

DRAFT 10/6/97 9:00 a.m.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT AT CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
OCTOBER 6, 1997**

Good afternoon.

I can think of no more fitting day for us to come together to discuss climate change than today: children's health day. For how we act in response to global warming will have a profound impact on the safety and well-being of children the world over.

One of the biggest threats children face is disease -- particularly disease rooted in environmental causes. Millions of children under the age of five die every year from preventable, easily-treated diseases like pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria and malnutrition. Thousands more are made sick from air pollution.

In recent years, I have seen the individual faces behind these harrowing statistics. A young boy feverish with malaria in Africa. A young girl perilously malnourished in Asia. An infant dehydrated from cholera, dying, in South America. Children in America's cities suffering from asthma, struggling to breathe.

There is no escaping the data: Growing bodies are more susceptible to disease, pollution

and environmental changes than the rest of us.

It is for these children and millions more like them that we come to this conference today. Because as we have heard this morning from some of the world's leading scientists, the health problems that fall disproportionately on children are only going to get worse if we do not do something about climate change. [Todd, is this accurate as worded? HRC wondered whether or not subject had come up?]

So I want to talk with you this afternoon not as a scientist or as someone prepared to recommend specific policies, targets or timetables, but as a mother and as a citizen with a long-standing concern for the health and safety of children. While uncertainties about the particulars of climate change remain, while we do not know how much temperatures will rise and how fast, this much is clear: global warming has the power to put more children at risk.

Let me focus on three health flashpoints: Air quality. The spread of disease. And food security.

One reason we should be increasingly concerned about global warming has to do with respiratory illnesses. Already, as many as 40 percent of children seen in health clinics around the world are suffering from acute respiratory infections. It is likely that an increase in global temperatures would deepen this problem. High ozone levels in many urban areas result in more acid rain and pollution. Studies tell us that respiratory illnesses tend to rise when pollution

increases.

We see this, for example, in the case of asthma. Over the last decade, the number of cases of asthma has jumped by 29 percent. Hospitalization rates have increased by 6 percent. The largest increases have been among children and young adults. Today, asthma affects nearly 5 million American children; last year it led to more than 300 deaths.

Children in urban areas are hit hardest. In New York City, for example, children are hospitalized at four times the national rate. Within the city, rates are three to five times higher for African Americans and Latinos. A rise in temperatures will likely hasten this trend. Children in disadvantaged areas -- those least able to seek quality medical care -- will be affected the most, but no child will be entirely safe.

Another reason we should be concerned with climate change has to do with the spread of infectious diseases. In 1995, infectious diseases -- like malaria, cholera, dengue [den-gay] and yellow fever -- killed more than 17 million people worldwide. Nine million of these deaths were children.

Increases in temperature hasten the spread of infectious diseases for two reasons. First, they shorten incubation periods. That means that the viruses, bacteria and parasites [is this correct?] that cause these diseases get out into the world a lot faster. Second, cool temperatures protect parts of the world from certain diseases. They serve as an important line of defense.

Diseases that can survive in hot, humid Calcutta just aren't going to make it in Cleveland. Unless temperatures rise.

Take a disease like malaria, which is spread primarily by mosquitoes. There are half a billion cases of malaria every year. In 1995, 2.1 million of these resulted in death -- and most of these deaths were children under the age of five. Moreover, the threat of the disease is increasing, with the growth in strains that are resistant to drugs. In Africa, for example, the spread of chloroquine resistant malaria has contributed to an estimated 2-3 fold increase in malaria related deaths since 1984.

From this perspective, higher temperatures should be a matter of real concern. Areas that were previously free of malaria mosquitoes, such as mountainous regions in Rwanda and Kenya, are now reporting an influx of the insects. In Costa Rica and Colombia, mosquitoes that were never seen above 1000 meters have been spotted at twice that altitude. The United States is not immune. In 1995, after five years without a killing frost, New Orleans reported a serious and unprecedented infestation of mosquitoes.

In fact, according to research by the United States Agency for International Development, as a consequence of climate change, the percentage of the world's population at risk to malaria could increase from 45 percent to 60 percent -- raising the annual number of malaria cases by 50 to 80 million a year.

The spread of water-borne disease could also be hastened by climate change.

Warmer water temperatures breed and sustain infectious bacteria. Flooding that results from rising sea levels can put water supplies at risk.

