 million for an Educational Technology Initiative to provide technical assistance and training to elementary and secondary schools; \$3.4 million for a multi-pronged Employment initiative to carry out research, training, and technical assistance to enhance the ability of individuals with disabilities to access and use information and communication technology; and \$5.1 million for a Community Independence initiative on how information and assistive technology can be used to enhance community integration and participation by individuals with disabilities. The Administration's request also includes \$15 million to support grants that establish or maintain alternative loan financing programs. Most people with disabilities do not have the private financial resources to purchase the assistive technology they need. If approved, this increase would significantly enhance opportunities for individuals with disabilities to take advantage of assistive technology.

Centers for Independent Living. The Administration's FY 2001 includes \$58 million for Centers for Independent Living (CILs) -- a 20.8 percent increase over last year's funding level. This increase would make it possible to accomplish an increase in the stability of existing CILs and open new CILs in unserved and underserved areas. The request could provide sufficient funding to establish a \$200,000 federal funding floor. In addition, a \$10 million increase for CILs could expand the network of centers by funding up to 56 new centers in 23 States.

Access Accomplishments

II. Record of Accomplishments

Ensuring that the Telecommunications Revolution Benefits All. In July 1999, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted rules on Section 225 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which requires that telecommunications equipment and services be accessible to individuals with disabilities, if readily achievable. This provision is known as the ADA for the Information Age. These regulations, which have been supported by the telecommunications industry, will ensure people with disabilities have access to a broad range of products and services -- such as telephones, cell

phones, pagers, call waiting, and operator services – where they previously experienced barriers. Telecommunications carriers may not install network features, functions, or capabilities that do not comply with the regulations. The regulations also ensure that information, documentation, and customer service is conducted in accessible ways.

Signed the Assistive Technology Act. Technology is a crucial component in enabling people with disabilities to obtain and keep meaningful employment. With the support of the Clinton-Gore Administration, Congress passed the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, which reauthorizes the "Tech Act" that created State Assistive Technology Centers to provide assistive devices to low-income individuals with disabilities.

Ensuring the Federal Government Provides Accessible Technology and Information. The Clinton-Gore Administration recommended, and Congress enacted, changes to the Rehabilitation Act strengthening the obligations of federal agencies to provide accessible information technology to their employees and customers. This enabled the federal government to use its considerable purchasing power to influence private industry toward developing universally designed technology that is accessible to almost everyone. On April 18, 2000, Attorney General Janet Reno announced the release of the Department of Justice's (DOJ) first report under section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, *Information Technology and People with Disabilities: The Current State of Federal Accessibility*. Under DOJ's direction, federal agencies examined the procurement policies and procedures, along with common types of information technology. DOJ found that while some information technology used by federal agencies is accessible, simple steps can increase the extent to which federal information technology is usable by people with disabilities.

Increased Resources for Accessible Transportation. In 1998, President Clinton signed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), which provides significantly increased resources to make our Nation's surface transportation systems accessible. TEA-21 included increased funding for the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities grant program.

Increasing Public Transportation Accessibility. The Department of Transportation and the Access Board have issued final regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions for over-the-road bus (OTRB)

accessibility that provides a definition of what constitutes discriminatory action. The regulation requires large, fixed-route operators to achieve 50 percent of full fleet accessibility by October 2006 and 100 percent by October 2012. The Department has strengthened the regulations by including provisions making OTRB operators individually and collectively accountable for providing accessible service.

Access to Jobs Initiative. The President's Access to Jobs initiative helps communities design innovative transportation solutions, such as van services, to help former welfare recipients and other low-income workers get to work. Funding for this initiative has increased to \$75 million in FY 2000 and will be \$100 million in FY 2001 as a result of guaranteed funding in TEA-21. This innovative program emphasizes providing people with disabilities the transportation access required to achieve education, work, and family goals.

Increasing Housing Options. The Clinton-Gore Administration took a number of significant actions in 1998 that advanced housing policy for people with disabilities. First, HUD issued a statement supporting the view that institutional living does not constitute real housing for people with disabilities. On April 28, 1998, Fannie Mae announced the publication of "A Home of Your Own Guide," the first manual specifically created to provide step-by-step home buying guidance for people with disabilities. In February, HUD Secretary Cuomo issued a directive encouraging communities to use community development block grant funds for home modifications for people with disabilities. Also, in HUD's recent Notices of Funding Availability, the agency included bonus points for developers when they seek to build structures that include "visitability" by people with disabilities.

Increasing Section 8 Funding in HUD Appropriations. President Clinton supported the inclusion of \$40 million in Section 8 funding for people with disabilities, in part to offset the displacement likely to occur as a result of "elderly-only" designation of public housing formerly occupied by people with disabilities.

PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR ALL OF OUR CITIZENS:

I. 2000 Legislative Priorities and FY 2001 Budget Initiatives

Increased Funding for Civil Rights Enforcement. The Clinton-Gore Administration's

Equality
Initiatives

FY 2001 budget includes a request for an additional \$16 million for the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Civil Rights Division -- a 19 percent increase over last year's budget of \$82.2 million. With a proposed increase of \$2.4 million for the Civil Rights Division, DOJ hopes to further implement the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by funding new initiatives, including an initiative to remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from obtaining basic community services, such as riding public transportation or attending a town meeting. Additional funding will also help begin a new initiative to train law enforcement officers on how to appropriately interact with persons with mental disabilities.

Protecting All of Our Citizens. The President and Vice President have repeatedly called for passage of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which would strengthen and expand the existing federal hate crimes law to cover cases of hate crimes based on disability, gender, or sexual orientation.

Equality
Accomplishments

II. Record of Accomplishments

Assuring Access to Community Living for the People with Disabilities. On June 22, 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that, under the Americans With Disabilities Act, unjustifiable institutionalization of a person with a disability who, with proper support, can live in the community is discrimination. In accordance with that Court ruling, on January 14, 2000, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued guidance to state Medicaid directors on how to make state programs responsive to the desires of people with disabilities to live in appropriate community-based settings. The Administration's goal is to integrate people with disabilities into the social mainstream with equal opportunities and the opportunity to make choices in their lives. The Clinton-Gore Administration's flexibility in granting state waivers has spurred an increase in home and community-based services. Since he took office, the President has approved over 300 such waivers. As a result, the number of people with developmental disabilities served in home and community waiver programs has increased significantly.

Vigorously Enforcing Disability Rights. President Clinton has led the fight for vigorous enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Housing Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other critical civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in housing, schools, workplaces,

and public areas across the nation. Under the Clinton-Gore Administration, the number of positions allocated for ADA enforcement at the Department of Justice (DOJ) has increased by 105 percent. The Administration's FY 2001 budget proposal includes funding for another 29 new positions for ADA enforcement -- a 35 percent increase over FY 2000 funding. DOJ has entered into hundreds of settlement agreements involving access to civic life (city halls and municipal services), 911 emergency services, hotels, stores, restaurants, theaters, and other public accommodations. The Department's litigation activity has established important legal precedents including ADA coverage (such as zoning and prisons), architect liability, line of sight over standing spectators, effective communication, and unnecessary inquiries by professional licensing entities. Implementation of the ADA's "most integrated setting" requirement has been an important element of DOJ's Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act investigations and agreements (involving MRDD institutions, psychiatric hospitals, and public nursing homes).

Working to Stop Discrimination Against People With AIDS. President Clinton supports the Supreme Court's decision in *Bragdon v. Abbott*, which reinforces the protections offered by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) for Americans living with HIV and AIDS. The President directed the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to vigorously prosecute those who discriminate against people with AIDS, leading to actions against health care providers and facilities that violate the ADA.

Working for Fair Housing. In response to the increase in reported cases of serious fair housing violations, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) committed to doubling the number of its civil rights enforcement actions by the year 2000. In addition, the President proposed and won a major expansion of HUD's Fair Housing programs. The FY 1999 budget expanded HUD's Fair Housing programs to \$40 million -- a \$10 million increase over FY 1998 funding. That 33 percent increase included \$7.5 million for a new audit-based enforcement initiative proposed by the Administration.

Adding a New Statue to the FDR Memorial. On May 2, 1997, President Clinton dedicated the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial to honor the thirty-second President of the United States. On July 2, 1998, Vice President Gore announced that

the FDR Memorial will soon include an additional outdoor room at the main entrance, which will depict FDR in the small wheelchair he invented. In collaboration with the disability community, the Clinton-Gore Administration has selected a specific design that will show how FDR became one of our greatest presidents while he had a disability and used a wheelchair. And last year, the Clinton-Gore Administration helped secure \$3 million to fund the memorial addition, which may be complete as early as this year.

Appointed the Most Diverse Administration in History. President Clinton has appointed a highly talented and the most diverse Administration in history, including the appointment of record numbers of people with disabilities in the White House and throughout the Clinton-Gore Administration. The Federal government now employs more than 100,000 employees with some type of disability. President Clinton's Administration appointees include: Judith Heumann, Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitation Services; Paul Miller, Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and Fredric Schroeder, Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Commission. People with disabilities serve in the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor, State, and Transportation. President Clinton has also appointed people with disabilities to positions in such independent agencies as the National Council on Disability and the Social Security Administration, as U.S. District Court Judges, and to various Presidential Committees, Commissions, and Task Forces. In the White House, Jonathan Young is the first person with a disability ever appointed to serve as Associate Director for Disability Outreach in the Office of Public Liaison.

5/00

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Record of Progress	The Briefing Room
Gateway to Government	Contacting the White House
White House for Kids	White House History
White House Tours	Help Text Only

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**THE FIRST LADY'S
COLUMNS AND REMARKS ON
AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES**

Remarks on Children w/ emotul & beh. conditions

THE WHITE HOUSE Treatment of Children with Emotional and Behavioral Conditions

(incl. psychotropic drugs)

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[Go](#)

- ▶ [President & First Lady](#)
- [Vice President & Mrs. Gore](#)
- [Record of Progress](#)
- [The Briefing Room](#)
- [Gateway to Government](#)
- [Contacting the White House](#)
- [White House for Kids](#)
- [White House History](#)
- [White House Tours](#)

Launch of New Public-Private Effort to Improve the Diagnosis and Treatment of Children with Emotional and Behavioral Conditions

Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

Indian Treaty Room
Roosevelt Room
March 20, 2000

Thank you all for joining us here this morning. I want to thank Secretary Shalala for her leadership, and I'm also pleased she refuses to sit still. Because whenever our children's health is at stake, she's out there working very hard to make sure we all pay attention.

Also, I'm pleased to be joined not only by Secretary Shalala, but by Surgeon General David Satcher, and FDA Director Jane Henney, and NMIH Commissioner Dr. Steve Hyman, and Dr. Judith Heumann, and representatives from many of the groups who are on the frontlines working on behalf of all of our children, particularly children with behavioral and emotional challenges.

We just came from a meeting where we talked about what more we can do to ensure that children with emotional and behavioral problems get the diagnosis and treatment they need, and when they need it. Today's meeting and the announcements around it are important steps, but they are certainly not the last step we need to take in ensuring that all of our children get the health and support and treatment that they deserve.

You know, when a child comes to us who is hurt or sick, there is nothing more terrifying for any of us, especially parents, when we don't know how to make it better. If they have a broken arm, we want to fix it; if they have a deadly disease, we want to do everything we possibly can to cure it. And it's no different if the problem they bring to us lies in

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[Remarks at the White House Conference on Teenagers - May 2, 2000](#)

[Treatment of Children with Emotional and Behavioral Conditions](#)

[Launch of the D.C. Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy](#)

[Vital Voices Reception](#)

[Women of Vision Awards](#)

[College Affordability and Access](#)

their head or their heart.

Thanks in large part to the leadership of Tipper Gore, the President's mental health adviser, we've come a long way in our battle to bring mental illness out of the shadows and make sure it is treated just as seriously as physical illness. More and more often, those treatments include drugs, even for young children. That is the issue we're here today to discuss.

As many of you know, the Journal of the American Medical Association recently reported that the number of preschoolers who are taking psychotropic drugs increased dramatically from 1991 to 1995. We know that the increase for Ritalin alone was 150 percent, and the use of anti-depressants increased over 200 percent. Now I am no doctor, as is obvious, but I am a parent and I have been a longtime children's advocate. And these findings concern me. I know they concern Dr. Hyman, Secretary Shalala and countless other experts.

But let me be very clear: We are not here to bash the use of these medications. They have literally been a Godsend for countless adults and young people with behavioral and emotional problems. We know that when children with such problems are left untreated, they may fail to reach their God-given potential later in their lives. That's why we are here. We want the best information for every parent, every doctor, every teacher—every single person who cares for our children.

But we do have to ask some serious questions about the use of prescription drugs in all children. We have to ask, for example, how are we diagnosing, treating and caring for children with behavioral and emotional conditions? Do we have the best tools to make the most accurate diagnoses? When it comes to drug treatments for children, why are we seeing such great variations by community and race? And what effects do overuse and underuse of these medications have on our children?

We need to ask also, why aren't we doing a better job of combining drugs, when necessary, with family therapy and other behavior modifications? And what about the effects on our very youngest children who haven't been tested for these prescription drugs and whose brains are in their most critical stage of development?

These are tough questions, and none of us have all of the answers. But as we made clear in the meeting this morning, we are building on a record, not

starting from scratch. We have already taken critical steps over the past few years to ensure that drugs are being tested and labeled specifically for children. Some of you may remember that was a long, drawn out struggle, that we were finally able to make progress and we were able to make an announcement at the White House last year. In so doing, we have learned that finding the right prescription for a child is not always just a matter of decreasing the dosage.

You know, I think it's important that all of us adults recognize that children are not just miniature adults; that their systems, their developmental needs, are different from that of an adult. We also learned quite a bit from the first ever Surgeon General's report on mental illness, which came out in December. It grew out of the White House Conference on Mental Illness, led by Tipper Gore. It taught us that the stigma of mental illness is worse for children; that too many health care professionals lack training in the area of children's mental, emotional and behavioral needs; and that we have a long way to go to increase awareness about children's mental health.

So clearly, we must do more. We know that the questions being raised are very difficult and they cannot be answered overnight. And they certainly won't be answered by the government, or health care professionals or educators or parents acting alone. Every single person with a stake in our children's health has an important role to play.

So I'm very pleased today to announce some of the immediate steps we are taking to make sure that children with mental illness, with behavioral and emotional problems, get the right care at the right time.

As our meeting made clear, we already know a lot about the proper diagnosis and treatment of emotional and behavioral problems in children. But that critical information has not reached many of the people who need it most—many of the parents, many of the teachers, many of the school nurses, many of the school social workers, many of the family physicians, many of the pediatricians—so there are a few things we are going to try to do to change that.

Today, the NMIH is releasing a new, easy to understand fact sheet that parents can use to make the right decisions about their children's treatment for these conditions. The Education Department will soon release an information kit to help parents and teachers better care for children with ADHD.

And I want to thank both the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians for all they are doing on this issue. This spring and fall, the American Academy of Pediatrics will give all of their 55,000 members up-to-date guidelines for diagnosing and treating children with emotional and behavioral problems. And as part of their yearlong focus on mental health, the American Academy of Family Physicians is sponsoring continuing education courses about these conditions for their 90,000 members.

But now we also have to admit, honestly, that there are some areas where we still just don't know enough, and that's especially true when it comes to giving prescription drugs to our very youngest children. I am pleased that NIMH will dedicate over \$5 million to conduct a landmark study examining ADHD and Ritalin use in preschoolers. This study will look at the gap between what we are finding out in the science labs and what is happening in clinical practice, so we can ensure that our children get the care they need. In addition, the FDA will look at some common psychotropic drugs and begin a process to find out what dosage levels are appropriate for very young children. This information will then be included on the labels of these medications, and the studies on them will address the obvious ethical issues that arise when you examine the use of prescription drugs in such a vulnerable group.

Finally, I'm delighted that this fall, the office of the Surgeon General will coordinate a national conference on the treatment of children with behavioral and mental disorders. It will bring together experts from the administration, parents, advocates, educators, researchers, healthcare professionals and consumers. It will look at the challenges we are all still facing in caring for children with mental illnesses. It will help us develop long term strategies that each of us can use to help young people get the childhood and chance in life that we all deserve.

