

Remarks on
the campaign trail... (1992)

REMARKS BY GOVERNOR BILL CLINTON
BESTOR PLAZA, CHAUTAUQUA INSTITUTION
CHAUTAUQUA, NY
AUGUST 23, 1992

int'l renowned
resort & mecca
for intellectuals
& artists.

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much ladies and gentlemen, President and Mrs. Bratton, Governor and Mrs. Ludine, and Senator and Mrs. Moynihan and Congress LaFalce. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm so elated to be back in Chautauqua. I'm glad that our road show here was introduced by Pat Moynihan. Sometimes I think that when he walks into the Chamber of the Senate the aggregate knowledge of the body doubles.

I told that to Al Gore once. And he said yeah, when we both leave there's nothing left. He didn't say that, I made that up. I'm not going to be like the other side, when I make something up, I'll tell you.

It is a joy for me to be back in this wonderful place, where I came first in 1988, by myself to speak to your Second Conference on the American Family. And where Hillary and I came last year to speak together about our family and America's families.

The nice thing about batting in clean up in this group is that it doesn't much matter what I say, its all been said.

I want you to know how proud I am to be associated with Al and Tipper Gore. I think they represent something good and decent and important and wonderful for America.

And I can't help saying as I heard my wife up here saying what I've heard her say so many times over the last twenty years. As I remember how many years and how many long days and hard nights she has devoted, not only to her own family, but to other people's families and their children and their futures.

And how funny it was to hear her attacks at the other Party's Convention on the question of family values by people who never even thought of the issue until they thought there were votes in it a few years ago. And I tell you that because I believe there is genuine cause for us to be debating the condition of the American family--its problems, its discontent, its continuing wonders and great potential. And I think its important to see it in the contexts of what is going on in the world today.

The nice thing about what Al and Tipper and Hillary talked about is that it is really no partisan content to the problem. No one can dispute the problems with which they each felt.

And I got in this race for president because I became convinced that we were at a historic turning point. And that we were once again being called upon as a nation to go beyond the pros and rhetoric that normally dominates our public debates; to go beyond the labels of Democrat, Republican, left and rights, of liberals and conservatives.

And instead to ask ourselves questions about what it would take to regenerate the American dream. And to propel our great nation into the future--a future brighter than our past.]

It is clear to everyone who has studied the matter, that our nation has been in severe economic distress for well over a decade. That real wages are no higher than they were twenty years ago. That our ~~own census~~ shows that two-thirds of the American people are literally working harder for less money than they were making a decade ago. That there has been in the last decade, a fifty percent increase in the percentage of working persons living below the poverty line. That we have responded to the pressures of the global economy in a way totally different from the response of any other major nation.

You heard Al Gore cite a couple of the areas we were different from the other advanced high-wage, high-growth countries. We resisted taking a lead in global environmental leadership. We resisted doing our part to deal with global population control. We're also the only major nation, to give you a couple of examples, where the national government has not stepped in to control health care cost and provide a basic system of affordable health care to all of our people.

Seventy-two nations in this world provide protection for working people to get a little time off without pay when there's a baby born or sick parent; But our country doesn't.

And in spite of the best efforts of the Congress on a bipartisan basis, this Administration vetoed the Family and Medical Leave Act.

We are the only major country that has a strong economy but has no real national economic strategy to target areas of opportunity in emerging technologies; to invest a competitive amount of money in transportation, in communication, and in environmental clean-up; to have clear and define partnership between government and business and labor and education; to create opportunity for all our people.

And most of the time, when we're on the stump, that's what I talk about. How we can put our people first and develop an investment oriented economy. Not trickle-down; not tax and spend; but invest, educate, organize and compete.

Many of you are by now, familiar with my views on the issues. But what I want to talk to you about, just for a couple of moments today is the other side of that coin. And that is the fabric and the potential of the people of America.