This has the potential to make a bad problem worse. 1.3 billion people already lack access to safe water; 1.9 billion lack access to sanitation. Children are most imperiled. Unsafe water is the prime cause of the approximately three million childhood deaths annually worldwide from diarrheal disease and the four million childhood deaths annually from pneumonia. In the developing world, diarrheal disease is the number one killer of children. Anyone who has visited a health clinic devoted to helping children suffering from water-borne diseases [is this correct? Cholera solely water-borne?] like cholera knows what a problem this is -- and knows that we simply cannot afford to let it get worse.

Third, and finally, climate change can put food security at risk. Scientists predict that as carbon dioxide levels rise in the atmosphere, one of the consequences will be to shift zones of agricultural productivity. That could result in changes in crop, livestock, and fish-farming productivity, reduced availability of water for irrigation, and loss of arable land owing to desertification or rise in sea level.

This would likely cause local shortages of food supplies resulting in hunger and malnutrition affecting children and pregnant women. To complicate matters, the countries most vulnerable to droughts, pest outbreaks, and other factors affecting food production are among the

poorest in the world and include many where widespread famine is already taking a terrible human toll. No matter where you are on this planet, the result is likely to be more children going hungry.

I am glad that climate change is being viewed increasingly not just as a scientific issue but also as a health and safety issue that should concern all parents. In this light, the President's efforts to respond to global warming are part of his overall agenda to build a strong foundation for the health and safety of all our children. He signed into law a balanced budget that will help extend health insurance to 5 million children. He protected and defended Medicaid.... enacted cutting-edge legislation like the Family and Medical Leave and Kennedy Kassebaum Acts... raised childhood immunization rates to record levels... and took steps to shield our young people from tobacco and drugs.

The President also acted to protect our air, water, and food. He put in place tough new standards to ensure the safety of meat, seafood, and poultry. He signed a law to keep harmful pesticides off our fruits and vegetables. He fought to strengthen the legislation that protects our air and water. And this summer, he put in place tough new air quality safeguards which will [numbers tk].

The President's concern over global warming grows out of his overall commitment to safeguard the future of our youngest citizens. Not only America's, but the world's.

The Bible asks: If your child asks for bread, would you give him a stone? If he asks for fish, would you give him a serpent? If he asks for an egg, would you give him a scorpion?

[Paraphrase of Luke 11:10-12].

These are the oldest questions in the world. They remind us of the duty faced by every generation: To see to it that our children and those who follow us inherit a world better than the one we came into.



White House Press Release

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT EVENT ON PEDIATRIC DOSAGE

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 13, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT EVENT ON **PEDIATRIC DOSAGE**

Room 450
Old Executive Office Building

2:19 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: You know, one of the most important rules about being President is to never go on after the star of the show. (Laughter.) I would like to thank all of you for being here today. The Vice President, the First Lady, and Secretary Shalala have spoken about what we're trying to do and acknowledged the work of many individuals and groups. But I want to thank Dr. David Kessler, who as the Vice President said, used to work at the FDA; Dr. Friedman, the Acting Commissioner of the FDA. I also want to thank Dr. Koop, who wrote us a letter in support yesterday. And Hillary mentioned our good friend, Elizabeth Glaser. I got a wonderful letter today from her husband, Paul, about how much this would mean to their son, Jake. And so, all of you who have been in this situation, I thank you for helping this day come to pass.

And I thank Reagan Ralph for her eloquent speech under some duress. (Laughter.) I thank her spouse for doing what I think is a noble duty there. (Laughter and applause.) And next time we'll let you give the speech. (Laughter.) And the rest of us will handle Sam. (Laughter.)

I'm glad Sam came up here today and showed us what childhood should be like. It's what kids that are a year and a half old should be doing, and they should be able to do it. They should be able to do it. And according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, more than 50 percent of the medicines that have proved helpful for children have not been adequately tested for children's use. That is not acceptable.

The executive action that I take today simply is designed to ensure that parents and pediatricians have the safety information they need. Doctors have known for a long time that children respond differently than adults to many drugs. In cases -- many cases -- children can only tolerate vastly scaled-down doses. In some cases, their bodies simply haven't developed enough to take any **dosage** of a medicine that has been perfectly safe for adults. }

Moreover, we still don't even have good information about medication for some of the most common childhood illnesses that Hillary mentioned, like asthma, allergic reactions, ear infections. And we certainly don't know enough about medications for treating life-threatening diseases.

Less than half the drugs used to help the estimated 12,000 children with HIV infection in our country have been tested for use in children. Information is especially sparse for children under two, the time when the medication may be most needed.