I remember, as we were talking today, that I was fortunate, more than 30 years ago, to work at the Yale Child Study Center, one of the premier research institutions in our country when it comes to treating our young children. And I was exposed to some of the greatest minds and experts in the country about how to treat very young children. And there was nothing more challenging and, in many ways, heartbreaking, than a preschooler with obvious mental, emotional and behavioral problems. That child cannot speak for him or

herself. So it's often difficult to find out what kind of conditions in the child's life led to—if there is a cause and effect—the kind of behavior that is being observed. So I know firsthand—from 30 years of work on my own behalf, and watching experts who are really on the frontlines of this—that this is a very big challenge we are taking on today.

But I am also concerned that we are seeing increasing numbers of children who are both being diagnosed with certain disorders and whose behaviors are crying out for helpful intervention. We spoke earlier today in our meeting about the increasing number of very young children in foster care. The fastest growing group of children being put into foster care are children under 5. They come into foster care because of abuse or neglect and they therefore have more than the kinds of problems that one would expect in the population at large. We talked about the increasing numbers of children who are in the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems. We are not doing what we need to do to help intervene and treat those children, just as we are not providing adequate medical and mental health services in our adult prisons. These are problems that affect all of society, not just the individual with the specific problem or that individual's family or those teachers and others that come into contact with that young person. This has ramifications for all of us.

All we need to do is look back a few weeks and think about the 6-year-old that brought the gun to school to kill the other 6-year-old. That is a problem that did not just occur the morning the child picked that gun up off of the bed in that terrible condition in which he was living. So all of us have a stake in the research, the diagnosis and the treatment. And I would also add that we need some other people at the table, and we're going to try to do that through Dr. Satcher's efforts and the efforts of the associations represented here. We need to be sure that the insurance industry, the HMO industry, the pharmaceutical industry—as well as decision-makers at all levels of government—are also at the table. We do have a lot of information about what works, but we need more. And that's what this meeting and these announcements are about. But we should at least be trying to implement what we do know works while we look for more answers, and follow up on the efforts that will be underway.

You know, when a child is sad or misbehaving, it is never easy for even the most well-intentioned, best-meaning parent to figure out what is happening. Anyone who has ever had a child who is

pre-verbal with any kind of illness, or a toddler, or a preschooler, knows how difficult it is. Some of these young people have problems that are symptoms of nothing more than childhood or adolescence. Some of them need a parent to love them, or a person simply to listen to them talk about their pain. And yet some do have severe emotional and mental problems that can be greatly helped by prescription drugs. These children are waiting for our help—every one of them—and today we are taking important steps to provide it.

It is my great hope that this meeting will move us closer to the day that we will be able, number one, to remove the stigma from these problems so that no parent or no community has to wonder whether this is something that should be talked about, or help should be sought for. And number two, that we will treat the problems of the body and the mind the very same.

I hope that all of us will see this as a beginning and that we will be even more committed to doing whatever it takes to make sure that our children get the help, support and love that they need to have.

Thank you all very much.

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Record of Progress	The Briefing Room
Gateway to Government	Contacting the White House
White House for Kids	White House History
White House Tours	Help Text Only

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Column on Am's w/ Disabilities; health care; jobs

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July 28, 1999

[Help](#) [Site Map](#) [Text Only](#)

Go

TALKING IT OVER

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

July 28, 1999

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Vice President &
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Record of
Progress

The Briefing
Room

Gateway to
Government

Contacting the
White House

White House
for Kids

White House
History

White House
Tours

No one should be forced to choose between health care and a job, but that is exactly what happens to millions of people with disabilities in this country every day.

Joann Elliot worked as a food-service worker at St. Elizabeth's Hospital here in Washington for 20 years. She loved her job, but in 1991, a massive stroke left her paralyzed on her left side. Now, she needs a wheelchair to get around and help with bathing, dressing and completing other day-to-day activities.

Because she had to give up her job, Joann receives Social Security Disability Insurance, Medicare and Medicaid to cover her personal-care assistant, prescriptions, special equipment, therapy and some transportation. But she wants to go back to work. "I don't like staying at home," she explains. "I want to get out and be productive."

Here's the problem: If Joann finds a job -- even a low-paying one -- she'll lose her Medicaid benefits -- the very health care coverage that she needs to be able to go to work. Karen Moore, who is a wheelchair user, was thrilled when she found a job as a dispatcher for the River Cities, S.D., Transit System. When she began working full-time, Karen found that she needed less medical care, made new friends and was able to reduce her SSDI benefits.

But like Joann, she also found herself in a Catch-22. She depends on an attendant to get ready for work every day, but lost coverage for that care once she went to work. "I believe in contributing for these services," she says, "but the current arrangement makes it impossible for me to continue working."

After David Robar sustained a spinal-cord injury in

Talking It Over: 1999

[December 15, 1999](#)[December 8, 1999](#)[December 1, 1999](#)[November 24, 1999](#)[November 17, 1999](#)[November 10, 1999](#)[November 3, 1999](#)[October 27, 1999](#)[October 20, 1999](#)[October 13, 1999](#)[October 6, 1999](#)[September 29, 1999](#)[September 22, 1999](#)[September 15, 1999](#)[September 8, 1999](#)[September 1, 1999](#)[August 25, 1999](#)[August 18, 1999](#)[August 11, 1999](#)[August 4, 1999](#)[July 28, 1999](#)[July 21, 1999](#)[July 14, 1999](#)[July 7, 1999](#)[June 30, 1999](#)[June 23, 1999](#)[June 16, 1999](#)

After David Robar sustained a spinal-cord injury in 1990, he learned the same unfortunate lesson. Determined to return to work, he managed to finish his degree in business administration, but when he began looking for a job, he found that he would have to give up his health care benefits. "If I were to pay for my personal attendant services out of pocket," he says, "it would cost me more than I would make working full-time."

Today, millions of Americans live with disabilities and can bring enormous energy and creativity to our workforce. Studies show that the vast majority wants to work, yet 75 percent of them are unemployed. Too often, they find themselves in the same boat as David, Karen and Joann: If they find a job, they stand to lose the very benefits that allow them to go to work in the first place.

Nine years ago this week, the Americans with Disabilities Act became law, opening doors in the same way that the Civil Rights Act did three decades ago. Whereas, at one time, we presumed that a disability meant a lifetime of dependence, now, we know that those with disabilities want to -- and can -- lead independent lives and contribute to our nation's prosperity.

I am proud of the steps this Administration has taken to integrate people with disabilities into the workplace. Last year, my husband created a National Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. He has implemented new regulations that increase the amount of income that those with disabilities can earn while still receiving critical benefits; taken steps to remove federal hiring barriers for people with mental illness; and ordered the development of a plan for the federal government to hire more people with disabilities.

But while these actions have been a source of hope to Americans with disabilities, a major obstacle to employment remains: Most Medicare and Medicaid benefits are limited to those too disabled to work. That is why, this week, as we celebrate the anniversary of the ADA, my husband has urged Congress to pass legislation that would provide new health care options and employment assistance so that people with disabilities can work.

Last year, when we celebrated the anniversary of the ADA, the President promised to work with Senators Jeffords and Kennedy to achieve this goal. In his State of the Union Address in January, he urged Congress to make this legislation a top priority, and he included full funding for it in the budget he sent to Congress. In June, by an

June 9, 1999
June 2, 1999
May 26, 1999
May 19, 1999
May 12, 1999
May 5, 1999
April 28, 1999
April 21, 1999
April 14, 1999
April 7, 1999
March 31, 1999
March 24, 1999
March 17, 1999
March 10, 1999
March 3, 1999
February 24, 1999
February 17, 1999
February 10, 1999
February 3, 1999
January 27, 1999
January 20, 1999
January 13, 1999
January 6, 1999

overwhelming bipartisan vote of 99-0, the Senate passed a bill. But the full House has yet to act.

In many ways, work helps build our self-respect as well as our nation's economy. But although our nation is enjoying its lowest unemployment in a generation, too many Americans with disabilities cannot participate because of the barriers that still stand.

Ignoring the potential of these citizens is not only a missed opportunity for them, it is a missed opportunity for the entire country. Let's celebrate the anniversary of the ADA by opening the doors of opportunity for millions of Americans even wider, so that no American has to choose between going to work and paying medical bills ever again.

To find out more about Hillary Rodham Clinton and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate web page at www.creators.com.

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White House Tours	Help Text Only

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Remarks @ WH Conference on Mental Health

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[Help](#) [Site Map](#) [Text Only](#) [Go](#)

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[The Briefing Room](#)

[Gateway to Government](#)

[Contacting the White House](#)

[White House for Kids](#)

[White House History](#)

[White House Tours](#)

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June 7, 1999

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY AT WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON MENTAL HEALTH

**Blackburn Auditorium
Howard University Washington. D.C.**

2:32 P.M. EDT

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. If I had any voice I would break into "You are the Sunshine of My Life," and dedicate it to Tipper. (Laughter.) But I'm delighted to be here, and so pleased not only to see this packed room with standing room only, but to know that nearly 6,000 sites around the country are sharing in this firsthand.

This is an historic conference, but it is more than that; it's a real signal to our nation that we must do whatever it takes not only to remove the stigma from mental illness, but to begin treating mental illness as the illness it is on a parity with other illnesses. And we have to understand more about the progress that has been made scientifically that has really led us to this point.

I don't believe that we could have had such a conference even 10 years ago, and I know we couldn't have had such a conference 25 or 30 years ago, when I was a young law student working at the Child Study Center at the Yale University and taking classes at the Med School and working at the Yale New Haven

[June 1999](#)

[School Violence](#)

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Hospital, and very interested in the intersection of mental illness and the law and in the development of children and other issues that we were only then just beginning to address. And we didn't have a lot of evidence to back up what we needed to know or how we should proceed with the treatment of a lot of the problems that we saw.

Well, today we know a lot more. And it is really our obligation and responsibility, therefore, to begin to act on that scientific knowledge. And I'm very pleased to be talking with a distinguished group of panelists about the science of mental health and mental illness.

We're happy to have with us Dr. Steven Hyman. He is a distinguished scientist who directs the National Institute of Mental Health, one of the institutes of the National Institutes of Health. And I want to start with Doctor Hyman.

Dr. Hyman, you have been dealing with some very difficult diseases that affect millions of people. We've already heard several mentioned—clinical depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia. What progress have we made in learning about these diseases in the last few years so that we understand them more scientifically, and, therefore, have a better idea of what to do about them?

DR. HYMAN: Well, Mrs. Clinton, the first thing that we've recognized is that the numbers are indeed enormous. More than 19 million Americans suffer from depression. More than 2 million children. More than 2 million Americans have schizophrenia. And the World Bank and the World Health Organization have recognized that depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, including the United States.

We have also learned some very important facts about these illnesses, and if I can just encapsulate them briefly, it's that these are real illnesses of a real organ—the brain. Just like coronary artery disease is a disease of a real organ—the heart. We can make diagnoses, and these diseases are treatable.

In addition, we've learned that these diseases should be treated just like general medical disorders. If you have heart disease you would get not only medication, but also rehabilitation, dietary counseling, stress reduction. So it is with a mental illness. We've heard a lot already today about medication, but people need to get their medication in the context of appropriate psychotherapies and other psycho-social treatments. (Applause.)

MRS. CLINTON: So how then has these scientific discoveries changed the way that we as a society deal with mental illness? And following up on what you

said, if we now know—if you as experts and practitioners know that we should treat mental illness as real and as treatable, as a disease of a bodily part, namely the brain, what does that mean for the kind of response that we should be looking to in society?

DR. HYMAN: You know, sometimes people think of science as something cold, but actually it has been an enormously liberating force for families and for people with mental illness. Not two decades ago, people were taught that dread diseases like autism or schizophrenia were due to some subtle character flaw in mothers. This idea, unfortunately, has been perpetuated by ignorance far too often. And, indeed, these ideas didn't help with treatments. And what they did do is they demoralized families who ultimately had to take care of these poor sick children.

So science has shown us some alternative ideas. For example, it's turned out that autism, schizophrenia, manic-depressive illness are incredibly genetic disorders. What this means is that genes have an awful lot to say about whether somebody has one of these illnesses. And I have to tell you that as the human genome project approaches completion, in the next few years, we're going to be discovering the genes that create vulnerability to these disorders.

Now, that's important because genes are the blueprints of cells and by understanding those blueprints, I think we're going to come up with treatments that we could not possibly have dreamt of.

The other thing, as you mentioned, is we're learning an enormous amount about how the brain is built and how the brain operates. I brought a few pictures—I don't know if we can project them, but I think pictures are worth an awful lot. You can see on the left the brain of a healthy person, and on the right the brain of someone with schizophrenia, given a cognitive task that requires planning and holding something in mind. The kind of task that a person with schizophrenia has difficulty with. And what you can see just looking at the red spots, that people with schizophrenia don't activate their brain in the same way as a person without this illness.

We also know—and I think this is really interesting if we could have the next slide—that our treatments work because they work on the brain. No one is surprised that medication works on the brain, but what we're learning is that psychotherapy also works on the brain. (Applause.) So what you can see in the lower two brain diagrams is that this is someone with an animal phobia—something that we can study relatively easily—before treatment. Now, after a cognitive behavioral treatment that exposes and

desensitizes the person, you can see new spots of activity—they're shown in green—and they represent activation of our prefrontal cortex, a modern part of the brain—which is actually able to suppress some of the fear circuitry.

Now, I don't want to over-sell this, but ultimately we're going to understand how these treatments work in the brain.

And then, finally, I just want to show you a picture that is somewhat alarming, but what we see here on the left, someone with—a healthy person with a normal brain, and then on the right someone who has had severe depression for a long time. What you see outlined in red at the bottom is that a key structure acquired from memory—actually gets smaller, it deteriorates if depression is not treated.

Now, this is not so hopeless as it seems because we believe that with treatment these changes can be reversed. But I'm showing you these pictures again to remind us that these are real diseases of a real organ—the brain—that we can make diagnoses and that these should be treated just like general medical illnesses. (Applause.)

MRS. CLINTON: You know, this is very exciting to all of us, because I think we can, in our own memories, think of diseases that have gone through a process of first being just mysterious; and then myths and stigmas associated with them; and then finally, science being brought to bear, and then the better they're understood, the more diagnosable and treatable they become.

That's why I'm also very pleased that in July, under your leadership, the NIMH will launch a \$7.3 million landmark study to determine the nature of mental illness and treatments. This will be a study that will help us guide strategies and policies for the next century by collecting information on mental illness, including the prevalence and duration of it, as well as the types of treatments that are most commonly used.

NIMH will announce the launch of two new clinical trials, investing a total of \$61 million, to build effective treatments for those affected by mental illness. So we're taking this information and we're not just leaving it in a laboratory. We are attempting to use it to implement better policies and better treatment modalities.

And I would just underscore something that was said, and that is that as we learn more, through the human genome project, we have to be even more careful to guard against discrimination against both physical and

mental illness. (Applause.)

I want to turn now to Dr. Koplewicz, who is an expert on mental health issues. He has shown me through the NYU Child Studies Center, and I know from firsthand experience and reports how he has brought to bear his extraordinary talent and experience on behalf of children as a child psychiatrist.

And I would like to ask you, you've worked with children and families on so many of these issues, what steps can we take to demystify mental illness?

DR. KOPLEWICZ: It's hard to believe that until 20 years ago we still believed that inadequate parenting and bad childhood traumas were the cause of psychiatric illness in children. And in fact, even though we know better today, that antiquated way of thinking is still out there, so that people who wouldn't dream of blaming parents for other types of disease, like their child's diabetes or asthma, still embrace the notion that somehow absent fathers, working mothers, over-permissive parents are the cause of psychiatric illness in children.

And the only way we can change that is through more public awareness. I mean, essentially, these are no-fault brain disorders. And as Dr. Hyman pointed out, these diseases are physiological, they respond to medicine. They're familial, they run in families. And they have a predictable onset and course. And as we learn more about this, it really becomes necessary for us to do three things.

We have to learn the costs of untreated mental illness, which really is lost school days, lost work days, dropout, marital distress, and also lost opportunity cost—executives and leaders who are quietly depressed and who aren't functioning at full capacity.

The second thing we have to do is we have to educate kids as early as middle school about mental illness. They learn about AIDS, they learn about seatbelts, but they have to learn about depression anxiety. And we have to educate their parents also.

And the third part is that you need a national public awareness campaign, so that Americans have to understand depression the way they understand heart disease. And the only way that happens is that when you have recognizable national leaders, moral leaders, role models like Tipper Gore, like Mike Wallace, who come out and acknowledge that they have a psychiatric illness, it makes it so much easier for the average citizen then to accept that maybe their child or maybe themselves or maybe another relative might be suffering also.