For no matter how good our economic policy; no matter how strong our commitment to investment, our ability to flourish in this world depends upon our ability as a people to give birth to and to rear our children; to educate them; to give form and direction and character and fiber to their lives. To give them the capacity to be everything that God meant for them to be.

Our debate in this country over the condition of families and children, in my judgement is long over due. And I welcome that. Nearly every American family has fretted over the problems of modern life. All of us wonder and worry about the conflicting demands and obligations to the generations; to each other.

The fact that too many people have gotten too selfish for the moment and done things which were bad for their own children. The fact that too many children have been subject to too many temptations which led them to destructive paths in life.

No person who has ever been a father or a mother; a grandfather or a grandmother, could have possibly watched the unfolding of American life for the last generation without feeling that kind of concern and caring. And without knowing that unless we found a way to do a better job of developing our people, then the best economic policies will still leave America short and divided and falling behind.

The thing that bothers me is that the tone of the family values debate today is that it is too polarized for short term political purposes and too little in view of the deep profound concern for the welfare of the real people whose real lives will be affected by the real decisions of America in this election.

The polarization comes in the form of something like this: one side says what we really need to do is just exonerate the American people. Tell everybody to behave and do right. And don't do such and such. And do this and do that. Then there's nothing left for us to do as a society.

The other side says there are a lot of poor folks and disadvantage people out there and all we need is another raise, government assistance, and everything will be fine.

Both are wrong. Both are wrong. You can not feed a hungry child with an assertion. You can't raise a child without values, successfully either. We've got to find a way to pursue both.

And that is the debate that we ought to be engaged. In which I seek for this election; in which I challenge the other side to embrace. I thank Senator Moynihan for scolding the Republicans for

jumping on my wife.

I think that's what you ought to know--just like Senator Gore said about the population issue-- what you really ought to know is that they know better.

Wasn't so many years ago, the first lady put out a book featuring programs which helped to strengthen families. And one of the few she selected was one my wife brought to Arkansas--bragging on Hillary.

Its a program you may have heard me talk about before but its combines the best of helping families and in viewing family values. It's called the HIPPY Program, Home Instruction Program For Preschool Youngsters. We brought it over to our state from Israel. Mothers are taught to work with their children for twenty minutes a day, five days a week, thirty weeks a year for two years to get them ready for school. Even totally illiterate mothers can be taught to do this. It strengthens family's values.

We have now, the largest program in the world, outside Israel and our state. And we had a reunion and some of those parents the other day--there was one woman in our backyard who used to be on welfare, forty years old, four children to the HIPPY Program--just got her college degree because we strengthen family values.

I never will forget the time Mr. Bush wrote my wife a thank you note for opening his eyes to problem of infant mortality in America; Because when she told him we ranked nineteenth in the world, he said she was wrong. But he promised to look into it and he thanked her for it because he didn't know that.

Well, while he didn't, Hillary was leading an effort in our state to cut the infant mortality rate almost in half over the last ten years. And that's a family value. That is a family value.

I say this, only to point out that we are not going to get any where in this election and we are not going to get any where in this country, if we try to turn people who disagree with us politically in cultural aliens by distorting their words, misrepresenting their values, and dividing the American people, when they ought to be reaching out, one from the other to lift up all of our children and find a way to rescue our future.

The families of America are in crisis because of social and economic changes which are sweeping through this country. There are many, but let me just mention a few: the first is poverty among young parents and their little children. They are the new poor of America. One in four children under the age of five, in poverty.

The second is the strength put on childbearing by work. By 1995, two thirds of the mothers of children under the age of six will be in the work force. And a study released documented what most of

you know, intuitively, anyway, which is that the average American family is spending more hours at work and less time with their children than they were twenty years ago because of the decline in our economic performance.

The third is that the structure of the family, itself has changed. With the raising tide of divorce, which Senator Moynihan mentioned, which leads on average to a forty percent decline in the standard of living of divorce woman within three years after the divorce, most of them still having custody of their children.