Without clear guidance, pediatricians sometimes decide not to prescribe for children drugs used successfully by adults, and this means that the children may well be being deprived of what may be the very best treatment available. And as the Vice President said, the pediatrician's other alternative is to guess -- with potentially grave consequences.

Some time ago, for example, doctors gave infants small doses of a crucial antibiotic commonly used by adults, but it turned out that the infants were unable to clear the drug from their bodies and large amounts built up in their livers and, because of needed **dosage** studies which had not been done, 23 infants died.

The rule I announce today will put an end to this guesswork. It will require manufacturers of all medicines needed by children to study the drug's effects on children. The results will then be displayed on drug labels to help pediatricians and other health care professionals make good decisions about how to treat their young patients. Groups representing patients, physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and drug manufacturers all have indicated their willingness to help us implement this new rule, and we appreciate their willingness to do so.

I also want to applaud Senators Dodd and DeWine and Congressman Greenwood and Congressman Waxman, all of whom have introduced legislation that would provide additional incentives for drug manufacturers to perform the needed **dosage** studies in children. Their approach is compatible with the rule we're announcing today, and I look forward to working with them on this issue as Congress continues our bipartisan efforts to pass comprehensive FDA reform this fall.

And I know Congressman Greenwood and his children are here - I'd like to ask him to stand. Thank you, sir, for being here. We appreciate your work. (Applause.) In your new position in the Congress you may have many more controversial issues to deal with, but few that will do more good. And we thank you for your leadership.

Today we take one more significant step toward assuring quality health care for our children, building on our historic commitment in the balanced budget to extend health care coverage to five million of them who don't have it today.

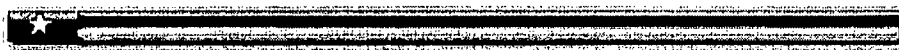
Again, let me say when something like this happens the President gets to give a speech, but the credit goes to all the people who worked on it -- to all the parents, to those who kept working for this even after their children suffered terrible injury and sometimes even death; to all the members of the professional groups. You deserve the credit. And I am very grateful to you for bringing this matter to my attention and giving me the power to use what the law has given me as President to do what you know and to do what you have long known is the right thing to do. This is your day.

As the First Lady has often said, children are not rugged individuals. They depend upon us to give them love and guidance, discipline and the benefit of good medical care. Today, their dependence has been justified. Their future and ours depends upon how well we continue to do this important work.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

2:26 P.M. EDT



To comment on this service: feedback@www.whitehouse.gov

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One of the biggest threats children face is disease -- particularly disease rooted in environmental causes. Millions of children under the age of five die every year from preventable, easily-treated diseases like pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria and malnutrition. Thousands more are made sick from air pollution.

In recent years, I have seen the individual faces behind these harrowing statistics. A young boy feverish with malaria in Africa. A young girl perilously malnourished in Asia. An infant dehydrated from cholera, dying, in South America. Children in America's cities suffering from asthma, struggling to breathe.

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and environmental changes than the rest of us.

It is for these children and millions more like them that we come to this conference today. Because as we have heard this morning from some of the world's leading scientists, the health problems that fall disproportionately on children are only going to get worse if we do not do something about climate change. [Todd, is this accurate as worded? HRC wondered whether or not subject had come up?]

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From this perspective, higher temperatures should be a matter of real concern. Areas that were previously free of malaria mosquitoes, such as mountainous regions in Rwanda and Kenya, are now reporting an influx of the insects. In Costa Rica and Colombia, mosquitoes that were never seen above 1000 meters have been spotted at twice that altitude. The United States is not immune. In 1995, after five years without a killing frost, New Orleans reported a serious and unprecedented infestation of mosquitoes.

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poorest in the world and include many where widespread famine is already taking a terrible human toll. No matter where you are on this planet, the result is likely to be more children going hungry.

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[Paraphrase of Luke 11:10-12].

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**HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEO REMARKS FOR 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF
SEATTLE'S CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

I am pleased to join you as you celebrate the 90th Anniversary of Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle. Children's hospitals have a special role in our country. When a child comes through your doors, he or she doesn't represent a race, a religion, or an economic class, he or she represents our hope for the future. Those of you who have dedicated your hearts, minds and hands to helping young patients are keeping faith with our future. You deserve our thanks and admiration.