MRS. CLINTON: I think that's so right. I remember when Betty Ford went public with her breast cancer. And to the best of my memory, that was the first time anyone in a position like that had, and what a difference that made.

Let me ask you, do children have particular needs, though, when it comes to mental illness, so that we can't just talk about mental illness generally; we do need to talk specifically about children's needs.

DR. KOPLEWICZ: Right. Well, as we all know, kids are not little adults, their brains are different. But child psychiatry has really lagged behind in many ways. I mean, there are three major problems—one is access. It is really a problem because there are 6,000 child and adolescent psychiatrists in the whole country. Pediatricians get very little training about mental health. And in many states across the United States Medicaid does not pay, forcing parents or forcing school officials or school teachers, so that treating a child is much more complex.

The next issue is research—not only basic epidemiology, treatment, prevention—in many ways we lag behind. And while the funding has increased dramatically in the last six years, it's still out of whack when you consider the impact and how common these child psychiatric illnesses are in society. So compared to childhood cancer, we really are not dedicating nearly enough funds for the research of child mental health.

And the last part again, of course, is that it's the stigma. The stigma is worse for kids. Let me remind you, teenagers are never volunteering to be customers for mental health services. So parents not only feel bad about themselves, many people are telling them they've done something wrong and then the kid doesn't want to go on top of that. So those things are much more difficult for children, adolescents, than for adults.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that part of what we we've got to do, though, is reflect how we can both identify and get help to children who need it, whether or not they want it or are willing to accept it. I think all of us have the tragedy at Littleton in mind, and we also know of the other school shootings; and in the ones that don't get as much publicity, there may have been signs, there may have been some way that we could have intervened and prevented.

So what can we do to intervene early, before mental illness causes a child to be violent to others or, as we see increasingly, to be a victim of suicide, which is a leading cause of death of young people?

DR. KOPLEWICZ: I mean, the real tragedy of Littleton is that—and in these other recent incidents of school violence—is that they're most probably preventable. Normal children just don't snap and go out on a shooting spree. Children who commit violent crimes almost always have histories of violence, depression or other mental health problems. And, unfortunately, schools and parents ignore psychiatric illness.

The problem is that we have never really looked at the underlying cause of all this violence, which is childhood psychiatric illness, which is a tremendous problem -- 12 percent of the population under the age of 18 -- that's about 8 million children, teenagers, in the United States today—have a diagnosable psychiatric illness. And that means that about 2 million children have depression, teenagers have depression.

And not all of them are going out to shoot someone, but they're certainly more at risk and they're certainly suffering and at risk for hurting themselves or others. And the problem is that while teachers ignore it and parents ignore it very often, unless we have a national public awareness campaign, unless we dedicate ourselves to child mental health the way we have to other mental health issues, it becomes really quite impossible for us to address this problem. So that someday, if teachers, pediatricians, if family practitioners were more aware of mental health warning signs for children, adolescence, that's the first step.

And, frankly, with public awareness, I think we have reached the point with a focus that mending of broken bones should be the same as getting help for emotional distress. It should be just as acceptable. It should be just as expected. Because, you see, if we don't do that, I think what happens, these kids lose out on schooling, making friends, and at the end of the day they lose out on happiness that we expect for all of our children. (Applause.)

* * * * *

MRS. CLINTON: I really want to thank you not only for coming forward, as you have in the past and again today, but for putting your energies behind this issue in the Congress and using your own personal experience to really make a difference, and I know that it will continue to do that.

I want to thank our three panelists and really not only thank them, but all of you who work on the issue of mental health and mental illness, and particularly the scientific research that we're learning so much more about. And, hopefully, this conference and the work that is being done because of it will get that word out to many, many Americans, and maybe they'll say, well, you know, I heard Dr. Hyman or I saw the pictures or I listened to the Congresswoman or whatever it might be. And for that, we're very grateful, and especially to you, Tipper. So, back to you. (Applause.)

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Record of Progress	The Briefing Room
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White House Tours	Help Text Only

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Foundation Awards**[Help](#) [Site Map](#) [Text Only](#)

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Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation Awards

Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

Washington Press Club
January 28, 1999

Thank you all. Thank you. Well, it is my honor to be here, once again, for one of the most important events that I think goes on in Washington every year, as we take the energy and the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations in a great show of philanthropic spirit and put that to work on behalf of the extraordinary, groundbreaking work that these scientists and their colleagues are doing. I am grateful to be here with all of you and to have a chance, once again, to thank those of you who support the foundation and the work that Elizabeth started so many years ago.

I want to thank my friend Paul, whom I appreciate for not embarrassing me. But more than that I want to thank him for his courage, commitment, and his support and friendship. I'm honored to be with him once again as we recognize the outstanding work that the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, and these scientists, are doing to push the frontiers of science even further.

I want to thank the remarkable leaders of this foundation, who have helped to build it into what it is today. I know that Suzie Zeegan is often very modest about her contributions, but she has been a stalwart, steadfast voice and heart of this organization for so many years. I'm glad that she is joined by Kate Carr and Janis Spire, and all of you who are on the board and involved in the work of the foundation.

And I want to say a personal word of appreciation and gratitude to Mary Fisher. Her tireless work, her eloquent powerful voice has meant a lot to many of us, and I know that she will not rest until we do all that we can on behalf of the work that she so well

[January 1999](#)[Long-Term Care](#)
[Dolly Madison
Commemorative
Silver Dollar
Unveiling](#)
[RUSH Presbyterian](#)
[Eid Al-Fitr
Celebration](#)
[Mars Millennium
Project](#)
[Qualified Teachers
in Every Classroom
Event](#)
[Families Agenda
Roundtable](#)
[NARAL
Anniversary
Luncheon](#)
[Social Security
Teleconference](#)
[Foster Care
Transitioning](#)
[Jo Oberstar Breast
Cancer Memorial
Lecture](#)
[U.S. Conference of
Mayors](#)
[Elizabeth Glaser
Pediatric AIDS
Foundation
Awards](#)
[Fifth Millennium
Evening: Meaning
of the Millennium](#)
President &
First LadyVice President &
Mrs. GoreRecord of
ProgressThe Briefing
RoomGateway to
GovernmentContacting the
White HouseWhite House
for KidsWhite House
HistoryWhite House
Tours

represents.

None of us would be here today—not Suzie, not Paul, not me, not Mary—none of us, were it not for the inspirational life and work of our friend Elizabeth Glaser. Her spirit animates this gathering, as it does any time we come together. No one fought harder—or more—to bring attention and resources to the issue of pediatric AIDS. No one who ever heard her speak or met her will ever forget that fabulous laugh and that very persistent effort that she put into making it clear to all she met that this was an issue that was not just confined to those who were suffering from the tragedy of HIV and AIDS—and particularly as it affected children—but for every human being. And that work that she started and that spirit that is still with us has brought hope to millions and millions of children and adults who suffer from this disease. She transformed literally the way this country responds to HIV and AIDS.

It was something that started very simply, sitting around a kitchen table with Suzie and Susan, and deciding to undertake what must, at that time, have seemed like an impossible task. But once again, one person and a small group of people have made a tremendous difference. And as Margaret Mead famously once said, “It is only a small group of people who ever make a difference in changing the direction of the world.”

So here we are to celebrate the 10th anniversary, a “decade of progress, a decade of promise,” and to go forward into this upcoming decade with the same level of commitment, motivation, and dedication. And there is no group that has done more than this foundation to make it possible for us to say that we are looking at a decade of promise.

Ten years ago, almost no one knew about AIDS, let alone that it could be transmitted from mother to child. There was ignorance; there was fear. And we have come a very long way indeed. We’ve come to the point where we can say that there is a pediatric AIDS research agenda and that we can point to the progress that all of us have seen made because of the dedication of scientists.

We can look back at the decade of breakthroughs that have dramatically reduced mother-to-child transmission and greatly improved the quality of life and life expectancy of infected children. There are also more drugs—once only available to adults—that are now benefiting children.

I want to underscore something Paul said and thank

all of you who joined us in our fight to make pediatric labeling a reality. It was a long struggle, but it was one that we could not have achieved without the support of this foundation and many of you here today. Now we have a regulation in place assuring that prescription drugs are tested for safety and efficacy in children. This regulation will ensure that doctors know which drugs to prescribe and how much to give to their youngest patients. We believe this initiative has the potential for saving countless lives, and we could not have done it without you.

In the past several months, the Clinton Administration has also launched new initiatives to address AIDS in minority communities, to strengthen our efforts to find a vaccine, and to boost our international efforts to care for children orphaned by AIDS. Those are three very important initiatives, and let me just briefly address them.

As I look around this room, I see that there are not many representatives of minority communities, which are the hardest hit part of the American population. And certainly if we look abroad and we see what HIV/AIDS is doing in Africa and Asia, it makes that emphasis even more urgent.

The effort to find a vaccine, which these scientists to some extent are focusing their work on, is something that the United States is even more committed to. And working with partners around the world, we hope we will see progress.

And finally, international efforts to care for children orphaned by AIDS are extremely important. I've seen varying statistics, but I keep seeing the number: 40 million orphans from AIDS in the next ten years.

So we've come together to celebrate what we've achieved, but also to look towards the future. And we have a lot to be thankful for when we look at the health care of our children. In the last six years, because of the leadership of this President and the Administration and the supporters in Congress and elsewhere, we've seen improvements in the health of America's children. Immunization rates are at an all time high, infant mortality at an all time low. And thanks to the President's program for children's health insurance called "CHIP," millions more children are eligible for coverage, and we have to make sure that we reach the 5 million children who are eligible but not currently enrolled.

I'm also pleased to announce today that the President's fiscal year 2000 budget includes a new \$40 million grant program to support graduate

medical education. This is something that has worried me for quite sometime. Some of you may know that graduate medical education—how we fund the training of our physicians, our research scientists, our hospitals, and our medical centers—is funded by Medicare. And what we have found over the last several years is that the funding for those who work with children and are being trained to work with children is grossly disproportionate to the need. I can't remember the exact figures, but something like over \$9,000 a year is spent out of Medicare to fund the training and work of physicians who work with adults, and about \$400 a year for those physicians working with children. We have worked for quite sometime to change that, and I am very proud that the President's budget will make a start on that.

There is no way we could talk about treating children with HIV or AIDS or any chronic or acute condition if we don't have the doctors and the trained staff ready and able to treat them throughout our country. So we need to do more to train doctors who care for our children and provide vital health services for the poorest, the sickest, and the most vulnerable among our children.

Too long children's hospitals have been trying to carry this responsibility without adequate resources. I ran into Senator Kennedy as I got off the elevator. Senator Kennedy and others have introduced a bipartisan piece of legislation to make permanent the funding of those who work for children's health and I hope, in addition to the grant, we will see a permanent solution to this problem.

But we have a lot of work ahead of us. Here, and around the world especially, new HIV infections are increasing, and women of color and young people are among the most vulnerable. Every hour of every day, two more American adolescents are infected with HIV. And around the world, 1,600 children are infected every single day.

As we all know, the ravages of pediatric AIDS are the most severe in the developing countries, where over 90 percent of new infections now occur. By the end of this year, 40 million people will be living with HIV or AIDS. And by the end of the next decade, AIDS will have orphaned over 40 million children.

Now when you're confronted with statistics like these, it is sometimes difficult not to feel overwhelmed. But the founders of this foundation and this effort, and Elizabeth herself, would not accept that as an excuse at all. The legacy that

Elizabeth leaves us is one that is driven by and shaped by hope, not despair; one that chooses action over inaction; one that is determined, regardless of the odds, to find effective treatments, a vaccine, and eventually a cure.

Now we know that that can only happen if we have the kind of support and dedication of the scientists that we honor today, and I am very proud to ask them to stand and receive their individual awards. These gifted individuals represent some of the brightest investigators from the international research community. While they work at separate research institutions, they all share a deep commitment to not only furthering their own work, but collaborating with those who are their partners here and around the world.

The first recipient is Dr. Robert Doms from the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Doms, will you please come forward? Dr. Doms is investigating how a cell gets infected with HIV. And I told Dr. Doms and the other scientists that I read the summary of their work, and as a lay person, I have to confess I wasn't quite sure what CCR5 was, what it did or what it didn't do, but I know how important the work is that each of them is engaged in. Dr. Doms is attempting to discover how we can block the infection by learning how the cell gets infected in the first place—which would then lead to the development of an effective vaccine. And so on behalf of all us, and literally on behalf of millions of people who will maybe never know your name, Dr. Doms, but will benefit from your work, congratulations! [The First Lady presents the award.]

Dr. Philip Goulder from Massachusetts General Hospital is investigating the immune response of AIDS-infected children in the United States and Africa to bring us closer to the discovery of an AIDS vaccine. I want, particularly, to thank Dr. Goulder and those who work with him for partnering with scientists and physicians in Africa where the need is so acute, and where we have an opportunity to make a tremendous difference. Because, as so many of you know, the progress that we've made in extending life expectancy and quality of life for many people living with HIV/AIDS is dependent upon a very expensive drug regimen which is out of the reach of people in most of the rest of the world. So the work that is being done by Dr. Goulder and others is critical to bringing hope to people in parts of the world that now don't have an opportunity to benefit from what has already been achieved. Dr. Goulder—congratulations. [The First Lady presents

the award.]

Next is Dr. Jule Overbaugh from Seattle's Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. She is collaborating with other researchers to further reduce mother-child HIV transmission—particularly during breastfeeding. You know, we spent years persuading women in developing countries to breast feed. This was one of the great causes of the 1970's and early 80's, to persuade them that their breast milk was more effective for their children to build up their child's immune system, and not to be persuaded by advertisements promoting the use of formula when they didn't even have clean water that they could mix with the formula. But, of course, now we are trying to figure out what we do with that success, because the breast feeding, which is very important for many reasons, is one of the ways that HIV is transmitted. As part of the work that Dr. Overbaugh is doing, she is studying HIV-infected infants and mothers in Nairobi, Kenya. And I want to thank her also for helping to focus on the issue in Africa. Congratulations. [The First Lady presents the award.]

Dr. Paul Johnson from Harvard Medical School is researching new ways to help boost the immune system's response to HIV infection in children. And that is something else that we are so hopeful about, to learn more about what can be done to fend off HIV once it enters into a child's system, to prolong life and really do everything we can to diminish the impact of HIV and postpone or eliminate the development of AIDS. Thank you, Dr. Johnson for your important work. [The First Lady presents the award.]

You know, I feel, as I hand out these awards to these scientists, the way I felt when I first went to a doctor younger than myself. These four incredible scientists are so young, and for all of us we think of that as a very hopeful sign that the research that is going on is engaging the attention and the intelligence and expertise of our young scientists and researchers. And certainly by evidence of them today and the work that they are doing, we have every reason to be hopeful. So let me on behalf of the foundation thank all of you who have been part of this work, who have been involved in carving out this very unique contribution that the foundation is making to furthering scientific endeavor and to highlighting the work that these four scientists are doing.

It is a pleasure and an honor for me to be part of this presentation once again, and to do all that I can

along with all of you to make it possible for us to move forward against this disease, and do everything we can to protect our children from it, and to help those who already suffer from it to lead lives of quality as they try to fulfill their entire God-given promise.

Thank you very much.

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Record of Progress	The Briefing Room
Gateway to Government	Contacting the White House
White House for Kids	White House History
White House Tours	Help Text Only
Privacy Statement	

Column on Epilepsy

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January 13, 1999

[Help](#) [Site Map](#) [Text Only](#)

Go

TALKING IT OVER

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

January 13, 1999

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First Lady

Vice President &
Mrs. Gore

Record of
Progress

The Briefing
Room

Gateway to
Government

Contacting the
White House

White House
for Kids

White House
History

White House
Tours

Not long ago, I had the opportunity to catch up with an old friend from Chicago. In the course of the conversation, he told me about his daughter, Lauren. Although Lauren was a happy, healthy baby at birth, she began to have seizures at the age of 7 months. Seventeen years later, the seizures continue, the cause has never been identified, and Lauren's development has been irrevocably delayed. She will never live independently and will require lifelong supervision and support. As her father spoke, I could see and hear the devastating impact Lauren's epilepsy has had, not only on her own life but also on her entire family.

When I heard Lauren's story, I was determined to learn more about this condition and bolster this administration's efforts to improve treatment and find a cure.

Nearly 200,000 Americans are diagnosed with epilepsy each year. Current treatments control symptoms in most of their cases. Yet the word epilepsy still provokes profound fear and misunderstanding.