An enormous increase in out of wedlock births; smaller families for two parent households and a drastic increase in violence in the lives of our young people.]

There are policy responses to all of this. A growing economy would reduce a lot of the problems of poverty. A better tax system could take the working poor out of poverty, why should we say, if you work forty hours a week and you got a child in the house, instead of giving another tax cut to the wealthiest one percent of Americans, we'll spend a small amount of money and lift you out of poverty to reward work and family.

We ought to continue the welfare reform efforts that we began on a bipartisan basis, as Senator Moynihan said. Senator Moynihan in the Senate, New York Congressman Downey in the House, the Republican and the Democratic governors in the Reagan White House.

We had a simple idea that most people on welfare were young women and their little children; that most people stayed on welfare because they were undereducated and they could only get minimum wage jobs. They couldn't afford child care and children would lose their medical coverage.

So, we had this simple idea. We're going to spend more money on education and training; require people to go to work but if they got jobs, we'll cover their child care and the medical coverage for their kids. And guess what, it worked, we moved seventeen thousand people from welfare to work in my state alone, since that bill was passed in late nineteen eighty-eight.

But, we do have to break the chain of welfare dependency. There are people who are generational dependent upon welfare; but we must understand how it works. We need to go beyond that. I would be in favor of changing welfare all together, saying that if you don't have a job within a year after your education is completed, you got to do community service work and be part of rebuilding your community. But you have to do it. You have to do it consistent with the dedication to the best of the child.

Poverty is a scourge of childhood, particularly, against the disintegration of the family which is occurring today.

What can be done to deal with the work problems? Well, we at least

ought to join the ranks with the rest advanced countries in the world and make sure we give enough support, not just for the poor; but to the working people so that they can afford to pick decent child care for their kids.

And, we ought to say as Americans, we can't. We can't. We can't. I am so sick and tired of hearing Americans say we can't do something that I can't stand it. And if seventy-two other countries can figure out how to let parents get off of work without pay, when kids are born, when parents are sick, then we ought to be able to do it too. That's pro-family. And by the way, it would increase productivity in the work force because the parents would feel more secure when they were at work. And better about their employers; and better about their lives and better about their future. And that is a family value.

What can we do about the changing structure of the American family? Are there laws we could adopt? There are some.

We ought to have a national system of child support enforcement so that you can't cross the state line and beat your child support bill. That would help.

Every state should look at its divorce laws and make sure that in every divorce proceeding, the Judge really gives adequate weight to the interest of the children, even when neither parent seems to be pursuing it. That should be considered.

We ought to strengthen the adoption proceedings in this country and try to make it more attractive to adopt children; make it easier for people to adopt children across racial and ethnic lines; give support to people who will adopt children with health care problems and other problems.

We ought to provide for more role models and mentors for kids who grow up without it in the home. Every child who makes it against the odds, almost, always, at least--almost always--has had a consistent relationship with a caring and successful adult. We need to try to do what we can to multiply that rule.

We could have stronger health education and parenting education in our schools. If you want to reduce teenage pregnancy, and abortion and out-of-wedlock births, it does work to tell people how their bodies work and to give them some imagination of what kind of future they might have.

So there are programs we can pursue. Are there values that we can promote in common with society? Sure there are.

I'm a musician. And I love the arts. And I believe in free expression. But I thought Tipper Gore was right: what's the difference between the record and the movie?

I thought she was right to say that we at least ought to know what

kids are listening to when they are eight, nine and ten years old. That's what the movies are. What's the difference between a record and a movie? None.

I do think we ought to be tough when our children are exposed to violence and pornography, and especially when the two things are put to us in pandor. That is a legitimate thing to do.

I do think that my wife was right when we worked on an opportunity for religious fundamentalists and others in our state to have their right to homeschool their children as long as they have met certain standards. Because this is a big country and we got to have a big tent and we need to be informed and enriched by people with different views and persuasions and we ought to reward people who care about their parental responsibility enough to put their kids first.