I know from my own experience as a trustee and volunteer for Arkansas Children's Hospital the important work that goes on in children's hospitals and the commitment it takes, on behalf of a community, to support that work. Our children's hospitals are special for a lot of reasons, but one of the most important of these is their tradition of serving all children in need, regardless of their families ability to pay. You make that possible.

In fact, Children's Hospital enjoys an outstanding reputation not only for the high quality care it delivers, but also for the commitment of its donors and volunteers. The Children's Hospital Guild Association is the largest health care volunteer organization in the country. It stands as a model for the spirit of service and philanthropy that has enriched and sustained our national life for more than two centuries.

For 90 years, the Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center of Seattle has made real one of our most cherished beliefs: that we care for our children so that they may make the most of their God-given promise. May your work continue for another 90 years and beyond.

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Happy Birthday Children's!

12/10/97

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT FOR NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S ASTHMA INITIATIVE
SOUTH BRONX CHILDREN'S HEALTH CENTER
DECEMBER 11, 1997

Acknowledgments. From advance

Today we take another step in our comprehensive effort to protect the health of America's youth -- a step that will meet head on the most common chronic medical problem children face today: asthma. And like all important steps, it is one we are taking together: doctors, nurses, health care providers, community leaders, government, citizens, and parents.

Asthma affects nearly 5 million American children. Over the past decade, it has led to more than 4000 deaths. Worse, these numbers are on the rise. In the last 20 years, the number of children hospitalized for asthma has increased five-fold; the number of deaths has more than doubled.

We also know asthma hits children wherever they live, but it hits the children of our inner cities hardest. New York City children, for example, are hospitalized at four times the national rate. Moreover, the hardest hit of the hardest hit are minorities -- African Americans and Latinos.

Here in New York, the asthma rates for African American and Latino children are three to five times higher than rates for other populations. An African American child is four to six times more likely to die from asthma than a white child.

Behind these statistics, there are human stories. Children who cannot step outside the front door without a pocketful of inhalers. Children who cannot walk a block or ride a bike without grasping for air. Children who miss out on education, friendship, and community because of their condition. Asthma is the leading cause of school absenteeism. Last year, it was the cause of more than 10 million missed school days. To a parent, there are few things more frightening than seeing the look of confusion and then fear on your child's face as he or she is struck by asthma. To a child, I cannot imagine anything more terrifying than not being able to breathe -- no matter how hard you try.

That is why I am so gratified by the action you are taking today. The Children's Health Fund, the Montefiore [Monta-fee-or] Medical Center, Shering Laboratories, and the New York City government have come together to create an innovative public-private partnership to lower the rates of childhood asthma -- largely through preventative measures.

This initiative will be built around education campaigns to teach parents and families how to protect their children from asthma. New mobile medical units and primary care centers will provide better care for more and more children. And they will reach out especially to children who are at special risk.

If any illness illustrates that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of intensive care, asthma is it. And this initiative offers prevention by the pound.

I am proud that the President has been a partner with you in your efforts to combat asthma. Asthma research at the National Institutes of Health has increased by 36 percent during my husband's administration -- from \$63 million in 1993 to \$86 million in 1997.

This effort is just part of the President's overall commitment to building a strong foundation for the health of all our children. This summer, the President signed into law a balanced budget that will help extend health insurance to up to 5 million children. This unprecedented \$24 billion investment constitutes the largest single expansion of health care since Medicaid.

These resources will go toward providing health care coverage for children who are currently uninsured. Up to 10 percent of these funds can be used for on-the-ground services -- like those we see here today.

Earlier this year, the President announced a plan to see to it that parents and doctors know exactly what and how much medicine to give children. Right now, the vast majority of medications -- including asthma drugs -- are not tested for kids. The President's Pediatric Labeling Initiative will change all that in the years ahead. No parent should have to guess how much medicine to give a sick child.

During the course of his administration, my husband has taken a series of other important steps to safeguard the health of our children: from protecting and defending Medicaid...to signing cutting-edge legislation like the Family and Medical Leave and Kennedy-Kassebaum Acts...to shielding our young people from tobacco and drugs...to seeing to it that our children get the immunizations they need.

He has also made a special effort to see to it that the air our children breathe, the water they drink, and the food they eat are safe. The President issued tough new public health standards for smog and soot that will prevent 350,000 cases of aggravated asthma. He has cleaned up a record number of toxic waste sites and expanded community right to know laws so that families know exactly what substances are being released into the world around them. Under this administration, we have strengthened and revolutionized food safety laws for meat, seafood, and poultry for the first time in a generation -- and we have toughened regulations to keep harmful pesticides off our children's food.

All these efforts work toward a single dream: Better health and safer lives for our children. With today's announcement and the plans you have underway -- and with your work and commitment -- we are one step closer toward making that dream a reality.

Thank you.

**HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
ASTHMA EVENT
MAY 21, 1998**

Welcome and thank you, Dr. Ford, for that introduction -- and for being such a strong advocate for children at the American Lung Association. I know that this issue has special meaning for you. It's a pleasure to be back at Children's Hospital, and to join you, Secretary Shalala, Administrator Browner and all the children here -- to talk about a very serious health problem, and what we are doing together to safeguard and improve our children's health.

We've all heard this morning about how asthma is the most common medical threat to America's children -- and that the problem is getting worse. And that while the rise in asthma cases and deaths cuts across all ages and groups -- there's been an alarming increase in asthma in children -- particularly under the age of five.

That's the bad news. The good news is that we're making significant headway in meeting this chronic medical problem head on -- and that we're making that progress by working together -- as federal agencies, caregivers, health care providers, parents, and community leaders.

We've heard from Secretary Shalala and Administrator Browner about what the federal government is doing to increase research and expand health programs to combat and prevent asthma. This morning, I'm pleased to announce three new initiatives -- from both the private and public sector -- that will build on these successful efforts already underway.

The first initiative I want to talk about today is a pilot program to empower local citizens and communities to take voluntary steps to protect children from environmental health threats such as lead, second hand smoke, and other pollutants. The Child Health Champion campaign is being initiated by EPA, as part of that agency's overall effort to help identify, prevent, and reduce environmental health risks to children. And it will go a long way to address the underlying causes of asthma.

These pilot programs will take place in eleven selected communities around the country - including here -- in Anacostia -- and will be supported with EPA seed money. Local communities will come together -- health care workers, teachers, citizen groups, business leaders, maintenance workers, and the government -- to help identify health problems, set goals, and develop action plans.

Information is another effective empowerment tool we have to help control and prevent asthma. With asthma affecting one in every 14 children, everyone -- children, parents, caregivers, teachers and the entire community -- needs to be informed about what can trigger it, its symptoms, and what to do about it. Getting this critical information out to the widest possible audience is the key to saving lives -- and improving the health of our children. And that's what the following two initiatives seek to accomplish.

First, the American Lung Association (ALA) and the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) are joining forces to educate and train both parents and child care providers in how to cope with childhood asthma and other lung diseases. Among other activities, they will distribute to NACCRA's network of over 350,000 child care providers Sesame Street's -- "A is for Asthma" -- educational kit. [You could hold up Caregiver's guide.] This bilingual kit includes a caregivers guide, a video, and a poster that will help educate the entire community about asthma and how to improve our children's health.

The program has enlisted the help of some very important people: Sesame Street characters Elmo, Rosita and Luis. It also introduces a new Muppet friend -- Dani -- who has asthma. So I know the children here at the Hospital and across the country will enjoy this program -- and learn some important lessons from it as well.

The other initiative I want to mention arms parents and others with another kind of information they need to help protect children with asthma -- information about the quality of the air we breathe. As Administrator Browner has already pointed out, smog and pollution -- particularly in our cities -- can cause all kinds of health problems, and children, particularly asthmatics, are at high risk for adverse health effects from ozone pollution.

A new program-- called the Ozone Mapping Project -- for the first time makes information about ozone concentrations available daily to the public -- through the media, but perhaps more importantly -- on the Internet. This project -- initiated by the Environmental Protection Agency -- provides parents and communities with an important new "right to know" tool to help anticipate increased risks for asthma attacks and other health-related problems. It's particularly appropriate that this project is being launched today -- on the nation's first Ozone Awareness Day -- which is being organized by the states to raise public understanding about ozone and how it affects our health.

Taken together, these three initiatives signify an important step forward in our nation's battle to combat the problems of asthma that can so cripple a child's life -- and to ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for all of our children. We do not know exactly what causes asthma -- but we do know how to help prevent it and manage it. And if any illness illustrates that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of intensive care, asthma is it. By keeping parents and caretakers informed about asthma and what to do about it, and by empowering communities to improve the environment around them, we will continue to make progress -- and save lives -- in this critical area of children's health. I want to thank everyone here today for helping to improve the quality of life for so many of our youngest citizens.

And now, the fun really begins. Elmo and Luis are going to do a song and dance about asthma for us. Let's all give them a very warm welcome.