Epilepsy is a chronic brain disorder characterized by spontaneous, recurrent seizures that range from brief lapses in attention to prolonged losses of consciousness with convulsions. It affects more than 2 million Americans -- one out of every 100. Of these, 300,000 are children. Head injuries, brain tumors, stroke, lead poisoning, genetic conditions and infectious illnesses can cause epilepsy. But in more than half of all cases -- like Lauren's -- no explanation is ever found.

According to a new report, "Epilepsy: A Report to the Nation," sponsored by the Epilepsy Foundation of America, anti-seizure drugs and other forms of

Talking It Over:
1999

[December 15, 1999](#)

[December 8, 1999](#)

[December 1, 1999](#)

[November 24, 1999](#)

[November 17, 1999](#)

[November 10, 1999](#)

[November 3, 1999](#)

[October 27, 1999](#)

[October 20, 1999](#)

[October 13, 1999](#)

[October 6, 1999](#)

[September 29, 1999](#)

[September 22, 1999](#)

[September 15, 1999](#)

[September 8, 1999](#)

[September 1, 1999](#)

[August 25, 1999](#)

[August 18, 1999](#)

[August 11, 1999](#)

[August 4, 1999](#)

[July 28, 1999](#)

[July 21, 1999](#)

[July 14, 1999](#)

[July 7, 1999](#)

[June 30, 1999](#)

[June 23, 1999](#)

[June 16, 1999](#)

of America, anti-seizure drugs and other forms of treatment can control or eliminate seizures in 75 percent of those affected.

These people live nearly normal lives -- lives that can be both personally and professionally fulfilling. But even they never escape the uncertainty or the potential social stigma that comes out of ignorance -- a stigma that can crush the spirit as surely as the disorder debilitates the body and the brain.

Tragically, though, for the nearly 600,000 like Lauren, the disorder is intractable. Drugs, diet, surgery and other treatments just don't bring their seizures under control.

One of the most heartbreaking aspects of epilepsy is the toll it takes on children. Seizures in early childhood often produce developmental delays and brain damage that can lead to a lifetime of dependence and extraordinary costs. Children with epilepsy are at special risk for learning problems.

They fall behind in reading, language development and general knowledge. Children who have frequent seizures can't even go to school. Perhaps worst of all, they live in constant fear of their next seizure.

If these children are ever to live the normal, healthy and happy lives they deserve, we must dedicate ourselves to finding a cure now.

I'm pleased that the President's budget for this year includes a 14 percent expansion for the National Institutes of Health, the largest funding increase ever. Of this, an unprecedented \$76 million is for epilepsy research alone. But we must still do more.

This week, I'll be in Chicago for the dedication of a new epilepsy center at Rush Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital and a major nationwide fund-raiser for epilepsy research. There, I'll release the Epilepsy Foundation's report and talk about the administration's next steps in the effort to eliminate the disorder.

Next year, NIH researchers will convene the first-ever administration conference on epilepsy, bringing together more than 150 experts and members of the public focused on finding a cure. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and the Agency for Health Care Policy Research together will launch a campaign to educate medical practitioners about the critical need for early and accurate diagnosis.

I have heard from many families around the country

June 9, 1999

June 2, 1999

May 26, 1999

May 19, 1999

May 12, 1999

May 5, 1999

April 28, 1999

April 21, 1999

April 14, 1999

April 7, 1999

March 31, 1999

March 24, 1999

March 17, 1999

March 10, 1999

March 3, 1999

February 24, 1999

February 17, 1999

February 10, 1999

February 3, 1999

January 27, 1999

January 20, 1999

January 13, 1999

January 6, 1999

who have been touched by epilepsy. Some share the pain of lives destroyed and promising futures extinguished. Others marvel at the seemingly miraculous -- when drugs, surgery or diet actually bring an end to the nightmare.

But the message is the same: More research dollars are critical if we are to devise innovative, safe and effective treatments or find a cure. No one has said it better than the parents of 12-year-old Philip Gattone, whose seizures ceased following a combination of successful surgery and drug therapy. They wrote:

"Today, Philip plays sports, participates in school activities and clubs, and loves learning. He has friends that care about him. He is our hero.

"There are so many children that need help. The fight for a cure is a daily battle, and it is real. It is a fight that must be won. Only research and new treatments will help these special families achieve their dreams of recovery from epilepsy."

For more information on epilepsy, visit the Epilepsy Foundation of America at www.efa.org.

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White House Tours	Help Text Only
Privacy Statement	

Remarks to ARC

Speech: Hillary Rodham Clinton
44th Annual Convention of The Arc
Providence, Rhode Island - Friday, October 9, 1993

Thank you. Thank you very, very much. Thank you very much for that very warm welcome. It is such a pleasure to be here with David Dunn, and the other officers and board of the Arc, and all of those in this audience and around this country who support the work of The Arc. And, I am also pleased to be here with the Governor of Rhode Island, Governor Sundlun, and both Senator and Mrs. Pell who came to be with us today. And, I am particularly pleased to have been introduced by someone you have known a long time and I have only been able to claim an acquaintanceship of less than a year but whom I admire so greatly, Senator Chafee. From the very first time that the President asked me to work on this very important task he has been such a constructive and helpful counselor and advisor. And I think it is only fair to say that we now do have a President who is committed to health care reform, and we have leaders like Senator Chafee who have worked on health care reform for many years who will help create a climate of cooperation that will lead to a bipartisan, nationally accepted health care reform in 1994 and I am very grateful to him for that.

This is an issue that we know will be very discussed all over the country in all kinds of forums like this, but even more importantly in living rooms, in coffee shops, around the water coolers, people are going to be talking about health care reform and I think it is a conversation that is long overdue and very welcome.

And those of you in The Arc have experience in knowing what is needed to make systems respond to human needs and we are so grateful that the Arc is taking such a strong stand of support in favor of health care reform. I want personally to thank The Arc for the very positive response that you issued in response to the President's health care speech. And I want to thank David and others for being with us at the White House when we kicked off this campaign for health care reform. Because you have been working with us through your officers and representatives now for a number of months and your help and constructive advice has enabled the Administration to come forward with the plan that it has and will continue to make a contribution as we work through the Congress to the final resolution.

You know, often better than most Americans, how easy it is to be victimized by a health care system that discriminates against pre existing conditions, that does not offer adequate long term care choices such as personal assistance and other supports that people with mental retardation and their families need to rely on to fulfill their lives and to be productive citizens.

We are trying in our health care reform approach to deal with several of the problems that are most important to The Arc. We want to expand home and community based services to persons with mental retardation.

You know so well that we have to have the capacity to support people while they live in their homes or in alternative living arrangements, and that you know so well that it is the right thing to do both in terms of the human dimensions and in terms of the economics. For too long we have looked to institutionalized care and, as the wonderful introduction of Senator Chafee pointed out, we are beginning to understand the human and economic costs that that has made on our society. But we still have not recognized how much better it would be if we could provide more support for home and community based arrangements. The health care reform plan will move beyond even the legislation that was mentioned and will finally make it clear that regardless of income or age, individuals with severe disabilities should have the options to choose home based care or community based care.

Also, as part of the overall plan we are leaving in place programs that have provided health and assistance. In fact, really the theme of health care reform, as far as the President is concerned, is let's preserve what is right about the American system and fix what is wrong. So one of the features that we will be preserving is Intermediate Care Facilities/ Mental Retardation and the Medicaid home and community based waiver program. In fact, we would like to be able - assuming we can afford to do so - to increase the living allowances for residents of ICFMR from the \$30 to higher - maybe as high as \$100 a month, if we are able to do that.

You know, when the President in his speech held up that health security card - and I hope you saw that on television - he didn't hold it up and he didn't say you will only be able to get this if you are a certain age, or if you have never been sick, or if you do not have any mental retardation. He held it up and said: every

American will be entitled to this card and the services that it will it represent and we want to make that a right of every American to have.

There are so many features of health care reform that will enshrine this basic principle about every American being entitled to receive health security, and at an affordable cost, that preserves and enhances quality; but particularly for people with mental retardation and their families we see it as a way to end the discrimination that has for too long existed in our health care system.

I was talking with some friends of mine about their small business. They employ four people, so there are four families, plus their own on their policy.. Several years ago one of their employees had a child who was born with Down Syndrome and all of a sudden they were faced with what so many people are faced with every day in our country. You want to continue to insure this family with this child. You want to have to pay more because if you continue to insure this family the costs for all your families will go up. And my friend, whom I have known ever since high school, a small business man said to me: What a choice for me to be asked to make. To turn my back on an employee and his family that were a part of my family and my small business, or to reach down even deeper out of the wages of my employees, out of our profits, and provide health care insurance. He continued to do so. He called me the other day to say: You know I made what I know is the right choice. It was the right choice for my business. It was the right choice for my employee and his family, but no American should have to make that choice. All Americans should be entitled to health care coverage, no matter who they are or what happens to them during the course of their life and that is the bed rock principle we have to work on.

In the coming months, as the Senator referred in his comments, you will be asked to judge health care reforms by a number of questions and I hope that you will keep them in mind as we go forward during this very important conversation.

In the news release that The Arc issued supporting health care reform and the President, it said that The Arc wants to measure any reform against a set of five principles from a disability perspective and these are: nondiscrimination, comprehensiveness, appropriateness, equity and efficiency. Every one of those fits into the principles that the President outlined and that are also embodied in the alternative that Senator Chafee has worked so hard on. It has to be

comprehensive, and that means it has to provide a comprehensive set of benefits.

It cannot discriminate against any American. It must be appropriate in the sense that it should build on what works. It should provide access to adequate quality affordable health care in appropriate settings, based upon choices that individuals make that are best for them and their families. It must, it must have equity, and if it is comprehensive and does not discriminate it should have equity; but, it needs to have safeguards built in so that all of us feel that we are not being taken advantage of or discriminated against. And it must have efficiency. Efficiency in the better delivery of health care services at a more cost effective level. This will be one of the great debates that we will be having as to how much efficiency we are able to achieve. But The Arc, for many of the programs that you are involved with, you have seen models that work. You know of more efficient ways of delivering health care services to people with mental retardation. That is true across our country. And, what we need is to build in incentives so that efficiency is rewarded and that those who are inefficient, who don't deliver high quality care at a cost efficient affordable rate, will learn how to do better because there will be incentives in the system for them to become more efficient. And we will need your voices and your experiences, speaking loudly to people all over America about how we can do the job better. I share the confidence and optimism that Senator Chafee just said in his introduction. I know, I know we are going to have health care reform in 1994. We are going to have it because it is the right thing to do. Because we know that to stay with the status quo is no longer an option and because so many people, including those in The Arc, have worked too long and too hard to try to make things better for us to give up now on what is an historic opportunity.

So, I came here today mostly to say thank you. Thank you, not only for the support you have given in the last months to this health care reform effort, but thank you for the support and the advocacy and the caring, and the example you have given this country for decades. Our time has finally arrived. If we work together we will see the fruits of your labor, and we will all be prouder to be Americans and to live in the country that gives us the best opportunities in the world if we are only willing to take the responsibility to make it so.

**THE PRESIDENT'S
JULY 1, 2000
PROCLAMATION FOR THE
“SPIRIT OF ADA MONTH,
2000”**

POTUS Proclamation for ADA Month 2000

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Proclamation: Spirit of the ADA Month,
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Progress
 The Briefing
Room
Gateway to
GovernmentContacting the
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for KidsWhite House
HistoryWhite House
ToursFor Immediate
Release

July 1, 2000

SPIRIT OF THE ADA MONTH, 2000

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

The enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 10 years ago this month signaled a transformation in our Nation's public policies toward people with disabilities. America is now a dramatically different -- and better -- country because of the ADA.

In the last 10 years, we have worked hard to eliminate harmful stereotypes and have grown to understand disability as a natural part of the human experience. We are taking steps, such as renovating and constructing public accommodations to make them fully accessible, to ensure that people with disabilities are fully integrated into our communities and workplaces. And we have come to appreciate that people with disabilities are a key element -- and an untapped resource -- in sustaining our Nation's historic economic growth.

Throughout our Administration, Vice President Gore and I have worked hard to achieve the ADA's core goals -- equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Our Administration has vigorously defended the ADA in court cases across the Nation; we are collaborating with State Medicaid directors to implement the Supreme Court's 1999 Olmstead decision, which prohibits unjustified isolation of institutionalized persons with disabilities; we helped ensure that 80 percent of America's public transit buses are now accessible; we are implementing the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act, which I proudly signed into law last December; we have worked closely with schools and colleges to improve the enrollment, retention, and graduation of students with disabilities; and my Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities is developing far-reaching

policies for a comprehensive, coordinated employment agenda.

We still have much to accomplish. Because the many barriers confronting people with disabilities took generations to develop, breaking them down requires consistent, coordinated, and farsighted effort. We must work aggressively to increase the employment rates of people with disabilities by attacking a range of work disincentives, including barriers to education, health care, technology, housing, and transportation. We must provide real choices for people with disabilities to live and work in their communities with the necessary services and supports. And we must be vigilant in protecting the rights we have secured through decades of legal activism. I am encouraged that the first 10 years of the ADA's life have provided us with a solid foundation for meeting these challenges.

To mark the ADA's 10th anniversary and the 25th anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the American Association of People with Disabilities has organized a nationwide "Spirit of ADA" Torch Relay. Twenty-four cities from coast to coast are hosting official relay events, and hundreds of communities are organizing additional local events as part of this national celebration. The Spirit of ADA's organizing theme is "Renew the Pledge" to encourage individuals, organizations, and government entities to reaffirm their commitment to the principles of the ADA and IDEA. Vice President Gore and I are proud to join in the celebration and to renew our own pledge to help advance the cause of disability rights.

Promoting disability rights not only improves the lives of the 54 million Americans with disabilities, it improves all of our lives. As President Franklin Roosevelt recognized more than 60 years ago, in words that are now inscribed on the FDR Memorial in our Nation's capital: "No Country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim July 2000 as Spirit of the ADA Month, 2000. I urge government officials, business people, community leaders, educators, and all the people of the United States, to celebrate the contributions people with disabilities have made, and continue to make, to the progress and prosperity of our Nation, and to renew our commitment to upholding the nondiscrimination principles of the ADA and IDEA.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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Record of Progress	The Briefing Room
Gateway to Government	Contacting the White House
White House for Kids	White House History
White House Tours	Help Text Only

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flu: ADA

PRESIDENT CLINTON COMMERURATES THE 10TH ANIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND TAKES FURTHER ACTION TO STRENGTHEN THE ADA AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES AND EQAULTY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

July 26, 2000

DRAFT

Today at the FDR Memorial, President Clinton and the First Lady celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and announced a number of executive actions that build on the foundation of the ADA by creating new opportunities for individuals with disabilities and strengthening protections that ensure equality.

In the decade after its enactment, the ADA has begun to transform the social fabric of our nation. It has brought the principle of disability civil rights into the mainstream of our Nation's public policy and has fundamentally affected the way Americans perceive disability. It has created increased recognition and understanding of the manner in which the physical and social environment can pose discriminatory barriers to people with disabilities and it continues to be a unifying focus for the disability rights movement.

This Administration has constantly asserted its strong support for the civil rights of people with disabilities. Since the law took effect the combined efforts of this Administration and the Department of Justice, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Transportation and the Federal Communications Commission has resulted in hundreds of settlements improving access across the country and each has engaged in extensive efforts to educate the public about the ADA.

To further the goals of the ADA, which include equality and opportunity, the President is taking a number of actions that would increase federal employment opportunities for people with disabilities. President Clinton also announced important changes that will reduce the barriers that Social Security beneficiaries face when they return to work. In addition, the President took executive actions to ensure that federal agencies establish written procedure for addressing reasonable accommodation requests, and to ensure that Federal programs are free from disability-based discrimination. The President also announced the Access America for People with Disabilities website (www.disability.gov) created to provide quick access to services and other resources for people with disabilities and their families.

The First Lady also announced new important initiatives to address the barriers for youth with disabilities. These proposals are aimed at increasing access to educational and training opportunities youth with disabilities need to transition to work and achieve independence.

Yesterday, Vice President Gore announced a number of steps to help people with disabilities live and work in their communities. The Vice President's actions focused on steps needed to move people with disabilities out of institutions and nursing homes and into their own homes and communities with the supports they need. In addition, the Vice President took action to

immigrants food

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Q & A's

- ① Press paper
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- ④ letter for FROV

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accelerate the development and transfer of assistive technologies that will facilitate the development of products that will enable people with disabilities to work and participate in society.