I do think our public leaders ought to be out there telling children they should avoid premarital sex and they ought to if they insist on having it, protect themselves against having children.

I believe we ought to be out there building the self image and the capacity of our young people. But remember, you can not do one, that is, tell people how to behave without the other, doing what you should do yourself to try to help promote the values you advocate. Those who advocate values have to behave in a way that is consistent with family values.

Not very long ago, the Children's Defense Fund did a study on young ladies who had babies out of wedlock. And they grouped them into two groups: those who had a second child out of wedlock and those who didn't. And guess what the overwhelming reason for those who didn't have a second child out of wedlock was that they acquired basic learning skills; began to be successful in school; though more of themselves; and began to imagine a different future for themselves. The two things are related.

I believe with all my heart that we can change the culture of America. I don't think that ten years from now, if we do what we should, we'll have the same rates as out of wed lock births.

I believe we can drive that down. I believe we can bring down the number of abortions. I believe we can lift up the number of people who want to adopt children and we can go forward together. But only if we have a consistent set of values and actions.

People are smoking as much as they used to, both because of advocacy and action. Heart disease associated with the lack of exercise is going down because its been a consistent effort over time. Cocaine use is gone down among all but the poorest of the poor who have no hope, no structure, no action to go with advocacy; who do not imagine that they can have a future. Among those who do, it has gone down.

I'm telling you my fellow Americans, we can do better. And we ought to be out there advocating what we believe in; but we also ought to know that we have to work together.

Let me close with just a couple of stories to show you the great gap between talk and action.

I never will forget when I was in New Hampshire at the beginning of this process, meeting a young man named Ron Marcos whose child had opened heart surgery--a two year old child. He loved that little boy more than anything in the world. And nobody wanted to hire him who had health insurance because the kid had opened heart surgery and might get sick again. Is that a nation with family values?

I never will forget meeting a woman when the Gores and Hillary and I were in Columbus, Ohio, the sole support of her seven children, I believe she was a divorcee, she might have been a widow. Her youngest child was desperately ill--she made fifty thousand dollars a year and she was so proud that she could support these kids. She was one of the Democrats who was for Ross Perot for President, until he dropped out.

I'm not talking about politics here. She had to quit that fifty thousand dollar job and go on welfare because that was the only way she could get any health coverage for one of the children; for the other six and that seventh were deprived of knowing their mother could support them because of the system we live under in this country. And that's the only country in this world where it would have happened to her, with any kind of an advanced economy. And I don't think that's family values.

When we were in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the other day in front of Quaker Oats, I ran upon a lady--a white lady, holding an African-American child--and grabbed that child in my arms and asked the lady whose child this was? And she said, "He's my child. And he has AIDS." And I said where did you get him? And she said, "I adopted him from another state." And by the way, she happened to have a pro-family, pro-choice button on.

But she had adopted a child. She had stood up for life. And she said, "You got to do something to help us get more of these kids adopted." She said, "Everybody's out here fighting over abortion. What about all of these kids who are coming into to the world. They're sick and they have AIDS and nobody's taking care of them and nobody wants to adopt them. Help me find a home for the children that are alive." And I think that's family values.

I could tell you stories like this all afternoon, but I know there is more you have to do. What I want you to think about is this: This is an election in which we must go beyond the frozen category of the debate that has dominated American politics for the last twelve years.

We can't just yell at each other across a big divide with a line

down the middle that say's Republican, Democrat or liberal conservation or family values or stump on family values. It don't amount to a hill of beans, folks.

The issue is will America have the courage to make the changes necessary to adjust to the global economy; to adjust to the historic environmental developments that we have to face. And to recognize that until we do a better job of lifting all of our people up, we all are going to be dragged down. Those are the issues that are facing us today.