The announcements made by the President, Vice President and the First Lady are all important steps that build on this Administration's commitment to advancing the rights of people with disabilities as full participants in all of society and preserving the spirit and intent of the ADA.

ASSISTING DISABLED SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARIES WHO ARE WORKING OR WANT TO GO TO WORK. The two proposals announced by the President and one announced by the First Lady truly represent the spirit of the ADA. These proposals will reduce the barriers that Social Security beneficiaries face when they return to work.

- Automatically adjust the Substantial gainful Activity (SGA) level for individuals with impairments other than blindness, based on any annual increases in the national average wage index. Since the beginning of the Social Security disability program in 1956, there have been no regularly scheduled increases in SGA. Last year, the Administration increased the amount that Social Security disability beneficiaries can earn – from \$500 to \$700 per month - and continue to receive their benefits. The increase has made it possible for disability beneficiaries to lead more productive self-sufficient lives. Annually increasing the SGA will now ensure that persons with disabilities who return to work will be able to count on having a limit that accurately reflects increases in wages.
- Increase from \$200 to \$530 the minimum amount of monthly earnings for a month to count during a trial work period for individuals who are Social Security beneficiaries and work. The President is also proposing to automatically adjust the amount thereafter based on any annual increases in the national average wage index. Many beneficiaries are leery of attempting to work for fear of inadvertently earning too much and losing critically important cash and medical benefits. This increase will encourage beneficiaries with disabilities to contribute their talent and energy to the workforce.

INCREASING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. The President issued an Executive Order directing Federal agencies to hire 100,000 people with disabilities over a five-year period. If current hiring trends continue without change, Federal agencies would hire approximately 62,500 people with disabilities over the next five years. Approximately 8,000 of those people would have severe disabilities. The new number is more than 60% higher than current trends, and reflects this Administration's strong commitment to making the Federal Government a model employer by recruiting a diverse and well-qualified workforce. The President believes that the Federal government is ready to meet this challenge.

Despite their qualifications for employment, persons with disabilities, and most notably person with severe disabilities, are not sought after by potential employers. This is often because employers fail to understand the many ways that disabilities can be accommodated on the job. Therefore, President Clinton and Vice President Gore have made a commitment that the Federal

government will take the lead in demonstrating that individuals with disabilities can successfully compete and perform in a wide range of jobs. With this Executive Order, the Administration is directing agencies to adjust their recruitment efforts to tap into the talented pool of individuals with disabilities. The Executive Order specifically calls on agencies to recruit individuals with disabilities for positions in the full range of levels and occupations in the Federal government.

ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS REASONABLE

ACCOMMODATION. The President issued an Executive Order requiring that all Federal agencies establish effective procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation by employees with disabilities and applicants for employment with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way a job is performed that enables a person with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Although many individuals with disabilities can apply for and perform jobs without any reasonable accommodations, workplace barriers may keep others from performing jobs which they could do with some form of accommodation. These barriers may be physical obstacles (such as inaccessible buildings or computer equipment), or they may be procedural obstacles (such as rules concerning when work is performed, when breaks are taken, or how job tasks are performed). Reasonable accommodation removes workplace barriers for individuals with disabilities.

RENEWING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ENSURING THAT FEDERAL PROGRAMS ARE FREE FROM DISABILITY-BASED

DISCRIMINATION. The President issued an Executive Memorandum for the heads of all Federal Executive Departments and Agencies. The Directive's core requirement is that all agencies engage in a plan to ensure that today's federal programs are free from disability-based discrimination. It contains specific steps designed by the Department of Justice and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to reach this important goal. As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the ADA, we should take this opportunity to renew our commitment to ensure that people with disabilities have equal employment opportunities within the Federal government and are fully able to participate in all Federal government programs.

EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES TO FILL FEDERAL JOBS THAT CAN BE PERFORMED AT ALTERNATIVE WORKSITES.

The increasing use of off-site work stations to carry out significant and competitive work activities provides a critical new source of employment opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities. It's in the interest of the Federal government to utilize the skills of people with significant disabilities by recruiting them for appropriate off-site, home-based employment opportunities. To harness the power of new technologies to promote employment of people with significant disabilities, the Executive Memorandum calls on Federal Agencies that already operate customer service centers to identify positions that could be relocated to home-based or off-site facilities and be filled with people who have significant disabilities. If the Agencies determine that it is feasible and appropriate to establish home-based positions, they are then required to develop a plan and guidelines that encourages the recruitment and employment of individuals with disabilities for such positions. Vocational rehabilitation counselors estimate that approximately 12% of the individuals with disabilities in their caseload could, and would, succeed if enabled to work from

home, but would not succeed in the same jobs if required to travel to distant and central locations on a daily basis.

ACCESS AMERICA FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WEBSITE. In keeping with the President's and Vice President's vision of using information technology to increase and improve customer service, the President announced a new website, *Access America for People with Disabilities* - www.disAbility.gov. - that will serve as "one-stop" electronic link to an enormous range of useful information to people with disabilities and their families. The website contains information relating to children and youth; employment, self employment, and entrepreneurship; transportation; health care and long term services and supports; choice and self-determination; recreation and travel; civil rights and protections; college, adult and vocational education; housing; technology; income supports; tax credits and deductions; disability statistics; and emergency preparedness. There are also special features, including "success stories" of individuals with disabilities; a "hot topics" corner discussing the newest disability issues and employment trends.

ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

FLOTUS – announcements (Ann/Vicky – please fill in and make any changes)

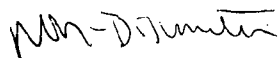
★ HELPING TO BRIDGE THE TRANSITION FROM EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT FOR ~~BY HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE~~ STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. The First lady announced an increase in the maximum monthly earned income exclusion for students who receive Supplemental Security Income from \$400 to \$1,290 and the yearly exclusion from \$1,620 to \$5,200. The Administration is proposing to automatically adjust these amounts thereafter based on any annual increases in the cost-of-living index. Young people with disabilities face enormous challenges when attempting to enter the workplace. We must find ways to bridge the transition from education to employment. The Administration is proposing to increase the amount that students who receive SSI can earn while continuing to receive the important protection SSI provides.

WORKING WITH YOUTH TO SUPPORT ADULT EMPLOYMENT; THE YOUTH TO WORK INITIATIVE. Recognizing that starting early is key to helping adults with disabilities gain employment skills and thrive in the workplace, the First Lady announced a Youth to Work Initiative. This Initiative would create a Youth Advisory Council within the Presidential Taskforce on Employment of Adults with Disabilities to help young people make the transition from school to work. Youth with disabilities who want to enter the workforce face many barriers to employment, including low educational attainment, low educational and employment expectations, and confusing government programs with conflicting eligibility criteria and goals. Under the structure of the Taskforce, the Youth Advisory Council will strengthen interagency research, demonstration projects, and training activities for youth to work activities. It will create a public awareness campaign to focus on youth with disabilities and reduce the stigma of their entering the workforce. To ensure fairness, this Initiative will ensure that youth with disabilities are included in all youth programs in Federal agencies. To

help ease the transition to work, it will increase access to health care and postsecondary education and training for youth going to work.

ABLE TO WORK CONSORTIUM TO HELP YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES ACCESS JOB OPPORTUNITIES. The Presidential Taskforce has worked with several major corporations to begin a public-private partnership that will help ensure that youth with disabilities are afforded the employment opportunities needed to lead to meaningful careers. These corporations, representing technology, pharmaceuticals, banking and investment, manufacturing, and communications, have volunteered to lead by example in demonstrating to other major corporations the importance and viability of hiring young people with disabilities. These pioneering companies would actively serve as mentors to other companies hiring youth with disabilities. They also would act as ambassadors or spokespersons, providing "business to business" communication on youth with disabilities going to work.

EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL YOUTH: INCLUSION IN YOUTH COUNCILS. To ensure that the recent Workforce Investment Act invests in the careers and employment of all young people, the First Lady announced that the Department of Labor will issue guidance to Workforce Investment partners for including youth with disabilities in their efforts. This guidance to Workforce Investment Boards, Private Industry Councils, and others will encourage the inclusion of youth with disabilities and their representatives on new Youth Councils. Youth Councils are charged with easing the transition from school to work by providing comprehensive employment services and access to One-Stop employment Centers. By ensuring that youth with disabilities are included in Youth Council priorities and activities, this Administration is keeping with its goal to help all Americans have access to meaningful work.



(VP)HELPING DISABLED INDIVIDUALS LIVE AND WORK IN THEIR

COMMUNITIES. Yesterday, Vice President Gore announced a number of steps to help disabled individuals live and work in their communities. The President and Vice President strongly believe that no one should have to live in an institution or nursing home if they can live in the community with the proper supports. The Vice President also took a number of steps to make it easier for disabled individuals to own their own home. In addition, the Vice President took action to accelerate the development and transfer of assistive technologies that will facilitate the development of products that will enable people with disabilities to work and participate in society. [Everything below is place-holder language that will be replaced as the VPs package comes together on Monday]

GRANTS TO STATES TO ENGAGE IN SYSTEM CHANGE ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO BUILD AND ENHANCE THEIR CAPACITY TO PROVIDE PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE MOST INTEGRATED SETTING APPROPRIATE. No one should have to live in an institution or nursing home if they can live in the community with the right support. The Vice President announced \$50 million in new funding for States to work with their disability and aging communities to develop comprehensive, effective plans for placing qualified persons with

disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Each State could use the funds for a variety of system change, capacity building and outreach activities designed to enable people with disabilities to have a real choice in where they want to live and receive services, whether in their own homes and communities or in an institutional setting.

POLICY GUIDANCE ON MEDICAID THAT WILL HELP STATES OFFER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES THE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS THEY NEED TO LEAD MEANINGFUL LIVES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

The Vice President announced new policy guidance to States to clarify Medicaid benefits available to persons in the community and additional flexibility to provide home and community based care services. The guidance will help States: 1) assist people with disabilities to make a successful transition from nursing homes and other institutions into the community; 2) expand access to home and community based services; and 3) assure that people receive comparable Medicaid services whether they are living in an institution or in the community.

ACCESS HOUSING 2000 – A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO TRANSITION FROM INSTITUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY BY PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS.

The Vice President announced that the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the National Program Office on Self-Determination, a Project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation at the Institute on Disability, a University Affiliated Program, University of New Hampshire (NPOSD) are launching a unique public/private partnership, entitled Access Housing 2000, to assist individuals with disabilities in making the transition from nursing homes and other institutional settings into community living. They jointly committed resources to assist States in their efforts to expand the availability of accessible, affordable housing and to assure that individuals with disabilities receive the personal assistance and supports necessary to successfully transition from institutions to the community.

This national demonstration project will provide a model for a coordinated response to the Supreme Court's decision in Olmstead v. L.C.. The partners will launch a five-year national demonstration project to create a model for facilitating individuals with disabilities' transition from institutional settings to community living. The project will begin with approximately 400 beneficiaries residing in targeted regions, with a goal, depending upon available resources, of reaching 2000 persons at full implementation. Participants will include individuals with disabilities who have very low incomes and who currently reside in nursing homes, state institutions, Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded, group homes, their parents' homes, and other community-based residential programs. The goal is to reach a broad geographic sweep, with a target of up to forty states and territories at full implementation. The demonstration project will use Section 8 housing vouchers, Nursing Home Transition Grants, Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act grants, and other resources in a targeted manner to help individuals with disabilities make this transition. Access Housing 2000 will also reach out to other potential public and private partners to encourage them to bring additional resources to this effort. In addition, the partners will explore ways to increase the use of individual development accounts (IDAs) for low- to moderate-income individuals with disabilities and their families.

INCREASING HOME OWNERSHIP FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. The Vice President announced that a letter entitled “Single Family Loan Production - Increasing Home Ownership Rates for Persons with Disabilities” will be sent to all approved FHA mortgagees, re-emphasizing HUD’s commitment to promoting home ownership for persons with disabilities. The letter encourages HUD’s lender partners to make the dream of home ownership possible for individuals with disabilities through increased, but prudent flexibility when underwriting their loan applications.

EXTENSION OF WORK INCENTIVES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO A BROADER RANGE OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. The Vice President announced that the Administration will take action to extend employment incentives for persons with disabilities to a broader range of HUD’s housing assistance programs.

NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH COALITION TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY-BASED CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDERS. Millions of people with disabilities can lead full, productive lives in their communities. But to live in the community, people need to be able to access not only the medical and mental health services they need, but also the housing, vocational rehabilitation, and employment services that enable them to support themselves in the community. The Vice President announced that the Center for Mental Health Services at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will work with a broad-based group of public and private organizations, constituencies and consumers to create state and local coalitions to assist persons with disabilities in accessing the services they need to live in the community.

The goal of the broad-based coalition is to bring together all of the service delivery providers needed to empower individuals with disabilities to return to their communities. SAMHSA intends to demonstrate that this national level effort can serve as a model for State, County, and local governments in improving the quality of life for persons with mental health and substance abuse disorders. The partners comprising the national coalition will include both traditional partners in the mental health and substance abuse treatment fields, such as professional organizations representing State mental health and substance abuse directors and protection and advocacy organizations, as well as non-traditional partners such as private industry councils, civil rights groups, housing and employment organizations and agencies, hospital administrators, and others.

DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY THAT ENABLES UNIVERSAL DESIGN. The Vice President announced an Executive Memorandum requiring that the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) publish a report identifying priority areas for the development and advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities, and that Federal agencies then develop a strategy for transferring such technology for the benefit of people with disabilities. The development and transfer of assistive technologies will facilitate the development of products that will enable people with disabilities to work and participate in society.

Assistive technology is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of people with disabilities. Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people,

to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The development of assistive technologies and products that incorporate universal design principles can significantly improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, and increase their ability to participate in the workplace. Technology transfers are important because they stimulate economic growth and a better quality of life for all Americans.

**SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS AND PRESIDENTIAL
MEMORANDUMS RELATED TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**
July 26, 2000

Executive Order: Increasing the Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities to be Employed in the Federal Government

- Federal agencies will be able to hire at least 100,000 individuals with disabilities by September 30, 2005, into the full range of levels and occupations in the Federal government. This is a 60% increase over the current hiring rate.
- 6-9th if hired • To ensure that individuals with disabilities are given the same employment opportunities as are afforded to non-disabled individuals, the President has directed Federal agencies to:
 - Use all available hiring authorities;
 - Expand their outreach efforts; and
 - Increase efforts to accommodate individuals with disabilities
- The Director will be issuing a guidance memorandum for agencies to assist them in their outreach and recruitment efforts, and to ensure that they comply with this Executive Order.

Executive Order: Requiring Federal Agencies to Establish Procedures to Facilitate the Provision of Reasonable Accommodation

- Federal agencies will establish written procedures for the processing of reasonable accommodation requests.
- These procedures will:
 - inform disabled individuals how to make a request for reasonable accommodation;
 - explain the types of information that an individual must provide for the agency to make a decision on such a request; and
 - advise individuals of their rights if an agency denies a reasonable accommodation request.
- This Order is designed to eliminate the great variation that currently exists in each agency's reasonable accommodation procedures. The EEOC will be issuing guidance on this order.

→ EO amendment on leave to work on it

Presidential Memorandum: Employing People with Significant Disabilities to Fill Federal Agency Jobs that can be Performed at Alternate Work Sites, Including the Home

- As a result of recent technological advances, customer service representatives can work from their homes or other off-site locations just as if they were working in the “call/contact” center at the agency. Therefore, the President has directed each agency that operates customer service call/contact centers to identify positions that can be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities.
- There are other activities, such the processing of insurance claims and financial transactions, that can also be performed at an off-site location. All agencies must determine the appropriateness of using home-based or other off-site positions to carry out these types of work activities.
- When an agency determines that it is feasible to establish home-based or off-site positions for a particular work activity, the agency must develop a plan that focuses on recruiting and hiring individuals with significant disabilities for these positions.

Presidential Memorandum: Renewing the Commitment to Ensure that Federal Programs are Free from Disability-Based Discrimination

- This memorandum reaffirms the federal government’s commitment to ensuring that agencies’ programs are free from discrimination, and are readily usable by persons with disabilities.
- Agencies must make all programs offered on their Internet and Intranet sites accessible to persons with disabilities by July 27, 2001.

Presidential Memorandum: Assistive Technology and Universal Design

- To accelerate the development of assistive technology and technology that enables universal design, the Interagency Committee on Disability Research will publish a report identifying priority areas for the advancement of such technology.
- After this report is published, each agency that participates in the Small Business Innovation Research program will develop a strategy for enhancing the development of this technology.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE
WORKING ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES
ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT A GLANCE**

July 26, 2000

Creating the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities - Two years ago, President Clinton created the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, chaired by Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman, and charged the Task Force with developing a coordinated and aggressive national policy to bring adults with disabilities into gainful employment at a rate that is as close as possible to that of the general adult population. The heads of 18 cabinet and sub-cabinet agencies sit on the Task Force, and President Clinton and Vice President Gore have given its work the highest priority through accepting all the recommendations in the first and second reports from the Task Force.

Signing the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA) President Clinton supported and signed this important bill, making health insurance available and affordable when an individual with disabilities goes to work or develops a significant disability while working, and giving people with disabilities more choices and greater access to employment services and training.

Signing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 - President Clinton signed WIA, which provides the framework for a unique national workforce preparation and employment system designed to meet both the needs of the nation's businesses and the needs of job seekers and those who want to further their careers. It also included reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, adding stronger linkages between the vocational rehabilitation system and the general workforce development system so that people with disabilities have increased employment training and job options. Changes to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act also strengthened the obligations of the Federal government to provide accessible information technology to their employees and customers, thus enabling the Federal government to use its considerable purchasing power to move private industry toward developing universally designed technology that is accessible to almost everyone.

Reauthorizing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Support Quality Education for Children with Disabilities - In 1997 President Clinton enacted an improved and stronger IDEA, and during the Clinton -Gore Administration funding for the basic IDEA grant program has increased by 100%.

Making the Federal Government a Model Employer - President Clinton directed Federal agencies to increase efforts to recruit and hire people with disabilities which resulted in OPM issuing "Accessing Opportunity: The Plan for Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Government" to serve as a framework for Federal departments and agencies to use in creating strategies and initiatives to recruit, hire, develop, and retain more persons with disabilities. President Clinton also signed an Executive Order ensuring that individuals with psychiatric disabilities are given the same Federal hiring opportunities as persons with significant disabilities and mental retardation. Furthermore, the President directed OPM to make mental

health coverage more affordable and accessible for all Federal employees by ensuring that by 2001 Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) plans provide coverage for mental illness in a manner identical to coverage for other medical conditions.

ADA DISABILITY EVENT
SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INITIATIVES
July 26, 2000
DRAFT – July 24, 2000

President Clinton Announces Two Important Proposals to Assist Social Security Beneficiaries who are Working or Want to Work

1. Automatically adjust the SGA level for individuals with impairments other than blindness, based on any annual increases in the national average wage index. Since the beginning of the Social Security disability program in 1956, there have been no regularly scheduled increases in SGA.

- Both the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs have a very strict definition of disability. The disability must be expected to last for at least 12 months or to result in death.
 - The Social Security Administration (SSA) uses a technical term called “substantial gainful activity” (SGA) to determine if work is substantial enough to make a person ineligible for benefits. Currently, monthly earnings of \$700 or more are considered SGA and will make a person ineligible for benefits. SSA has special rules for blind persons.
 - Disability benefits will continue unless the disabling condition improves or the disabled person returns to performing “substantial” work.

These changes truly represent the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. These proposals will reduce the barriers that Social Security beneficiaries face when they return to work. Last year, the Administration increased the amount that Social Security disability beneficiaries can earn and continue to receive their benefits. This increase has made it possible for disability beneficiaries across the country to lead more productive self-sufficient lives. Now, through regulation, the President is proposing to increase annually the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level. This will ensure that persons with disabilities who return to work will be able to count on having a limit that accurately reflects increases in wages.

2. Increase from \$200 to \$530 the minimum amount of monthly earnings for a month to count during a trial work period for individuals who are Social Security beneficiaries and work. The President is also proposing to automatically adjust the amount thereafter based on any annual increases in the national average wage index.

- A Trial Work Period (TWP) allows a disabled individual receiving Social Security disability benefits to test their ability to work for at least 9 months. During the TWP, an individual will receive full disability benefits regardless of how high their earnings might be so long as they continue to have a disabling impairment.

- The TWP continues until the individual accumulates 9 months (not necessarily consecutive) of “services” that they performed within a rolling 60-consecutive-month period.
- A trial work month is any month in which an individual’s total earnings are more than \$200 or, if self-employed, they earn more than \$200 (after expenses) or spend more than 40 hours in their own business.
- When nine trial work months are successfully completed within 60 months, SSA reviews the work to see if the earnings are “substantial.” Generally, \$700 per month is considered “substantial” earnings. If earnings do not average more than \$700 a month, benefits will generally continue. If earnings average more than \$700 a month, benefits will continue for three more months before they stop.
- For 36 months after a successful TWP, if a person is still disabled, they will be eligible to receive a monthly disability benefit without a new application for any month earnings drop below \$700.

Many beneficiaries are leery of attempting to work for fear of inadvertently earning too much and losing critically important cash and medical benefits. Now, through regulation, the President is proposing that the amount a beneficiary can earn in a month before it will be counted toward the 9-month trial work period be increased from \$200 to \$530. In addition, he is proposing that we index this amount annually. This increase will encourage beneficiaries with disabilities to contribute their talent and energy to the workforce.

The First Lady will Announce an Important Proposal to Assist Disabled Students who Receive SSI

2/1/20

Increase the maximum monthly earned income exclusion for students who receive SSI from \$400 to \$1,290 and the yearly exclusion from \$1,620 to \$5,200. The President is also proposing to automatically adjust these amounts thereafter based on any annual increases in the cost-of-living index.

- If a person receiving SSI is under age 22, not married or head of household, and regularly attending school, SSA does not count up to \$400 of earned income per month when figuring that person’s SSI payment amount. The maximum yearly exclusion is \$1,620.

Young people with disabilities face enormous challenges when attempting to enter the workplace. We must find ways to bridge the transition from education to employment. The First Lady is proposing to increase the amount that students who receive SSI can earn while continuing to receive the important protection that SSI provides. In addition, we are proposing that this increase be indexed to reflect the annual increase in the cost-of-living.

Background

SSA administers two disability programs, Social Security Disability Insurance and

Supplemental Security Income.

- **Social Security benefits are an earned benefit.** Workers pay taxes into the system, and when they become disabled, they may be eligible to receive benefits based on their earnings. Their spouses and dependent children may also qualify.
- **SSI is a federal program that makes monthly payments to disabled people who have limited income and resources.** The program is administered by the Social Security Administration but the funds do not come from the Social Security trust funds. Benefits are paid from the general revenue. There are no benefit provisions for spouses and dependent children.
 - Whether a person can get SSI also depends on what they own and how much income they have. Income includes wages, Social Security benefits and pensions. Income also includes non-cash items received, such as food, clothing or shelter.
 - For students receiving SSI, some wages or scholarships may not count.

THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE ORDER ON INCREASING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EMPLOYED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

"Seventy-five percent of Americans with disabilities remain unemployed, and of those, 72% say they want to go to work. This is not just a missed opportunity for Americans with disabilities -- it is a missed opportunity for America."

- President Bill Clinton, June 4, 1999 -

On July 26, 2000, President Clinton will sign an Executive Order directing federal agencies to increase their efforts to hire individuals with disabilities at all levels of the government. This will continue his objective of making the federal government a model employer and an example to private employers.

- In five years, federal agencies will be able to hire 100,000 people with disabilities.
- This is a 60% increase over the current hiring rate and reflects President Clinton and Vice President Gore's strong commitment to making the Federal Government a model employer by recruiting a diverse and well qualified workforce.
- Currently, there are 122,000 federal employees with disabilities, which make up 7.2% of the workforce. Of the entire federal workforce, 1.2% are severely disabled. It is highly likely that these counts are low because employees either fail to, or choose not to, self-identify as having a disabling condition.
- The Executive Order specifically calls on agencies to recruit for the full range of levels and occupations in the federal government.
- Each agency will be asked to submit a plan by September 25, 2000. OPM will work with agencies to assure the overall success of the initiative.
- An employee is considered disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities. For example, speech, vision, hearing and orthopedic impairments, missing extremities, paralysis, mental illness, diabetes and heart disease.
- If current hiring trends continue without change, Federal agencies would hire approximately 62,5000 people with disabilities over the next five years. Approximately 8,000 of those people would have severe disabilities.
- The Federal Government is our nation's largest employer with 1.8 million employees. Each year the Government hires approximately 200,000 each year and of those 12,000 (5.9%) are people with disabilities. If we do nothing, Federal hires will be 1,082,000 over the next five years and 62,5000 will have a disability. 100,000 new hires represents 9.2 percent of all new Federal hires.

Draft Remarks for the First Lady on the 10th Anniversary of the ADA and Youth

Draft: July 20, 2000

FDR Quote: “No Country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance. Morally, it is the greatest menace to our social order.”

— Adam Apple & Anne-Marie

(BROAD ADMINISTRATION ACCOMPS)

- **Vigorously Enforcing Disability Rights** - President Clinton and Vice President Gore have led the fight for vigorous enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Housing Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other critical civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in housing, schools, workplaces, and public areas across the nation by increasing the funding for enforcement personnel, entering into hundreds of settlement agreements involving access to civic life and setting important ADA legal precedents. Furthermore, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission received a \$13 million verdict in a disability discrimination case against the Chuck E. Cheese pizza chain, the largest monetary award by a jury in a case brought under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **Creating the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities** - Two years ago, President Clinton created the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, chaired by Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman, and charged the Task Force with developing a coordinated and aggressive national policy to bring adults with disabilities into gainful employment at a rate that is as close as possible to that of the general adult population. The heads of 18 cabinet and sub-cabinet agencies sit on the Task Force, and President Clinton and Vice President Gore have given its work the highest priority through accepting all the recommendations in the first and second reports from the Task Force.
- **Signing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998** - President Clinton signed WIA, which provides the framework for a unique national workforce preparation and employment system designed to meet both the needs of the nation's businesses and the needs of job seekers and those who want to further their careers. It also included reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, adding stronger linkages between the vocational rehabilitation system and the general workforce development system so that people with disabilities have increased employment training and job options. It also strengthened the obligations of the Federal government to provide accessible information technology to their employees and customers, thus enabling the Federal government to use its considerable purchasing power to move private industry toward developing universally designed technology that is accessible to almost everyone.

- **Signing the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA)**

President Clinton supported and signed this important bill, making health insurance available and affordable when an individual with disabilities goes to work or develops a significant disability while working, and giving people with disabilities more choices and greater access to employment services and training.

- **Making the Federal Government a Model Employer** - President Clinton directed Federal agencies to increase efforts to recruit and hire people with disabilities which resulted in OPM issuing "Accessing Opportunity: The Plan for Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Government" to serve as a framework for Federal departments and agencies to use in creating strategies and initiatives to recruit, hire, develop, and retain more persons with disabilities. President Clinton also signed an Executive Order ensuring that individuals with psychiatric disabilities are given the same Federal hiring opportunities as persons with significant disabilities and mental retardation. Furthermore, the President directed OPM to make mental health coverage more affordable and accessible for all Federal employees by ensuring that by 2001 Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) plans provide coverage for mental illness in a manner identical to coverage for other medical conditions.

(YOUTH ACCOMPS)

- **Reauthorizing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Support Quality Education for Children with Disabilities** - In 1997 President Clinton enacted an improved and stronger IDEA, and during the Clinton -Gore Administration funding for the basic IDEA grant program has increased by 100%.
- **Including Youth with Disabilities in Education and Workforce Development Systems** - President Clinton and Vice President Gore have reaffirmed their national commitment to ensure that young people with disabilities are included and served in all aspects of education and workforce development systems.

YOUTH FOCUS

very many people today with disabilities are young up in a world where defined by

The Americans with Disabilities (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are ~~powerful~~. In the past ten years, ^{the law} they have ~~become~~ created hope for many Americans who were used to being left behind. They have been an ~~especially powerful influence~~ in the lives of young people with disabilities.

At times we have high expectations for all kids not just high expectations for all except those with disabilities

By ensuring fair treatment, the ADA and IDEA have quietly empowered a new generation of Americans with disabilities -- young people who were in high school and junior high and even in elementary school in 1990 ~~when~~ ^{ADA} ~~IDEA first became law~~

Now, young people with disabilities across the nation have set their sights on graduating from high school -- on going to college, finishing college -- and on getting good jobs ^{where you finish} ~~just like their peers~~. ^{High expectations for all is not just a slogan}

Before, we tried to protect kids with disabilities from the harsh realities of a world where they probably couldn't work. Now we can see that kids who grow up secure in their civil rights develop higher expectations for themselves.

^{Young people w/ disabilities expect to work. It is no longer assumed by the group}
~~They~~ want to work. And it is up to families, schools, employers, and governments to see that they have the tools necessary to make this happen.

Families can support their sons' and daughters' dreams and ~~build their self-esteem~~ by planning for success. Encouragement and plans for future education and work are just as important for a disabled son or daughter as for one without disabilities. Understanding that young people with disabilities face the same issues and problems faced by all teens is key. (Experienced parents of teenagers say it's the same life, but with more equipment.) Parents can help young people with disabilities find mentors who have disabilities, so they know what is possible.

Schools and teachers are finding new ways to make sure that students with disabilities are planning for the world of work, through hands-on experiences and reality-based learning and work opportunities. Teachers are making kids with

disabilities genuinely welcome in their classrooms, so they can make friends and learn the 'soft skills' we all need to be good team players at work. Teachers are striking a balance between academic and functional skills youth need to succeed. ~~Schools help get kids with disabilities and their families off to a good start by putting them in touch with government programs designed to help them.~~

Employers across the country are doing their part by making sure young people with disabilities have equal access to internships as well as summer and after-school employment, so they can build their resumes along with their peers.

Government programs are finding new ways to share responsibility for how the whole system works -- local, state and federal governments as well as agencies across government.

Young people tell us they need many different systems to work together in order to get and keep a job. Transportation, housing, rehabilitation, health care, education, labor, Social Security -- these and many other programs and systems often must play a part. The challenge is not so much to invent new services, but to ensure that existing services are well coordinated and can be accessed equally by everyone.

~~The Presidential Task on the Employment of Adults with Disabilities recognizes~~ ^{Our society must} ~~that they have~~ a special responsibility to help young people with disabilities successfully finish school and become employed.

A special responsibility because we recognize that if even one system or service fails to respond, then the young person doesn't go to work. Maybe not today, maybe not this week, maybe not for years -- maybe not ever.

However it takes a long time to earn trust once it is lost. So we are responsible not only for doing our part, but for coordinating with other parts of the system to be sure nobody is going to drop the ball.

A special responsibility because the expectations of families, and government workers, and teachers, and business people will be challenged, too. Most of us are baby boomers, or beyond -- and we probably didn't grow up and go to school with kids who had disabilities. Maybe we didn't even stop to wonder where they were, why they weren't in school or on the job with us. Now we know, and we must keep the faith with the young people -- with and without disabilities-- who are showing us how much more is possible.

~~We also recognize that we~~ have a special opportunity because ~~now~~ we have a generation of young Americans with disabilities -- representing the most severely underemployed and unemployed minority in our nation-- telling us they want to work. They have been preparing to work, studying so that they can work -- and now they are showing up, offering us their skills and abilities at a time when employers are searching for qualified employees.

Government can do its part to make this happen:

To ensure improvement in the education, transition, employment, health, and independent living outcomes of young people with disabilities, the mandate of the Presidential Task Force ^{will be expanded to include focused attention on young people with disabilities} will be expanded to include focused attention on young people with disabilities. This initiative will strengthen interagency collaboration, promote public awareness, ensure that youth with disabilities participate in

**Draft Remarks for the First Lady on
the 10th Anniversary of the ADA and Youth**

Draft: July 20, 2000

FDR Quote: “No Country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance. Morally, it is the greatest menace to our social order.”

These words etched in stone on this memorial were first spoken by FDR during the depression, but could also describe the wasted opportunities, lives, and resources of the thousands of Americans with disabilities who were not expected and, in fact, were often discouraged from working in the past. Today, we are here to celebrate how far we have come since discrimination based on disability was the way of life for many Americans. We are here to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and how this law has changed the hopes and dreams of thousands of Americans.

(ACCOMPS)

I am proud to be part of an Administration that has vigorously enforced disability rights. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have led the fight for strong enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Housing Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other critical civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in housing, schools, workplaces, and public areas across the nation by increasing the funding for enforcement personnel, entering into hundreds of settlement agreements involving access to civic life and setting important ADA legal precedents.

I am proud to be part of an Administration that established an aggressive national policy to bring adults with disabilities into gainful employment at a rate as close as possible to that of the adult population. And, one that created the President’s Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, led by Secretary Alexis Herman, to make this happen.

I am proud that President Clinton signed the Workforce Investment Act two years ago that gives people with disabilities increased employment training and job options. And, that strengthens the obligations of the Federal government to provide accessible information technology to their employees and customers, thus enabling the Federal government to use its considerable

purchasing power to move private industry toward developing universally designed technology that is accessible to almost everyone.

I am proud to be part of an Administration that made health insurance available an affordable when an individual with disabilities goes to work. (Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999).

I am proud that this President has made the Federal Government a model employer by directing Federal agencies to increase efforts to recruit and hire people with disabilities. And, that President Clinton signed an Executive Order ensuring that individuals with psychiatric disabilities are given the same Federal hiring opportunities as persons with significant disabilities and mental retardation.

I am also proud that this Administration has recognized the importance of supporting young people with disabilities by reauthorizing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to support quality education for children with disabilities and by including youth with disabilities in education and workforce development systems.

(YOUTH FOCUS)

Today, young people with disabilities are growing up in a country that has been transformed by the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A country where high expectations for all does not mean all except those with disabilities. In the past ten years, these laws have created hope for many Americans who were used to being left behind.

By ensuring fair treatment, the ADA and IDEA have quietly empowered a new generation of Americans with disabilities -- young people who were in high school and junior high and even in elementary school in 1990 when ADA first became law.

Now, young people with disabilities across the nation have set their sights on graduating from high school -- on going to college, finishing college -- and on getting good jobs when they finish.

Young people with disabilities want and expect to work. And it is up to families, schools, employers, and governments to see that they have the tools necessary to make this happen.

Families can support their sons' and daughters' dreams by planning for success. Encouragement and plans for future education and work are just as important for a disabled son or daughter as for one without disabilities. Understanding that young people with disabilities face the same issues and problems faced by all teens is key. (Experienced parents of teenagers say it's the same life, but with more equipment.) Parents can help young people with disabilities find mentors who have disabilities, so they know what is possible.

Schools and teachers are finding new ways to make sure that students with disabilities are planning for the world of work, through hands-on experiences and reality-based learning and work opportunities. Teachers are making kids with disabilities genuinely welcome in their classrooms, so they can make friends and learn the 'soft skills' we all need to be good team players at work. Teachers are striking a balance between academic and functional skills youth need to succeed.

Employers across the country are doing their part by making sure young people with disabilities have equal access to internships as well as summer and after-school employment, so they can build their resumes along with their peers.

Government programs are finding new ways to share responsibility for how the whole system works -- local, state and federal governments as well as agencies across government.

Young people tell us they need many different systems to work together in order to get and keep a job. Transportation, housing, rehabilitation, health care, education, labor, Social Security -- these and many other programs and systems often must play a part. The challenge is not so much to invent new services, but to ensure that existing services are well coordinated and can be accessed equally by everyone.

Our society must take responsibility to help young people with disabilities successfully finish school and become employed.

We must also recognize that we have a special opportunity because now we have a generation of young Americans with disabilities -- representing the most severely underemployed and unemployed minority in our nation-- telling us they want to work. They have been preparing to work, studying so that they can work -- and now they are showing up, offering us their skills and abilities at a time when employers are searching for qualified employees.

Government can do its part to make this happen:

To ensure improvement in the education, transition, employment, health, and independent living outcomes of young people with disabilities, I am pleased to announce that the mandate of the Presidential Task Force on the Employment of Adults with Disabilities will be expanded to include focused attention on young

people with disabilities. This initiative will strengthen interagency collaboration, promote public awareness, ensure that youth with disabilities participate in programs under the Workforce Investment Act, increase access to health care and resources, and establish a “Youth Advisory Council” to assist the Task Force to open up opportunities to this generation of Americans.

The Task Force will establish a public/private partnership with employers to ensure that youth with disabilities have the opportunity to have meaningful internships that lead to real careers. This initiative will be established with the “Able to Work Consortium,” a private, business-led collaboration of some of our nation’s largest companies, including Microsoft and Ford Motor Company. I want to thank each and every one of these companies for committing to making the dreams of our young people a reality.

Today, I am also pleased to announce that the Social Security Administration will increase the amount of money a student can earn (typically through a summer job) without having their SSI and Medicaid benefits reduced or terminated. This amount will now be annually adjusted. This change is important so that young people can continue to receive their critical benefits while exploring the world of work that is about to open up to them.

The Department of Labor will issue guidance to expand participation by all youth, particularly youth with disabilities, on the Youth Councils created by the Workforce Investment Act. The Department will also ensure that WIA programs work aggressively to address the concerns of people with the most significant disabilities.

The Department of Education will issue guidance to help schools address student harassment based on disability and promote environments where young people with disabilities feel that they are respected among equals. I want to recognize a special guest here today who has been working hard to promote “ridicule-free” schools through his “Don’t Laugh at Me” campaign – Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary. Students with disabilities often know first hand the importance of a campaign that promotes compassion, generosity, respect, and understanding of differences.

Young people with disabilities are helping to create a new society where people with disabilities are treated and respected as full members of our society. We must continue to work together to be sure that no one is left behind.

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The Department of Education will issue guidance to address student harassment based on disability, and including students with disabilities in statewide and district assessments. It will also publish a pamphlet designed to help general and special education programs work together to promote inclusive schooling.

Peter Lamm

The Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services, the Social Security Administration, the National Council on Disability, and the Presidential Task Force will jointly fund a “Youth with Disabilities Leadership Development Project.” This project will identify barriers to economic independence and propose specific strategies for removing them. It will also encourage the development of leadership skills among young people with disabilities throughout the nation.

Because the ADA and IDEA have been in place for years, young people with disabilities have a realistic expectation of being among the travelers on the bridge to the 21st century. We are committed to working together to be sure that no one is left behind.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON COMMERURATES THE 10TH ANIVERSARY OF THE
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND TAKES FURTHER ACTION TO
STRENGTHEN THE ADA AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY FOR
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

**July 26, 2000
DRAFT**

Today at the FDR Memorial, President Clinton and the First Lady celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and announced a number of executive actions that build on the foundation of the ADA by creating new opportunities for individuals with disabilities and strengthening protections that ensure equality.

In the decade after its enactment, the ADA has begun to transform the social fabric of our nation. It has brought the principle of disability civil rights into the mainstream of our Nation's public policy and has fundamentally affected the way Americans perceive disability. It has created increased recognition and understanding of the manner in which the physical and social environment can pose discriminatory barriers to people with disabilities and it continues to be a unifying focus for the disability rights movement.

This Administration has constantly asserted its strong support for the civil rights of people with disabilities. Since the law took effect the combined efforts of this Administration and the Department of Justice, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Transportation and the Federal Communications Commission has resulted in hundreds of settlements improving access across the country and each has engaged in extensive efforts to educate the public about the ADA.

To further the goals of the ADA, which include equality and opportunity, the President is taking a number of actions that would increase federal employment opportunities for people with disabilities. President Clinton also announced important changes that will reduce the barriers that Social Security beneficiaries face when they return to work. In addition, the President took executive actions to ensure that federal agencies establish written procedure for addressing reasonable accommodation requests, and to ensure that Federal programs are free from disability-based discrimination. The President also announced the Access America for People with Disabilities website (www.disability.gov) created to provide quick access to services and other resources for people with disabilities and their families.

The First Lady also announced new important initiatives to address the barriers for youth with disabilities. These proposals are aimed at increasing access to educational and training opportunities youth with disabilities need to transition to work and achieve independence.

Yesterday, Vice President Gore announced a number of steps to help people with disabilities live and work in their communities. The Vice President's actions focused on steps needed to move people with disabilities out of institutions and nursing homes and into their own homes and communities with the supports they need. In addition, the Vice President took action to

accelerate the development and transfer of assistive technologies that will facilitate the development of products that will enable people with disabilities to work and participate in society.

The announcements made by the President, Vice President and the First Lady are all important steps that build on this Administration's commitment to advancing the rights of people with disabilities as full participants in all of society and preserving the spirit and intent of the ADA.

ASSISTING DISABLED SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARIES WHO ARE WORKING OR WANT TO GO TO WORK. The two proposals announced by the President and one announced by the First Lady truly represent the spirit of the ADA. These proposals will reduce the barriers that Social Security beneficiaries face when they return to work.

- Automatically adjust the Substantial gainful Activity (SGA) level for individuals with impairments other than blindness, based on any annual increases in the national average wage index. Since the beginning of the Social Security disability program in 1956, there have been no regularly scheduled increases in SGA. Last year, the Administration increased the amount that Social Security disability beneficiaries can earn – from \$500 to \$700 per month - and continue to receive their benefits. The increase has made it possible for disability beneficiaries to lead more productive self-sufficient lives. Annually increasing the SGA will now ensure that persons with disabilities who return to work will be able to count on having a limit that accurately reflects increases in wages.
- Increase from \$200 to \$530 the minimum amount of monthly earnings for a month to count during a trial work period for individuals who are Social Security beneficiaries and work. The President is also proposing to automatically adjust the amount thereafter based on any annual increases in the national average wage index. Many beneficiaries are leery of attempting to work for fear of inadvertently earning too much and losing critically important cash and medical benefits. This increase will encourage beneficiaries with disabilities to contribute their talent and energy to the workforce.

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INCREASING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. The President issued an Executive Order directing Federal agencies to hire 100,000 people with disabilities over a five-year period. If current hiring trends continue without change, Federal agencies would hire approximately 62,500 people with disabilities over the next five years. Approximately 8,000 of those people would have severe disabilities. The new number is more than 60% higher than current trends, and reflects this Administration's strong commitment to making the Federal Government a model employer by recruiting a diverse and well-qualified workforce. The President believes that the Federal government is ready to meet this challenge.

Despite their qualifications for employment, persons with disabilities, and most notably person with severe disabilities, are not sought after by potential employers. This is often because employers fail to understand the many ways that disabilities can be accommodated on the job. Therefore, President Clinton and Vice President Gore have made a commitment that the Federal

government will take the lead in demonstrating that individuals with disabilities can successfully compete and perform in a wide range of jobs. With this Executive Order, the Administration is directing agencies to adjust their recruitment efforts to tap into the talented pool of individuals with disabilities. The Executive Order specifically calls on agencies to recruit individuals with disabilities for positions in the full range of levels and occupations in the Federal government.

ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS REASONABLE

ACCOMMODATION. The President issued an Executive Order requiring that all Federal agencies establish effective procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation by employees with disabilities and applicants for employment with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way a job is performed that enables a person with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Although many individuals with disabilities can apply for and perform jobs without any reasonable accommodations, workplace barriers may keep others from performing jobs which they could do with some form of accommodation. These barriers may be physical obstacles (such as inaccessible buildings or computer equipment), or they may be procedural obstacles (such as rules concerning when work is performed, when breaks are taken, or how job tasks are performed). Reasonable accommodation removes workplace barriers for individuals with disabilities.

RENEWING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ENSURING THAT FEDERAL PROGRAMS ARE FREE FROM DISABILITY-BASED

DISCRIMINATION. The President issued an Executive Memorandum for the heads of all Federal Executive Departments and Agencies. The Directive's core requirement is that all agencies engage in a plan to ensure that today's federal programs are free from disability-based discrimination. It contains specific steps designed by the Department of Justice and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to reach this important goal. As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the ADA, we should take this opportunity to renew our commitment to ensure that people with disabilities have equal employment opportunities within the Federal government and are fully able to participate in all Federal government programs.

EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES TO FILL FEDERAL JOBS THAT CAN BE PERFORMED AT ALTERNATIVE WORKSITES.

The increasing use of off-site work stations to carry out significant and competitive work activities provides a critical new source of employment opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities. It's in the interest of the Federal government to utilize the skills of people with significant disabilities by recruiting them for appropriate off-site, home-based employment opportunities. To harness the power of new technologies to promote employment of people with significant disabilities, the Executive Memorandum calls on Federal Agencies that already operate customer service centers to identify positions that could be relocated to home-based or off-site facilities and be filled with people who have significant disabilities. If the Agencies determine that it is feasible and appropriate to establish home-based positions, they are then required to develop a plan and guidelines that encourages the recruitment and employment of individuals with disabilities for such positions. Vocational rehabilitation counselors estimate that approximately 12% of the individuals with disabilities in their caseload could, and would, succeed if enabled to work from

home, but would not succeed in the same jobs if required to travel to distant and central locations on a daily basis.

ACCESS AMERICA FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WEBSITE. In keeping with the President's and Vice President's vision of using information technology to increase and improve customer service, the President announced a new website, *Access America for People with Disabilities* - www.disAbility.gov - that will serve as "one-stop" electronic link to an enormous range of useful information to people with disabilities and their families. The website contains information relating to children and youth; employment, self employment, and entrepreneurship; transportation; health care and long term services and supports; choice and self-determination; recreation and travel; civil rights and protections; college, adult and vocational education; housing; technology; income supports; tax credits and deductions; disability statistics; and emergency preparedness. There are also special features, including "success stories" of individuals with disabilities; a "hot topics" corner discussing the newest disability issues and employment trends.

ADDRESSING BARRIERS FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

FLOTUS – announcements (Ann/Vicky – please fill in and make any changes)

HELPING TO BRIDGE THE TRANSITION FROM EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT BY HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. The First lady announced an increase the maximum monthly earned income exclusion for students who receive SSI from \$400 to \$1,290 and the yearly exclusion from \$1,620 to \$5,200. The Administration is proposing to automatically adjust these amounts thereafter based on any annual increases in the cost-of-living index. Young people with disabilities face enormous challenges when attempting to enter the workplace. We must find ways to bridge the transition from education to employment. The Administration is proposing to increase the amount that students who receive SSI can earn while continuing to receive the important protection SSI provides.

YOUTH TO WORK INITIATIVE

ABLE TO WORK CONSORTIUM

YOUTH COUNCILS

(VP)HELPING DISABLED INDIVIDUALS LIVE AND WORK IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. Yesterday, Vice President Gore announced a number of steps to help disabled individuals live and work in their communities. The President and Vice President strongly believe that no one should have to live in an institution or nursing home if they can live in the community with the proper supports. The Vice President also took a number of steps to make it easier for disabled individuals to own their own home. In addition, the Vice President took action to accelerate the development and transfer of assistive technologies that will facilitate the development of products that will enable people with disabilities to work and participate in society. **[Everything**

below is place-holder language that will be replaced as the VPs package comes together on Monday]

GRANTS TO STATES TO ENGAGE IN SYSTEM CHANGE ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO BUILD AND ENHANCE THEIR CAPACITY TO PROVIDE PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE MOST INTEGRATED SETTING APPROPRIATE. No one should have to live in an institution or nursing home if they can live in the community with the right support. The Vice President announced \$50 million in new funding for States to work with their disability and aging communities to develop comprehensive, effective plans for placing qualified persons with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Each State could use the funds for a variety of system change, capacity building and outreach activities designed to enable people with disabilities to have a real choice in where they want to live and receive services, whether in their own homes and communities or in an institutional setting.

POLICY GUIDANCE ON MEDICAID THAT WILL HELP STATES OFFER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES THE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS THEY NEED TO LEAD MEANINGFUL LIVES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. The Vice President announced new policy guidance to States to clarify Medicaid benefits available to persons in the community and additional flexibility to provide home and community based care services. The guidance will help States: 1) assist people with disabilities to make a successful transition from nursing homes and other institutions into the community; 2) expand access to home and community based services; and 3) assure that people receive comparable Medicaid services whether they are living in an institution or in the community.

ACCESS HOUSING 2000 – A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO TRANSITION FROM INSTITUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY BY PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS. The Vice President announced that the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the National Program Office on Self-Determination, a Project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation at the Institute on Disability, a University Affiliated Program, University of New Hampshire (NPOSD) are launching a unique public/private partnership, entitled Access Housing 2000, to assist individuals with disabilities in making the transition from nursing homes and other institutional settings into community living. They jointly committed resources to assist States in their efforts to expand the availability of accessible, affordable housing and to assure that individuals with disabilities receive the personal assistance and supports necessary to successfully transition from institutions to the community.

This national demonstration project will provide a model for a coordinated response to the Supreme Court's decision in Olmstead v. L.C.. The partners will launch a five-year national demonstration project to create a model for facilitating individuals with disabilities' transition from institutional settings to community living. The project will begin with approximately 400 beneficiaries residing in targeted regions, with a goal, depending upon available resources, of reaching 2000 persons at full implementation. Participants will include individuals with disabilities who have very low incomes and who currently reside in nursing homes, state institutions, Intermediate Care Facilities

for the Mentally Retarded, group homes, their parents' homes, and other community-based residential programs. The goal is to reach a broad geographic sweep, with a target of up to forty states and territories at full implementation. The demonstration project will use Section 8 housing vouchers, Nursing Home Transition Grants, Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act grants, and other resources in a targeted manner to help individuals with disabilities make this transition. Access Housing 2000 will also reach out to other potential public and private partners to encourage them to bring additional resources to this effort. In addition, the partners will explore ways to increase the use of individual development accounts (IDAs) for low- to moderate-income individuals with disabilities and their families.

INCREASING HOME OWNERSHIP FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. The Vice President announced that a letter entitled “Single Family Loan Production - Increasing Home Ownership Rates for Persons with Disabilities” will be sent to all approved FHA mortgagees, re-emphasizing HUD’s commitment to promoting home ownership for persons with disabilities. The letter encourages HUD’s lender partners to make the dream of home ownership possible for individuals with disabilities through increased, but prudent flexibility when underwriting their loan applications.

EXTENSION OF WORK INCENTIVES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO A BROADER RANGE OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. The Vice President announced that the Administration will take action to extend employment incentives for persons with disabilities to a broader range of HUD’s housing assistance programs.

NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH COALITION TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY-BASED CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDERS. Millions of people with disabilities can lead full, productive lives in their communities. But to live in the community, people need to be able to access not only the medical and mental health services they need, but also the housing, vocational rehabilitation, and employment services that enable them to support themselves in the community. The Vice President announced that the Center for Mental Health Services at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will work with a broad-based group of public and private organizations, constituencies and consumers to create state and local coalitions to assist persons with disabilities in accessing the services they need to live in the community.

The goal of the broad-based coalition is to bring together all of the service delivery providers needed to empower individuals with disabilities to return to their communities. SAMHSA intends to demonstrate that this national level effort can serve as a model for State, County, and local governments in improving the quality of life for persons with mental health and substance abuse disorders. The partners comprising the national coalition will include both traditional partners in the mental health and substance abuse treatment fields, such as professional organizations representing State mental health and substance abuse directors and protection and advocacy organizations, as well as non-traditional partners such as private industry councils, civil rights groups, housing and employment organizations and agencies, hospital administrators, and others.

DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY THAT ENABLES UNIVERSAL DESIGN.

The Vice President announced an Executive Memorandum requiring that the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) publish a report identifying priority areas for the development and advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities, and that Federal agencies then develop a strategy for transferring such technology for the benefit of people with disabilities. The development and transfer of assistive technologies will facilitate the development of products that will enable people with disabilities to work and participate in society.

Assistive technology is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of people with disabilities. Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The development of assistive technologies and products that incorporate universal design principles can significantly improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, and increase their ability to participate in the workplace. Technology transfers are important because they stimulate economic growth and a better quality of life for all Americans.



Heather H. Howard
07/24/2000 09:45:12 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Ann O'Leary/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Pro-choice alert: new anti-choice bill moving

FYI -- this is the new battle. The House Judiciary Committee is marking up tomorrow; they plan to bring to the floor of the House in September.

----- Forwarded by Heather H. Howard/OPD/EOP on 07/24/2000 09:43 AM -----



"Coleman, Clare" <Clare.Coleman@mail.house.gov>
07/19/2000 06:27:16 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Heather H. Howard/OPD/EOP, Lauren M. Supina/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Pro-choice alert: new anti-choice bill moving

MEMORANDUM

To: Pro-Choice & Health Staff
From: Clare Coleman/Rep. Lowey -- Pro-Choice Caucus
Date: July 19, 2000
Re: HR 4292, the "Born Alive Infant Protection" Act

Rep. Canady, the principle sponsor of the abortion ban, has introduced a new anti-choice measure, which will have a hearing in the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution tomorrow, Thursday, July 20.

According to Rep. Canady, the "Born Alive Infant Protection" Act, HR 4292, is intended to provide legal personhood only to "an infant who is completely expelled or extracted from her mother and who is alive is, indeed, a person under the law." In fact, the bill would change the meaning of "person," "human being," "child," and "individual" in all laws and regulations -- altering the U.S. Code in more than 15,000 different places. The impact on federal regulations will be even greater.

Further, 37 states have some sort of statute concerning liabilities and/or obligations for conduct related to "infants born alive." Even in states without statutory law, case law recognizes a "born alive" rule that holds that if a fetus is delivered alive, it would be criminal to take affirmative

acts to end its life.

Given this, it may be difficult to understand why the Judiciary Committee is moving yet another bill related to Roe v. Wade and the right to choose, especially in light of the Supreme Court's recent decision in Stenberg v. Carhart, the abortion ban case. The following excerpt from a recent anti-choice email alert may help our understanding:

"The question remains: Are their [sic] any viable legislative options for pro-lifers that will not be struck down by a Supreme Court that in a series of decisions - Planned Parenthood v. Casey, Danforth v. Reproductive Health Services and now Carhart - has shown no inclination to curtail abortion on demand articulated in Roe v. Wade

In terms of legislation, Senate pro-life leaders are planning to introduce new legislation in place of the bill on partial birth abortion, which had passed the Senate last year but was vetoed by President Clinton, that would make it illegal to kill a child that survives an abortion.

The virtue of the bill, said Hadley Arkes, a professor of jurisprudence at Amherst University in Massachusetts and a prominent pro-life writer, is that it stops what he sees as a "terrible drift toward making the right to abortion the right to a dead child."

According to Arkes, by the logic of the decisions on partial birth abortion, there is no way to distinguish legally between partial-birth abortion and actual infanticide, which he feels opens the way to allowing the destruction of infants who survive abortions. "This establishes a bright line of legal protection," Arkes said.

The proposed law also would provide a starting point "from which we can roll the point of legal protection back," according to one Senate staffer for a pro-life floor leader who may introduce the bill."

We've been working closely with pro-choice Judiciary committee staff and pro-choice groups on this emerging issue -- we'll provide more information soon.

Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities
Announcements for Mrs. Clinton
Questions and Answers

Youth to Work Initiative:

Q: What is the Youth-to-Work Initiative?

A: Over the past twenty-five years, Federal legislation has been enacted to exact changes in how youth with disabilities are educated, engaged in postsecondary education, and prepared for, and involved in, meaningful employment and independent living. This year, our nation will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the tenth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Because of these laws, more young people with disabilities are completing high school, going to college, entering the workforce, and participating in lifelong learning. Although these Federal initiatives have resulted in some success, young people with disabilities often remain far behind their peers without disabilities on many measures of success, including graduation rates, and on such postschool outcomes as employment, postsecondary education participation, and independent living.

In its second report to the President, ***Re-charting the Course: If Not Now, When?***, the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities recommended that the President direct the Departments of Labor, Education, Health and Human Services, the Social Security Administration, the Office of Personnel Management, and other appropriate Federal agencies to construct and coordinate, under the leadership of the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, a Youth-to-Work Initiative. This Youth-to-Work Initiative would test alternative approaches to helping youth with disabilities gain access to education and training opportunities and to overcome barriers to employment.

Q: Why is this initiative important?

A: Barriers to employment for youth with disabilities include the following: low educational and employment expectations; low educational attainment; and confusing governmental programs with conflicting eligibility criteria and goals. As a result, many youth with disabilities transition from the youth welfare system to the adult welfare system without having had access to the education and training opportunities they need to transition to work and achieve independence.

Over the past five years, according to the U.S. Department of Education, the number of young people with disabilities exiting the school system has steadily increased from 441,812 in 1996 to 486,625 students in 1998. During this period, diploma rates have remained static at around 27%. Dropout rates have also remained static at around 18%, as has the percentage of young people exiting the system and reported as "not known to continue" which has stayed at 13%. Out of school youth, dropouts, and "not known to continue" comprise almost one-third of all secondary-aged youth with disabilities who exit the system.

In 1998, only 9% of college freshman reported having a disability. As of 1999, there were 416,000 youth between the ages of 18 and 24 on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Less than one percent of this population currently leaves these programs to join the workforce.

Inasmuch as the labor market demands higher levels of education and skills, the completion of high school and further education has become even more critical than it was previously. Improving the postschool, transition, and independent living results of young people with disabilities will result in an increase in their employment opportunities. These individuals are an important untapped resource of talent and skills, and a key element in sustaining our historic economic growth.

Q: What works in promoting better outcomes for youth with disabilities?

A: The transition needs of young people with disabilities are reflected in many factors. School completion rates for students with disabilities are low. At the same time, however, national studies report that students with disabilities who complete high school while participating in work site learning experiences are more likely to be employed, to earn higher wages, and to enroll in postsecondary education and training. More than 20 years of research and experience has demonstrated that key ingredients to a smooth transition for young people with disabilities include: (1) career exploration and development as an integral part of the educational process; (2) school personnel using contextual teaching and learning methodologies that clearly connect classroom learning with the real world; (3) opportunities to participate in work-based learning activities that tie the world of work back to classroom learning; (4) partnerships between multiple agencies serving young people with disabilities and employers; and (5) facilitating self advocacy, self-determination, family interventions and independent living. Practitioners, however, lack knowledge about integrating service systems to assure a smooth transition from adolescence to adulthood.

Q: How will this Youth to Work Initiative address these needs?

A: For far too long, our nation's policy on transitioning young people with disabilities into adulthood has been fragmented, uncoordinated, and often self-contradictory. Employment, education, and lifelong learning outcomes for our nation's young people with disabilities continue to remain lower than those of their nondisabled peers. This underscores the need to coordinate and align Federal systems that support a young person's successful transition to adulthood.

The Youth-to-Work Initiative will build upon efforts currently underway in the Federal government, through the Presidential Task Force, to coordinate and align programs and services being implemented by several agencies.

Q: How will this initiative be implemented?

A: Through an amendment to Executive Order 13078, which created the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, the mandate of the Task Force will be expanded to focus on youth.

Q: What are the components of this Initiative?

A: Through the Task Force, several activities will be conducted:

1. Departments and agencies will work with the Task Force to design and coordinate a public awareness campaign to promote high expectations and effective transitioning of young people with disabilities. This campaign, which will promote successful examples from local programs, youth, and employers, will include an interagency-funded one-stop information center on transition of young people with disabilities. The campaign will be designed to:

- * Educate parents of youth with disabilities about the initiatives and services available to help prepare their children to successfully transition into adult roles.

- * Educate businesses, especially during such a tight labor market, that youth with disabilities can become productive, contributing adults in the workplace.

- * Educate the general public about the strides being made to help prepare youth to be active members of the community, and to eliminate the stigma associated with disabilities.

2. These agencies will work with the Task Force in FY 2001 to: (1) coordinate and implement research activities across agencies and programs to identify and synthesize best practices for improving the transition results of young people with disabilities; (2) conduct interagency demonstration programs based on the key ingredients to promote "what works" for young people with disabilities, families, service providers, employers, and decision-makers; and (3) carry out interagency cross-training activities designed to disseminate the best practices identified to service providers. These coordinated activities will serve all youth, and also ensure a focus on young people with mental illness, those with the most significant disabilities, and those from diverse cultures and with limited English proficiency.

3. The Task Force will work with the Department of Labor to ensure that young people with disabilities are included in all youth programs mandated under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

4. Increase access to health care and resources through an Interagency Council on Health and Ready to Work. This Interagency Council will be composed of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), the Social Security Administration, the Departments of Education and Labor, and other appropriate departments and agencies, as well as family, youth, and health care representatives. It will be charged with working together to ensure access to, and utilization of, HRTW services by youth with special health needs.

5. The Department of Education will review and analyze transition planning in postsecondary education and make recommendations to the Presidential Task Force on strategies for making transition services available on college campuses.

6. The Task Force will create a Youth Advisory Council to assist it in conducting these and other appropriate activities.

Q: How will agencies implement these activities?

A: The National Performance Review shall convene a National Institute of Federal Agencies to focus on the alignment of resources, programs, and services to improve the transition into adult roles of youth with disabilities. The Institute will bring together senior level representatives from Federal departments and agencies to develop action plans containing strategies for the creation of a seamless delivery system for youth with disabilities.

Partnership between Task Force and Able to Work Consortium:

Q: What is the Able to Work Consortium?

A: The Able to Work Consortium is a group of 10 major corporations representing technology, pharmaceuticals, banking, investment, manufacturing, and communications that have 'volunteered' to lead, by example, other major corporations to the realization that workers with disabilities contribute to the bottom line like other employees. These 10 corporations will actively serve as mentors to other companies to increase the number of companies actively hiring people with disabilities. These companies will also serve as 'spokes people' at business conferences and media events to promote the 'business to business' message.

In the fall, Able to Work will initiate a survey of 3,000 corporations about the use of assistive technology in the workplace.

Q: How will the Administration work with the Able to Work Consortium?

A: Through the President's Task Force, we will develop an public/private partnership to ensure that young people with disabilities are afforded the opportunity to have meaningful internships that will lead to real careers.

Social Security Administration: Student Earned Income Exclusion (Being sent directly by SSA to White House)

Department of Labor: Youth Councils:

Q: What are Youth Councils?

A: President Clinton signed the Workforce Improvement Act in 1998. WIA streamlined the nation's workforce development programs and set forth a new vision of workforce development programs for young people. One key aspect of this legislation is the establishment of Youth Councils. These Councils are to be a part of the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and will work to inform the WIB on issues unique to youth.

Q: How will Youth Councils effect services for youth with disabilities?

A: The emphasis on youth under WIA presents a new opportunity for young people with disabilities, who are included among the target populations to be served. Youth Councils serve as the central mechanism to enhance and increase participation of youth with disabilities in WIA youth-related programs.

Q: How will Youth Councils include young people with disabilities?

A: The Department of Labor will issue guidance to the Workforce Investment Partnerships on the creation of newly authorized Youth Councils under WIA. This guidance, among other things, will encourage the inclusion of young people, families, and other parties representing the interests of youth with disabilities on these Councils.

Significant Disability:

Q: The workforce investment system under WIA is intended to be comprehensive, customer-driven, and serve the needs of all people. What about people with the most significant disabilities - those who have been in institutions and other non-work settings, or who have been working but at less than the minimum wage. What is being done for this group of people?

A: The Department of Labor will issue a Training and Employment Information Notice (TIEN) to the workforce investment system on people with significant disabilities. This notice will emphasize the need for states to be aggressive in ensuring that the concerns and needs of people with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, are addressed.

State rehabilitation systems are mandated and critical partners under WIA for addressing the needs of people with significant disabilities. The DOL Notice, however, will also encourage outreach to, and inclusion of, State Directors of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Systems and State Medicaid Directors on state Workforce Investment Boards. While these State Directors are not mandated partners in the One-Stop system, their involvement is crucial to ensuring that the needs of people with significant disabilities are met.

Department of Education: Policy Guidance and Publications

Q: What guidance and publications will the Department of Education be releasing?

A: The Department of Education will issue a "Dear Colleague Letter" to offer schools guidance on addressing student harassment based on disability. The Department has also published two products: (a) a pamphlet designed to facilitate the unification of current general and special education; and (b) a guide on high stakes assessment which includes a section that addressed the testing of students with disabilities. Finally, the Department will issue guidance in the form of commonly asked questions and answers about the inclusion of students with disabilities in statewide and local district assessments.

Youth Leadership:

Q: How will the Administration encourage Youth Leadership Development?

A: This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the tenth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These landmark pieces of legislation have led to some significant strides in raising expectations and fulfilling the dreams of youth of completing school, going to college, entering the workforce, and living independently. In celebration of the ADA, a national "Torch Relay" was sponsored by the disability community. The culmination of this national relay was an event Tuesday at the FDR Memorial to celebrate the heros of the ADA, and to "pass the torch" to our leaders of tomorrow our nation's youth with disabilities.

We must keep our promise to our youth. Leadership development is critical to our future. Sharing its role in developing tomorrow's leaders, the Federal government will issue a grant to establish a Youth with Disabilities Leadership Development Project to help identify barriers to economic independence for youth with disabilities, and strategies for removing these barriers. It This effort, which will build on leadership conferences sponsored by Federal Agencies over the past two years, will be jointly funded by the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Labor, the Social Security Administration, the Presidential Task Force, and the National Council on Disability.