Now here is this wonderful place that people have come from all views and all parties and all parts of the country for decades and decades and decades. And when you leave this place this summer, I ask you to go home and do what you can---wherever you're from; whatever your political party; whatever your preference about politics--to be a good citizen as America once again seeks to recreate itself.

No serious person could say that the problems we face today are greater than those faced by Franklin Roosevelt when he lifted the country from the chains of his wheelchair in 1933; faced by Abraham Lincoln, when the country was coming a part and literally gave his life to preserve the Union or faced by the Founding Fathers when they had to deal with all those terribly difficult questions.

You know the other night...I will say this, the best line at the Republican Convention was when President Reagan said that he knew Thomas Jefferson and that I was no Thomas Jefferson. I love that. Now, I never compared myself to Thomas Jefferson, but Reagan never let the facts stand in the way of a good line.

But I'll tell you this, and I close with this, I would never do that. Thomas Jefferson was one of the greatest people who ever lived. But he was subjected to a lot of brutal, bitter, unfair, totally personal, totally irrelevant criticism in his public life. And he never would have tolerated a debate in which the personal attacks on the family of his opponent or trying to alienate the people who was running against or debating with, dominate an honest consideration of the human elements of the issues of his day. And that's why after two hundred years, we're still here.

You owe your children; your grandchildren; and generations to come that same effort in this year. Thank you and God Bless you all.

ISSUE OUTLINE
1999 STATE OF THE UNION
1/18/99

The Aging of 21st Century America

Social Security
Medicare
[REDACTED]
Long Term Care

POTUS

21st Century Schools

Student Loans/Hope Scholarships/Ed. IRAs
America Reads/Mentoring
Internet
100,000 Teachers

Accountability Agenda
 social promotion
 after school/summer school
 failing schools
 teacher quality
 parent choice
 discipline codes

POTUS

School Modernization

21st Century Support for American Families

Minimum Wage
Equal Pay

*POTUS —
Add new
agenda*

[Child Care
 at home parent tax credit
 family leave act expansion
 anti-discrimination provision

[Health Care
 medical research
 patients' bill of rights
 medical records privacy
 expanded coverage (Medicare buy-in, Kennedy-Jeffords)

[after school)

- community health centers
- family planning/reproductive health
- mental illness

Tobacco

A 21st Century Economy

- Worker Training/Adult Literacy
- Welfare to Work

- Urban Investment
 - community development banks
 - empowerment zones
 - 100,000 vouchers for affordable housing
 - untapped markets initiative

- Farm Safety Net
- Technology Research & development
- Y2K

- International economy /trade
 - IMF
 - international financial architecture
 - fast track
 - Africa Trade and Growth Initiative
 - Caribbean Basin Trade Initiative
 - new round of trade negotiations
 - child labor
 - manufacturing initiative
 - Japan steel imports

A Strong America in a Strong World

- Peace
 - Northern Ireland
 - Balkans
 - Middle East

New Threats of 21st Century

- Terrorism/Critical Infrastructure
 - embassy safety
 - computer network safety, bio/chem. emergency readiness, vaccines

Nuclear Weapons

- restrain spread in North Korea, India, Pakistan
- safeguard technology in Russia/Ukraine/former USSR
- START III
- CTBT (ratify this year)

Iraq

21st Century Military

- Readiness and Modernization (more support for troops and families).

21st Century alliances

- [NATO Summit]
- U.N. dues and debts
- Asia -- Japan, South Korea, China
- Africa
 - Democracy
- Americas
 - free trade area
 - disaster relief
- Cuba

21st Century Communities

Crime

- 100,000 Cops, Brady Bill
- COPS II
- drug testing and treatment
- guns
 - 5-day waiting period
 - Brady expansion: juvenile ban
- school safety
 - Child-proof trigger locks,
 - Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Environment

- clean air fund
- livability agenda
- lands legacy initiative

AmeriCorps

Campaign Finance Reform
Race Initiative
ENDA/Hate Crime Prevention Act
Immigration
English/civics education

Peroration: The Millennium

White House Millennium Project
Save America's Treasures
Millennium Communities

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
FAMILIES AGENDA
JANUARY 20, 1999

THANK YOU, TIPPER, FOR THAT KIND INTRODUCTION --
AND FOR YOUR TIRELESS EFFORTS, OVER MANY YEARS,
EDUCATING US ALL ABOUT THE CRITICAL ISSUE OF
MENTAL HEALTH. I'M SO PLEASED TO BE IN NORRISTOWN --
THE PRIDE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY. AND TO JOIN YOU,
THE VICE PRESIDENT, THE PRESIDENT, AND EVERYONE
HERE TODAY, AS WE TALK ABOUT THE BOLD NEW AGENDA
FOR AMERICA THAT THE PRESIDENT UNVEILED LAST NIGHT
IN HIS STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS.

FIRST, I WANT TO COMMEND ALL OF YOU FOR WHAT
YOU ARE DOING HERE IN NORRISTOWN -- TO REVITALIZE
THIS COMMUNITY -- AND SUPPORT THE FAMILIES AND
CHILDREN WHO LIVE HERE.

I'VE HEARD ABOUT THE INNOVATIVE DROP-IN CHILD CARE CENTER AT THE COUNTY COURT HOUSE -- AND THE CHILD CARE SERVICES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO THOSE MOVING FROM WELFARE TO WORK. I'VE ALSO HEARD ABOUT NORRISTOWN'S SCHOOL/ BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS -- THAT ENCOURAGE PARENTS AND BUSINESSES TO GET INVOLVED IN IMPROVING THE EDUCATION OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

THESE ARE THE KINDS OF PROGRAMS -- AIMED AT HELPING FAMILIES MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY -- THAT ARE AT THE HEART OF THIS PRESIDENT'S AGENDA.

WHEN MY HUSBAND FIRST BEGAN HIS CAMPAIGN IN 1992, HE SPOKE ABOUT THE VERY REAL CONCERNS OF AMERICA'S FAMILIES: HOW WE NEED TO RAISE WAGES FOR WORKING AMERICANS; IMPROVE CHILD CARE; STRENGTHEN OUR SCHOOLS; GIVE PARENTS TIME OFF FOR FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES; AND PROVIDE MORE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL OUR CITIZENS.

AND I'M VERY PROUD THAT OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS, MY HUSBAND HAS NEVER, EVER, TAKEN HIS EYES OFF OF THOSE FUNDAMENTAL GOALS FOR AMERICA'S FAMILIES, OR STOPPED WORKING -- WITH ALL HIS ENERGY AND COMMITMENT -- TO FULFILL THAT VISION FOR THE FUTURE.

FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS, I'VE HAD THE HONOR OF TRAVELING AROUND THIS WONDERFUL NATION OF OURS -- SOMETIMES WITH THE PRESIDENT, AND SOMETIMES ON MY OWN -- TALKING WITH PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELVES ABOUT THE DAILY STRUGGLES WE ALL FACE TO BALANCE WORK AND FAMILY.

WE'VE LEARNED -- FROM LISTENING TO YOU -- HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR FAMILIES TO BE ABLE TO TAKE TIME OFF FROM WORK TO CARE FOR A NEW BORN CHILD -- OR AN AILING PARENT. THAT'S WHY WE WERE ALL SO PROUD THAT THE FIRST PIECE OF LEGISLATION MY HUSBAND SIGNED INTO LAW WAS THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT. MILLIONS OF AMERICANS HAVE ALREADY BENEFITTED FROM ITS PROTECTIONS.

AND, LAST NIGHT, THE PRESIDENT CALLED ON CONGRESS TO EXPAND THE LAW TO COVER 10 MILLION MORE WORKING AMERICANS.

AS A NATION, WE MUST HONOR THE COMMITMENT OF PARENTS -- NOT PUNISH THEM. THAT IS WHY THE PRESIDENT WILL SEND LEGISLATION TO CONGRESS THAT PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PARENTS IN THE WORKPLACE.

WE'VE ALSO LEARNED -- FROM LISTENING TO YOU -- THAT ONE OF THE GREATEST CONCERNS OF AMERICANS TODAY IS FINDING AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE CHILD CARE. AND RESEARCH UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF THOSE EARLIEST YEARS TO OUR CHILDREN'S ABILITY TO LEARN AND GROW FOR A LIFETIME.

THAT'S WHY IMPROVING CHILD CARE HAS BEEN AT
THE HEART OF THE PRESIDENT'S FAMILIES AGENDA.

THE PRESIDENT IS SEEKING TO SIGNIFICANTLY EXPAND
OUR INVESTMENT IN CHILD CARE -- TO MAKE IT MORE
AFFORDABLE FOR LOW-AND MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES,
AND TO STRENGTHEN ITS QUALITY SO THAT CHILDREN
COME TO SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.

THE PRESIDENT IS ALSO PROPOSING NEW TAX RELIEF
TO HELP OVER A MILLION PARENTS WHO STAY AT HOME
WITH THEIR YOUNG CHILDREN. THESE FAMILIES NEED
SUPPORT TOO.

WE'VE LEARNED -- FROM LISTENING TO YOU -- THAT EVERY DAY AT 3 P.M., PARENTS ACROSS AMERICA LOOK UP AT THE CLOCK, AND START WORRYING ABOUT WHETHER THEIR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN ARE SAFE, AND WHETHER THEY HAVE A SUPERVISED PLACE TO PLAY OR DO THEIR HOMEWORK.

THIS PRESIDENT HAS ALREADY DRAMATICALLY EXPANDED FUNDING FOR AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. HE'S NOW PROPOSING TO TRIPLE THAT INVESTMENT TO ENABLE OVER ONE MILLION CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

THIS INITIATIVE WILL NOT ONLY GIVE WORKING PARENTS THE PEACE OF MIND THEY NEED AND DESERVE. BY PROMOTING ACADEMICALLY ENRICHED AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS, WE'RE ALSO HELPING AMERICA'S CHILDREN GET THE EXTRA HELP THEY NEED TO SUCCEED.

WE'VE ALSO LEARNED -- FROM LISTENING TO YOU -- THAT TOO MANY FAMILIES ARE CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE BETWEEN NURTURING THEIR GROWING CHILDREN -- AND NURSING THEIR ELDERLY OR DISABLED PARENTS. SO THE PRESIDENT IS PROPOSING NEW LONG TERM CARE ASSISTANCE THAT INCLUDES HELP FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED AMERICANS AS WELL AS THEIR THE CARE GIVERS -- MOST OF WHOM ARE FAMILY MEMBERS ALREADY STRUGGLING TO BALANCE FAMILY AND WORK.

THE PRESIDENT RECOGNIZES THAT AS MUCH PROGRESS AS WE'VE MADE, WE MUST DO MORE TO HELP FAMILIES MEET THEIR OBLIGATIONS AS WORKERS, AND THEIR EVEN MORE IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES AS PARENTS. TO DO SO, WE MUST MOVE FORWARD NOT ONLY IN THE AREAS THAT I'VE JUST MENTIONED -- BUT IN OTHER CRITICAL AREAS LIKE RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE; PASSING THE PATIENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS; AND EXPANDING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE.

TODAY, LET'S CELEBRATE HOW FAR WE'VE COME SINCE THE PRESIDENT FIRST PRESENTED HIS VISION FOR AMERICA'S FAMILIES MORE THAN SIX YEARS AGO -- AND REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS TO BUILD UPON THIS REMARKABLE RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.

AND NOW, IT'S MY HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO
INTRODUCE A MAN WHO IS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO
AMERICA'S FAMILIES. A VISIONARY LEADER AND A DEAR
FRIEND: VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE.