

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR CHILD CARE EVENT
"JUST US KIDS" CHILD CARE CENTER
April 12, 1999**

- **Acknowledgments:** Senator Dodd (t); Senator Jeffords (t); Ann Brown, Chairman of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission; Dave Barrum, Administrator of the General Services Administration; Olivia Golden (t), Assistant Secretary of HHS for Children and Families; Carole Black, President and CEO of Lifetime Television; Pam Simon, Director of "Just Us Kids," a federally-sponsored child care facility; and Parent TK.

I am delighted to join all the parents and experts here today to talk about a critically important issue -- how to empower parents and child care providers to provide the very best care for our children. We know that millions of Americans, struggling to be both good parents and good workers, rely on child care and after-school programs for part of each day. And we know that we all have a stake in making sure that no parent has to choose between the job they need and the children they love.

- And so we are here to highlight two important new efforts designed to empower parents to make the child care choices that are right for them and their families.

(1) New Study on Child Care Safety. I'm pleased that the Consumer Product Safety Commission is today releasing new vital information for parents and child care providers designed to keep our children safe, prevent injuries and even save lives. As many of us who have "child-proofed" a home know, there are details that even the most thorough person may overlook that could place children at risk of harm. On the basis of a random study of child care facilities around the country, the Commission has produced a simple Child Care Safety Checklist for parents and caregivers to identify and correct "hidden hazards" in child care facilities -- and in the home.

Parents and child care providers want to do the very best for children and we hope that this important new information will empower them to do just that. Parents and caregivers can play a critical role in making sure child care settings are safe by asking the right questions and looking for specific hazards. For instance, by making sure that window blinds do not have looped cords, we can prevent children from strangulation. By making sure that playground surfacing is safe -- with wood chips, sand, mulch, or other surface covering -- we can protect against injuries from falls, especially head injuries. And, by making sure that no soft bedding exists where babies

*the cc
center*

sleep, we can prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and suffocation.

The purpose of this effort is to empower parents and child care providers with the information they need to ensure children's safety in child care settings and in the home. For 25 years, America's families have long benefitted from the Commission's dedication to preventing injuries and saving lives. I'm very pleased that the Commission will be mounting an aggressive campaign to get this checklist into the hands of all caregivers so that they can ensure that their facilities are checked for any possible hidden safety hazard. And, I'm pleased to say that the General Services Administration will be joining this effort by ensuring that ~~they~~ the federally-sponsored child care facilities in their supervision will have these right away. Also, I am pleased to announce that by this Mother's Day, GSA will connect all of its child care facilities to the Internet so that caregivers can receive up-to-the-minute safety notices and communicate with parents.

Others are
putting
as well.

Internet

(2) New Efforts From Lifetime Television. Another important way to empower parents ~~on child care~~ is to ensure that their voices are heard. Too often, discussions about child care challenges take place around the water cooler or the kitchen table -- and aren't heard by the policy-makers who can help them. I'm so grateful that Lifetime Television is bringing its unique powers of amplification to this important issue -- to ensure that parents know that they are not alone in their child care struggles and to encourage them to speak up and speak out. And I'm pleased to announce that the General Services Administration will be partnering with Lifetime and use its child care settings around the country as venues for dialogues on parents' child care struggles.

- **Greater Federal Investment in Child Care is Needed.** But the President and I believe that more must be done at the federal level to make child care better, safer and more affordable for America's working families. That is why the President has included in his budget request significant new investments in child care -- to help working families pay for child care, build a good supply of after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning.

Central to the President's plan is to provide more help to low-income working families paying for child care. Today, these families spend up to 25 percent of their incomes on child care, and assistance is scarce. According to the most recent figures, ten million families are eligible for federal subsidies, yet

only 1.25 million received support in 1997. The President's child care initiative includes an important new investment in child care subsidies.

Parents I am pleased that the Senate -- under the leadership of Senators Dodd and Jeffords and with bipartisan support -- recently approved significant new funding for child care subsidies to help low-income families pay for child care. I hope Congress takes this critical step to give America's working families the child care support they need to thrive.

- Let us all join together to make sure that this is the year that we make sure children are safe in child care, that parents' voices are heard, and that Congress addresses the child care needs of working families.



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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 23, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT ON CHILD CARE

The Rose Garden

10:20 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, Hillary and I are delighted to have all of you here. We thank Mr. Tobias for his work and the power of his example. I thank Secretary Shalala and Secretary Herman for their extraordinary work, and Secretary Rubin, in his absence. And I note the presence here by SBA Director Aida Alvarez, and our OMB Director, Frank Raines, in the back. I thank the members of Congress who are here -- Representatives Lois Capps, Rosa DeLauro, Sheila Jackson Lee, Sandy Levin, Patsy Mink, Tim Romer, Ellen Tauscher, Lynn Woolsey, and Steny Hoyer.

There are many other members of Congress who are supporting this child care initiative --two who are not here, three that I think I should mention are Senators Dodd, Jeffords, and Kohl, along with Senator Specter who have given real bipartisan leadership to the child care initiative in the Senate.

Let me also say I'm delighted to see all the children here today. I like Take Our Daughters To Work Day. As Representative Capps pointed out, since her daughter works in the

White House, she came to work with her daughter today instead of the other way around. (Laughter.) But, for the rest of you, I like this day.

When my daughter started pre-school, and she was asked what her father did, she said that he works at McDonald's. (Laughter.) So I decided I better take her to work with me, even though I realized it would result in a diminution of my status in her eyes. (Laughter.) So then, by the time she went to kindergarten, she had actually been to work with me, and they asked her what I did for a living and she said, "Well, he drinks coffee, makes speeches and talks on the telephone." (Laughter.) (Laughter.) So I'm delighted that all the children are here.

The idea of merging work and family is embodied in Take Our Daughters To Work Day. There's also another important idea embodied in it, which is that we want our daughters to believe, along with our sons, that they can aspire to do whatever it is they want to do, whatever they're willing to do, whatever they're prepared to make the effort to do. Now, if you want that to be a reality, we have to make a commitment to give all of our children the best possible childhoods. That's really what all this is about.

Last year Hillary and I sponsored two conferences that many of our administration people helped on and many of you participated -- one on child care and the other one on early childhood and the brain. Now, what they showed is what all of you already know, but what is still not widely accepted by decision-makers in our society. They showed, first of all, that the early years are profoundly important and that an even greater percentage of a child's learning capacity and intellectual infrastructure is built up in those very early years. And they showed what we in the child

care conference, what we've all been here to say today, that people are worried about whether they can find child care, whether they can afford it, and whether it will be good child care.

We've been very fortunate in our country in the last few years, and I know we're all grateful to have the best economy in a generation and the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years and the lowest crime rates in a generation. But if we really want Americans to succeed over the long run we have to allow every family the opportunity to succeed at home and at work. It is the most fundamental decision we have to make. There is no more important job in a society than raising children well. Nothing even compares with it. In the end, if you fail at that job, all the other jobs will, by definition, fail.

Therefore, there is virtually nothing worse you can do to a parent than to put a parent in the position of basically just being knotted up every day, worrying about whether he or she has fulfilled the responsibilities to the child. How can you be at work

worrying about your kids, and if you have to leave work to take care of your kids, except in emergency situations or for appropriate events -- there's a sacrifice there.

One of the reasons the business community is interested in this is that enlightened business leaders understand that, actually, if you permit people to do the right thing by their children you wind up having a happier, more upbeat, more affirmative, more positive business environment, and ultimately the business enterprise will be more successful because the workers are also successful at home. That's what this whole business is about, taking care of their children and not asking their parents to choose between being good parents and good workers. It all comes down to that.

The private sector obviously can and should do more. We should have more companies that are willing to follow the example of these fine leaders who are here and who have been acknowledged. The Treasury working group that Secretary Rubin has led has done a very important job in participating in and presenting this report to me, and I am glad to receive it.

I'm also releasing a report today that Secretary Herman has provided that highlights other family-friendly businesses, giving them sort of an honor roll status. I think it's well-deserved, and I hope that the work the Labor Department will now do in serving as a clearinghouse for companies interested in child care and setting up mentoring programs between businesses on child care will get more and more private sector folks involved. Secretary Shalala pointed out that in the welfare reform bill -- the one we finally got -- we fought like crazy to get \$4 billion in child care for states. But, believe it or not, there's still a lot of demand out there that's not being met, in state after state after state.

Hillary said before we came out of the Oval Office this morning that everybody talks about how important child care is, but if you look at higher education -- and this may be hard for some of you to believe if you have staggering tuition bills, but still, nationwide, families directly pay only about 25 percent of the costs of their children's move through college.

No one questions that we have the best system of higher education in the world. No one questions that it's not only been good to let our children live out their dreams, but it's also been very, very good for the American economy. By contrast, with child care, the average family, at an earlier age with a lower income, just getting started out in the work force with young children, on the whole, pays over 60 percent of a cost out of pocket.

So I would suggest to you that we basically have a choice to make here. I have put a proposal before Congress that deals with affordability, accessibility, the training of the workers, the quality of the child care. But the fundamental question is not so much over the specifics of our proposal, but whether the national government has a responsibility to do more. And we have a

fundamental choice: Do you believe that the early years are as important as all the evidence says? Do you believe that we could hardly do anything better for America's families than to relieve them of the burden of being terribly worried about their children while they're at work? In other words, do you believe that this should be an urgent priority for America?

That is the decision every member of Congress should make. And this year, we shouldn't slide by it. Everybody should just stand up and say, yes, or no -- because the budget is going to be in balance, we have the money to make a major step forward. (Applause.)

Now, there's a highway bill making its way through Congress, and I support a good highway bill. I presented a good highway bill that would have significant increase in our infrastructure. But I hope that as Congress continues to consider this and determine how much money should be put in it, they will remember some other things. We've got to build a lot of highways -- or bridges, if you will -- to the 21st century. We have to have a road that will make Social Security strong in the 21st century. We have to have a road that will make our children's environment better in the 21st century. We have to have a road that will guarantee universal high-quality, high-standards education in the 21st century.

I think we have to have a road that will guarantee that people will not have to choose between being good parents and good children, and that we will act on the overwhelming weight of the evidence about the importance of the earliest years in the child's life.

Now, there are choices to be made, and it is wrong to pretend that there are no choices here. We now have the opportunity because of the good fortune that we enjoy as a people, because of the solvency of the budget, to take a major step forward in child care; to build that part of our national infrastructure. You look around at all these children today, and at their parents beaming about them -- I don't really believe that any part of our infrastructure is more important than they are.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, do you propose tax cuts for mothers who want to stay home?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm glad you didn't stay home today, Sam. (Laughter.)

Q What do you think of the idea of tax cuts for a stay-at-home mom?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we need to get into a negotiation. We need to get started talking seriously about what we're going to do.

Q Would you be open to it?

THE PRESIDENT: I'll be happy to talk to them, but we've got to -- are we going to make a serious effort here? We need to have a discussion about it.

Q So you are willing to negotiate, then?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm willing to negotiate with anybody who wants to help people raise their children better so that people can succeed at home and at work. It's not an either-or deal. That's why we had the \$500 tax credit last time, children's tax credit, because we wanted to help all parents. We're not against helping all parents. But the question is, most parents are in the work force and we have to do something serious about it. We have to decide, are we going to do it, or not.

Q Children's advocates, Mr. President -- children's advocates --

Q What do you think of McDougal testifying today?

Q Did the French betray the effort in Bosnia to bring Karadzic --

Q Mr. President, did the French soldiers prevent Mr. Karadzic from being arrested?

END

11:00 A.M. EDT

Message Sent To: _____

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS
GREATER ITHACA ACTIVITY CENTER
ITHACA, NEW YORK
JULY 16, 1998**

- Thank you, Congressman Hinchey, for that introduction. I'm pleased to be here at the Greater Ithaca Activity Center -- and to be able to see firsthand what a wonderful job you are doing on behalf of all the children of this community. I'm also pleased to have this opportunity to join all of you for this discussion today. Because I believe -- as I'm sure you do -- that one of the most pressing issues facing communities and families today is providing families with safe, quality child care -- and good after school programs -- that families can afford and depend upon.
- First, I want to thank Congressman Hinchey for the invitation to join this discussion, and for his leadership on behalf of children and families here in New York and across the country. Over the past five years -- he's committed his efforts to invest in America's children -- by supporting child care and after school care; by working to improve our public schools; by fighting to increase funding for Head Start. I know he was an early supporter of the President's child care initiative -- and has promoted legislation to help communities provide comprehensive after school programs.
- (Since I've just completed an extraordinary trip up through the East Coast to "Save America's Treasures" -- I also want to commend Congressman Hinchey for his role in creating the federal legislation that established the Hudson Valley as a National Heritage Area. Here you have a leader who cares as much about preserving the glorious past of this region -- as he does about ensuring its future -- its children.)
- The challenges all of you face here in Ithaca today -- as teachers, working parents, administrators -- mirror the challenges facing communities across the country. I've learned that here -- in the 26th Congressional District -- 60% of the mothers of pre-schoolers are working; and almost 80 % of women with school age children are working. Yet as few as 23% of children in day care programs across the district are cared for by licensed, trained providers. I also know that across New York State -- only one in four public schools offer extended day programs.
- The already significant demands for child care and after school care gain even greater urgency as New York helps parents move from welfare to work.
- Thanks to strong leaders like Congressman Hinchey -- this community is working to meet that challenge. (Ithaca and Thompsons County have made a major commitment to provide affordable child care by trained providers -- and as a result nearly 60% of the children here in Ithaca are cared for by trained providers.)

- Also, Congressman Hinchey has recently helped secure a \$600,000 grant under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program -- which will enable the school district to create a “Bridge Between Cultures” program -- to bring children from the urban downtown neighborhoods together with those in nearby rural communities.
- Yet as much as you are doing here for the families in Ithaca -- such as this Activities Center -- which offers such a wide range of activities for people of all ages -- I know the federal government has a role as well. As you know, the President has proposed an historic investment in child care and after school care this year -- to help meet these growing demands. It will make child care more affordable; it will help local communities promote early learning and healthy child development opportunities; and it will ensure higher standards for child care -- by enforcing state health and safety standards.
- Another major part of this initiative is the expansion of the 21st Century Community Learning Center program -- from which you are already benefitting -- so that communities across the country can start up or expand after school programs.
- This is the agenda that working families across the America want and need. Yet today -- we have a Congress that refuses to act on these priorities; that refuses to listen to the American people; that refuses to make these critical investments in our children. Members like Congressman Hinchey are doing all they can -- but there are not enough like him on Capitol Hill. So my message to you is this: let's keep the pressure on. Let them feel the heat. There is no greater priority than investing in our children's care and education. This Administration is committed to making that investment. But Congress must act.
- I look forward to the discussion today -- and to hearing about the successes and challenges in child care and after school care that you've experienced in this community, and to learn more about what you see are the most pressing needs to be addressed.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS
TAUSCHER CHILD CARE EVENT
DANVILLE, CALIFORNIA
MAY 26, 1998**

- Thank you, Congresswoman Tauscher, for that introduction. I'm pleased to be here at Greenbrook Elementary, and to join all of you for this discussion on one of the most pressing issues facing communities today: how to provide working parents with affordable, quality child care they can trust and depend upon.
- First, I want to thank Congresswoman Tauscher for the invitation to join this conversation, and for her leadership on behalf of children and families here in California and across the nation. How fortunate for all of us to have a representative in Congress who brought with her a rich knowledge of child care from her previous life in the private sector -- (combined with the personal experience of being a working mother). Not surprisingly, she's become one of the most powerful champions of child care in Congress today.
- As many of you know, Congresswoman Tauscher has sponsored an important child care bill in the House -- and has also joined a new group of Democrats who are pulling together another promising piece of legislation that embraces many of the Administration's child care initiatives.
- Those of you in California always seem to be the pioneers. And child care is no exception. I'm pleased that I've had the opportunity to tour this model child care program that many of you here today helped to create. It truly is "Kid's Country" -- offering activities that any kid would love -- art, music, crafts, sports, science, cooking, and games. I'm particularly pleased to see you're also teaching children how to resolve conflicts peacefully, and to helping them understand how diversity -- and tolerance -- play such a positive role in our lives. These lessons will stay with them for a lifetime.
- This center is also a testament to the power of parents and communities -- and what they can accomplish together to improve the quality of life around them. Many of you have worked hard to create this Center, which not only enriches the educational environment of your children. It clearly meets the needs of working parents in this area -- many of whom have non traditional working hours.
- The challenges that all of you face here today -- as teachers, working parents, administrators, and citizens -- mirror the challenges facing communities across the country. I've learned that in Contra Costa County alone, over 50% of children 5 years and younger, and 65% of children aged 6 through 13, live in homes where either both parents or the single head of the household are in the labor force.

- The growing demand for child care and after school care gains even greater urgency -- as California helps parents move from welfare to work. That's why a new piece of legislation in California that addresses child care staff compensation and training is so important -- because while we must continue to expand access to child care -- we must also ensure greater quality of care as well.
- As many of you know, the President has proposed an historic investment in child care this year -- over \$20 billion over the next five years -- to help meet these growing demands, to help make child care more affordable for working families, and to promote early learning opportunities for our children. As part of that proposal, the 21st Century Learning Fund would be expanded to support communities like this one -- which have come together to establish school-based child care and after school programs.
- I hope, as I'm sure all of you do, that we can come together in bipartisan support for improving access to quality child care and after school care -- and for giving America's working parents the tools they need to make the best possible choices for themselves and their families. Parents should never have to choose between the job they need and the children they love.
- I look forward to our discussion this afternoon, and to hearing about the successes and challenges of child care that you are experiencing in this community, and to learn more about what you see are the most pressing needs to be addressed.

[If this student is part of the discussion -- you could add the following.]

- I'm pleased that this discussion will include a fifth grade student here at Greenbrook Elementary who has been part of Kids' Country for the past 3 years. I will be particularly interested in what Neal has to say to all of us today. He and his fellow students are the truest reflection of how well we're doing on behalf of our children -- and where we still need to improve.

Early learn { *the new new year*
for year
(too cheap care center)

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR COMMUNITY CHILD CARE FORUM
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
APRIL 27, 1998

Thank you. I am delighted that I could be here with you today and have the opportunity to join this Community Child Care Forum. I want to thank Rep. Barrett, not only for bringing all of us together to talk about this critical issue, but also for the leadership and vision he has demonstrated over the last 5 years in the House of Representatives. The people of Milwaukee are fortunate to have a representative who cares so deeply about issues that have such an impact on their everyday lives. Rep. Barrett has been a powerful advocate for reducing health care costs, making it easier to adopt a child, and ending the drugs and violence in our communities. And he's championed the cause of young people, here in Milwaukee, and across the nation.

I wish I had been able to hear the Forum discussion you've just had. But I do want to thank today's panelists, and our moderator, Kathleen Dunn. I'm particularly pleased that this group represents national and local child advocates, child care professionals, business leaders, and, most important, parents from the Milwaukee area. Because if we are to make progress in this critical area of child care, everyone -- from the federal government to local institutions like hospitals and universities to parents themselves -- must be at the table, and play a role.

All of us here know how great the challenge is before us. Today, dramatic changes in the character of America's workforce has made child care a national -- and increasingly urgent -- priority. Well over half of all mothers with small children work outside the home, a number that will surely grow as women leave the welfare rolls for the workplace. And here in Wisconsin, there are over 245,000 children under six in child care. And as many parents here know so well, the need for care doesn't end when children go to school. Across the country, at least 5 million school-age children are left unsupervised during those critical after-school hours.

The sheer numbers of children needing care -- and the growing number of working families -- should be enough to focus our attention on expanding and improving child care. But there are other reasons to be concerned about the quality, safety, and affordability of the care our children receive.

Last year, the President and I hosted two ground breaking conferences at the White House. One centered around Early Childhood Development and Learning, and the other Child Care. And we heard what you are hearing today. America's working families are struggling to find child they can afford and trust.

At each of these conferences, experts confirmed what parents and pediatricians had always known instinctively: the quality of care children receive in their earliest months and years profoundly affects how they develop and learn and grow over a lifetime. Because so many of our nation's children spend such a significant part of their early years in child-care, we must, as a nation, be concerned.

Since those early years are so formative for the intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of a child, the quality of care is of utmost importance. And according to recent studies, good child care -- with staff trained in child development skills -- can have a very positive impact on a child's development. Yet we also know that too many of our child care centers don't offer our children the safe, loving, and professional atmosphere they need to grow and thrive.

But even when quality care is available -- too many working parents simply can't afford it. About half of America's families with young children earn less than \$35,000 per year. For them, child care -- which typically costs between \$4,000 and \$10,000 per child annually -- is simply out of reach. One working mother from Fayetteville, North Carolina wrote to me and said, "it takes everything we earn to pay for our house, food, transportation and child care. Something has got to change."

I think it's important to consider that no one in America questions that we have the best system of higher education in the world. And no one questions that such an investment not only allows our children to live out their dreams, but ensures a growing economy. Yet as hard as it may be sound to those who are paying college tuition today, families directly pay only about 25 percent of the costs of their children's higher education. By contrast, the average American family -- just getting started in life with a new job and young children -- must pay over 60 percent of the cost of child care out of their own pockets. It's time to reconcile our priorities with our investments.

I believe, as I'm sure all of you do, that there is no more important job in a society than raising a child well. Nothing even comes close. So no parent should ever be asked to choose between being a good parent and a good worker. It's an impossible choice. We must all make it our top priority to ensure America's parents can succeed at both home and work.

As you know, the President has called on Congress to pass comprehensive Child Care legislation that would significantly increase the number of children receiving child care subsidies, give tax cuts to businesses providing child care, and expand child care tax credits to millions of working families. The legislation that he has proposed would also expand funds for more after-school programs, improve the quality of child care centers and provide more money to train child care workers.

There are less than 70 days left in this year's congressional session. That is not much time to tackle the ambitious agenda they have set for themselves. And it certainly is not much time to address the critical issue of child care in America. But Congress must make passing Child Care legislation one of its top priorities.

But we must always remember that government programs are never the final solution. Parents raise children -- not governments. Yet while it's our national responsibility to help parents meet those responsibilities, the private sector can -- and must-- take on a greater role.

Just this past week at the White House, the President released two major reports. A Treasury Department report demonstrates not only that the private sector is becoming a stronger

partner in child care. It shows that business investment in child care is not only good for families, it's good for the bottom line. Another report -- from the Labor Department -- highlights family-friendly businesses that have become models throughout the country. The Labor Department will now help serve as a clearinghouse for companies interested in establishing or improving their child care opportunities.

As all of us know, it's here, where businesses and child care providers and advocates are working together at the local level -- that so much of the real work of improving child care and expanding opportunities for our working parents is taking place. Milwaukee has many strengths -- including a wealth of community and neighborhood organizations, as well as an involved business sector. I know businesses here have come together to provide quality child care options for their employees -- and that the medical community is working hard to improve health and safety standards to cut down on illness and injury in child care centers. This institution, the Milwaukee Area Technical College, is also making important contributions, by offering an associate degree and certification program in child care, and by providing quality child care that meets the needs not only of the student population, but the entire surrounding community.

So today, I want to commend you for coming together to ensure working families here in Milwaukee and across Wisconsin have the safe, affordable child care they so desperately need to be good parents, and good workers, and to lift up their lives. Please know that we are doing all we can in Washington, D.C., to support your efforts.

In urging Congress to act on this issue of child care at a White House event a few days ago, the President asked the audience: "Do you believe that the early years are as important as all the evidence says? Do you believe that we could hardly do anything better for America's families than to relieve them of the burden of worry about their children while they're at work? In other words, do you believe that this should be an urgent priority for America?"

I know that the people in this room would respond to those questions with a resounding "yes." And I'm confident, that if we work together, with the help of strong national and state and community leadership, we will succeed.

**HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR TRINITY COLLEGE
JANUARY 28, 1998**

- I'm so pleased to be with you today to talk about one of the most important issues facing parents and our nation -- and that's how we care for our children, especially in their earliest and most critical years. I can think of no better place to have this conversation: Congresswoman Kennelly has done so much lift up the lives of our children. And so many of you in this room -- and across Connecticut -- have come together across political lines to ensure that children in this state get the safe, quality care that all of our children deserve.
- We now know that the care children get in their early years affects how well they will learn and grow for a lifetime. And that includes the quality of their child care. Quality counts. And good child care can be good for children. Tragically, too many parents today are making one of the most important decisions of their lives with too little information, too few choices and too many worries. And too many children are in mediocre, even poor, care that is jeopardizing their health and their futures.
- Yesterday, in his State of the Union address, the President discussed his plan to dedicate \$21 billion to give working parents more peace of mind, and their children safe places to play and grow. This is the largest investment in child care in our nation's history.
- One part of his plan, The Early Learning Fund, builds on many of the activities you have underway here. It will support community efforts like your local collaboratives to invest in home visits and parent education; focus on training child care providers; and encourage links between child care providers and health care professionals. As we begin our work to pass this important child care legislation, I look forward to hearing more about your innovative programs in Hartford and across the state.

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TAUSCHER CHILD CARE EVENT
DANVILLE, CALIFORNIA
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- As many of you know, Congresswoman Tauscher has sponsored an important child care bill in the House -- and has also joined a new group of Democrats who are pulling together another promising piece of legislation that embraces many of the Administration's child care initiatives.
- Those of you in California always seem to be the pioneers. And child care is no exception. I'm pleased that I've had the opportunity to tour this model child care program that many of you here today helped to create. It truly is "Kid's Country" -- offering activities that any kid would love -- art, music, crafts, sports, science, cooking, and games. I'm particularly pleased to see you're also teaching children how to resolve conflicts peacefully, and to helping them understand how diversity -- and tolerance -- play such a positive role in our lives. These lessons will stay with them for a lifetime.
- This center is also a testament to the power of parents and communities -- and what they can accomplish together to improve the quality of life around them. Many of you have worked hard to create this Center, which not only enriches the educational environment of your children. It clearly meets the needs of working parents in this area -- many of whom have non traditional working hours.
- The challenges that all of you face here today -- as teachers, working parents, administrators, and citizens -- mirror the challenges facing communities across the country. I've learned that in Contra Costa County alone, over 50% of children 5 years and younger, and 65% of children aged 6 through 13, live in homes where either both parents or the single head of the household are in the labor force.

- The growing demand for child care and after school care gains even greater urgency -- as California helps parents move from welfare to work. That's why a new piece of legislation in California that addresses child care staff compensation and training is so important -- because while we must continue to expand access to child care -- we must also ensure greater quality of care as well.
- As many of you know, the President has proposed an historic investment in child care this year -- over \$20 billion over the next five years -- to help meet these growing demands, to help make child care more affordable for working families, and to promote early learning opportunities for our children. As part of that proposal, the 21st Century Learning Fund would be expanded to support communities like this one -- which have come together to establish school-based child care and after school programs.
- I hope, as I'm sure all of you do, that we can come together in bipartisan support for improving access to quality child care and after school care -- and for giving America's working parents the tools they need to make the best possible choices for themselves and their families. Parents should never have to choose between the job they need and the children they love.
- I look forward to our discussion this afternoon, and to hearing about the successes and challenges of child care that you are experiencing in this community, and to learn more about what you see are the most pressing needs to be addressed.

[If this student is part of the discussion -- you could add the following.]

- I'm pleased that this discussion will include a fifth grade student here at Greenbrook Elementary who has been part of Kids' Country for the past 3 years. I will be particularly interested in what Neal has to say to all of us today. He and his fellow students are the truest reflection of how well we're doing on behalf of our children -- and where we still need to improve.

Call

JAMES P. McGOVERN
3RD DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

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May 8, 1998

Jennifer L. Klein
Special Assistant To The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

By fax to: 202.456.2878 ATTENTION: Wendy

Dear Ms. Klein:

This letter is an invitation for Mrs. Clinton to visit the Hyman Fine School in Attleboro, Massachusetts with Congressman McGovern between 11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 4, 1998.

This early childhood education program could include reading a story or a short activity with preschoolers in the Project Connect Young Children's Community Center (YCCC), followed by a session with birth-to-three children, their parents, and their Parent Educator. Mrs. Clinton and Congressman McGovern might then address and answer questions from approximately 400 parents, teachers and other invited guests in the Hyman Fine auditorium.

The Attleboro Public School System's Project Connect is a unique early childhood initiative funded through competitive grants from the Massachusetts Department of Education.

The mission of Project Connect is to provide high quality, comprehensive, equitable services and programs to all children (birth through five years and their families) regardless of special needs, low income, homelessness, limited English speaking, abuse or neglect. These services include a child care subsidy for working families and preschool programming.

Jennifer L. Klein
May 8, 1998
Page 2

Project Connect is a nationally acclaimed model of effective collaboration between the public and private sectors of the early childhood community. The New York based Child Care Action Campaign (CCAC) selected Project Connect as an outstanding model of a "dynamic early childhood/public school partnership."

Project Connect includes The Family Network and Parents as Teachers programs. These services are offered free to all Attleboro families with children from birth to three years. Home visits made by certified parent educators, infant / toddler play groups and parenting programs are the focus of this initiative.

The Young Children's Community Center is another aspect of Project Connect, offering high quality early childhood programming. Once again the family is the focus. Parent workshops and a lending library of parenting materials are central to this program.

One highlight of Project Connect's success? Yvonne was one mother who attended the parenting classes presented by Project Connect at the homeless shelter. There Yvonne learned to improve her parenting skills and also discovered that she had a special skill in working with children. Yvonne attended a local college, completed her Child Development classes and now works in a Project Connect day care program. She also benefited from subsidized day care while in school.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this invitation.

Sincerely,



Bernie Robinson
Chief of Staff

cc: Diane Dewhirst (by fax: 202.456.5340)

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR CHILD CARE ANNOUNCEMENT

THE WHITE HOUSE

JANUARY 7, 1998

Good afternoon, and welcome again. I'm pleased that have with us today so many friends and advocates of our nation's children and families, who have helped push child care to the forefront of America's agenda. Today, we join together in taking this historic step forward for America's children, for our working families, and for our nation.

We have much to be thankful for this New Year, especially when it comes to the well being of our children. Immunization rates are the highest in history; infant mortality is at an all time low; and teen pregnancy is down. The President signed the largest expansion of health care coverage in 30 years to provide health insurance for millions more of our nation's children. And thanks to the adoption bill recently signed by the President, more kids will have a shot at growing up in safe and loving homes.

This Administration is also helping parents make the choices that are right for their families, whether that means working or staying home to care for their children. From the \$500 per child tax credit for families with children, to the earned income tax credit that lifts millions of working families out of poverty, we're now providing greater resources and real choices for America's parents.

Today, however, more of America's parents are working, by choice or by necessity. More than ever, parents rely on child care and after-school programs to care for their children for part of each day. We all have a stake in making sure that children in care are safe and nurtured. This is part of America's unfinished business. Because while we've made important progress in strengthening child care in this country, child care still fails too many of our children and working parents, and in so doing, fails our nation.

I've worked on children's issues for over twenty five years. I've been privileged to travel around the country, visiting day care centers, and talking to experts. And I've seen firsthand the results of our failures to invest in our children at the most critical stages in their lives. I've also learned why good child care is so critical to our children, to our families, and to our future. But I've learned the most from talking and listening to parents, who describe, often in anguished terms, their daily struggles to balance the demands of work and family.

A few months ago, with the help of many of you here today, the President and I hosted a first ever White House Conference on Child Care, where we sought to turn those private conversations into a national dialogue on how to improve the availability, affordability, safety and quality of child care in America. We were spurred by recent scientific studies that were discussed at last year's White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning-- studies that confirm what every parent and grandparent has always intuitively known. That the love and attention a child receives in the earliest years have a direct impact on the development of the brain, and dramatically affect how children learn and develop over an entire lifetime.

As more of our nation's parents join the workforce, more of our children are spending those early years in child care. Today, over half the infants in this country are in day care, and millions more school-aged children have both parents - or their only parent -- in the workforce. And what we've learned, from these conferences and conversations over the years, is that for a growing number of parents, it's tough, if not impossible, to find the child care they need. Parents of children with special needs face even greater obstacles. And when child care is available, it's often out of reach financially. Even when affordable, too much of child care today doesn't provide the safe, let alone stimulating, environment children need to grow and learn.

As every working parent knows, under the best of circumstances, we fret about whether our youngest children are safe, and happy, and getting enough attention. And every day, about this time, parents everywhere are looking at the clock, knowing their kids are out of school -- unsupervised, and maybe getting into trouble.

For too long, America's parents have struggled with too little information; too few choices; and far too many worries.

Today, the President is announcing an historic Child Care proposal that seeks not only to give working parents the peace of mind they need, but also to give more of America's children a safe place to learn and grow. By helping working families pay for child care, and improving the safety and quality of child care, this proposal can truly help parents better balance the demands of both home and family.

We are privileged to live in a time when America is at peace, and our economy is booming. It's also a time of enormous change and transition, as more parents join the workforce of the 21st Century. Times like these present unique opportunities for action, as well as new challenges for leadership. And we must ensure that in this time of change and growth, no family falls through the cracks, and no child is left behind. I believe that the President's proposal today will help us all move forward together.

And now, it's my great pleasure to introduce Vice President Gore, who is such a good parent himself, and who has provided such visionary leadership in improving the lives of America's families and children.

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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
ROSE GARDEN CHILD CARE EVENT
APRIL 23, 1998

Good morning. I'd like to thank you all for coming this morning and welcome Secretary Herman, members of Congress, business leaders, and child care advocates. A special welcome to members of the Treasury Working Group on Child Care, who I've joined this morning for a discussion on the growing role that business is playing in expanding and improving child care. We all owe a debt of gratitude to those who have served on that working group, and to Secretary Rubin, for his leadership role on this critical issue before us.

I'd also like to welcome all of the daughters who have joined us here in the Rose Garden and throughout the White House as part of "Take Your Daughters to Work Day." The theme for today is "Imagine the Future," and I'm so glad you're here because we're here to talk about an issue that will affect your lives in the not so distant future: and that's the urgent need to provide America's working families with quality, affordable child care. And to hear about how the business community is becoming an increasingly valuable partner in meeting that need.

Forty years ago, when I was growing up, most mothers stayed at home to take care of their children. But, times have changed dramatically, as many of you daughters of working parents know so well. Today, more than half the children in America under five with mothers in the workforce spend most of their day in child care. In 1995, more than 12 million of America's children were in child care. We also estimate that nearly five million school-age children spend time as "latchkey kids" -- without adult supervision during those critical hours after school -- and before their parents return from work.

Yet while the need for quality, safe, and affordable child care is growing, that care is either unavailable or unaffordable for millions of America's working families. For too long, America's parents have struggled with too little information, too few choices, and far too many worries. I want to read you just a few of the voices of those parents who are struggling to find the child care they need in communities across the country. One 25-year old woman from Elbert, Colorado, writes how disturbed she is that her fellow students can't continue their classes because child care costs almost half their monthly take home pay. More disturbing, she says, is "when I hear about bad daycare centers of family group homes that mistreat and abuse the children in their care... Isn't the future of our country more important to this nation?" Another mother, from New York City, writes, "No parent should have to worry about leaving their most precious gift in the hands of strangers."

When we held the White House Conference on Child Care last October, the President asked Treasury Secretary Rubin to convene a group of business and labor leaders to look at the child care problems facing working parents. Not too long ago, no one would have thought to ask the Treasury Secretary to study child care issues. But the Treasury Department cares about American business. And American business knows that what's good for America's families is good for America's business - and what's good for America's families is good child care.

I've just met with members of the Treasury working Group on Child Care, who have been working over this past year to produce the report that is being issued today, called "Investing in Child Care." And I want to personally thank the members of that working group this morning: Doug Price, CEO of First Bank of Colorado; George Stinson, CEO of General Converters and Assemblers; John Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; Randall Tobias, CEO, Eli Lilly; Sanford Weill, CEO of Travelers Group; and Marcy Whitebook, national co-director of the Center for the Child Care Workforce. I also want to thank the staff of the working group for their valuable support.

This report represents a significant compilation of the best practices businesses around the country are undertaking, and reflects the growing acknowledgement within the private sector that it's good for businesses to help the people who work for them to find good day care. As this report details, some companies have opened on site child care centers. Others provide lists of names and addresses of good places. Some help defray the costs. And some companies allow their workers to work flexible hours so that they can be home when their kids get home from school. There are lots of ways companies are helping to meet this critical need.

Today we're also releasing a report from the U.S. Department of Labor, which has pulled together "best practices" from their list of "Honor roll" companies around the country, who have become models for how to create family friendly workplaces.

The business community is stepping up to the plate. By helping to ensure their workers have access to child care they can afford and trust, they are not only ensuring a better bottom line for their companies; they are ensuring a better future for tomorrow's workers -- our children.

But business alone cannot take care of all of this country's child care needs. Child care is expensive - typically it costs a family \$4,000 to \$10,000 per child per year - and many people just can't afford that. That's why the President and many of the members of Congress here today have introduced bills in Congress to help families who need child care get it. These bills would significantly increase the number of families that receive financial assistance, give tax breaks to businesses that provide child care, expand the child care tax credits for working families, and improve after-school programs and the quality of child care centers and workers.

The window of opportunity to make an historic investment in child care is open. But Congress doesn't have much time to act. There are fewer than 70 days left in this year's Congressional session, so they need to get busy and pass these bills now. I fervently hope that the daughters of White House staff who are now "envisioning their future" will benefit from the work that we are doing here today, and the in the weeks ahead.

Now I'd like to introduce the Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman, who's here to tell us how child care is good for everyone's bottom line.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR COMMUNITY CHILD CARE FORUM
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
APRIL 27, 1998

Thank you. I am delighted that I could be here with you today and have the opportunity to join this Community Child Care Forum. I want to thank Rep. Barrett, not only for bringing all of us together to talk about this critical issue, but also for the leadership and vision he has demonstrated over the last 5 years in the House of Representatives. The people of Milwaukee are fortunate to have a representative who cares so deeply about issues that have such an impact on their everyday lives. Rep. Barrett has been a powerful advocate for reducing health care costs, making it easier to adopt a child, and ending the drugs and violence in our communities. And he's championed the cause of young people, here in Milwaukee, and across the nation.

I wish I had been able to hear the Forum discussion you've just had. But I do want to thank today's panelists, and our moderator, Kathleen Dunn. I'm particularly pleased that this group represents national and local child advocates, child care professionals, business leaders, and, most important, parents from the Milwaukee area. Because if we are to make progress in this critical area of child care, everyone -- from the federal government to local institutions like hospitals and universities to parents themselves -- must be at the table, and play a role.

All of us here know how great the challenge is before us. Today, dramatic changes in the character of America's workforce has made child care a national -- and increasingly urgent -- priority. Well over half of all mothers with small children work outside the home, a number that will surely grow as women leave the welfare rolls for the workplace. And here in Wisconsin, there are over 245,000 children under six in child care. And as many parents here know so well, the need for care doesn't end when children go to school. Across the country, at least 5 million school-age children are left unsupervised during those critical after-school hours.

The sheer numbers of children needing care -- and the growing number of working families -- should be enough to focus our attention on expanding and improving child care. But there are other reasons to be concerned about the quality, safety, and affordability of the care our children receive.

Last year, the President and I hosted two ground breaking conferences at the White House. One centered around Early Childhood Development and Learning, and the other Child Care. And we heard what you are hearing today. America's working families are struggling to find child they can afford and trust.

At each of these conferences, experts confirmed what parents and pediatricians had always known instinctively: the quality of care children receive in their earliest months and years profoundly affects how they develop and learn and grow over a lifetime. Because so many of our nation's children spend such a significant part of their early years in child-care, we must, as a nation, be concerned.

Since those early years are so formative for the intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of a child, the quality of care is of utmost importance. And according to recent studies, good child care -- with staff trained in child development skills -- can have a very positive impact on a child's development. Yet we also know that too many of our child care centers don't offer our children the safe, loving, and professional atmosphere they need to grow and thrive.

But even when quality care is available -- too many working parents simply can't afford it. About half of America's families with young children earn less than \$35,000 per year. For them, child care -- which typically costs between \$4,000 and \$10,000 per child annually -- is simply out of reach. One working mother from Fayetteville, North Carolina wrote to me and said, "it takes everything we earn to pay for our house, food, transportation and child care. Something has got to change."

I think it's important to consider that no one in America questions that we have the best system of higher education in the world. And no one questions that such an investment not only allows our children to live out their dreams, but ensures a growing economy. Yet as hard as it may be sound to those who are paying college tuition today, families directly pay only about 25 percent of the costs of their children's higher education. By contrast, the average American family -- just getting started in life with a new job and young children -- must pay over 60 percent of the cost of child care out of their own pockets. It's time to reconcile our priorities with our investments.

I believe, as I'm sure all of you do, that there is no more important job in a society than raising a child well. Nothing even comes close. So no parent should ever be asked to choose between being a good parent and a good worker. It's an impossible choice. We must all make it our top priority to ensure America's parents can succeed at both home and work.

As you know, the President has called on Congress to pass comprehensive Child Care legislation that would significantly increase the number of children receiving child care subsidies, give tax cuts to businesses providing child care, and expand child care tax credits to millions of working families. The legislation that he has proposed would also expand funds for more after-school programs, improve the quality of child care centers and provide more money to train child care workers.

There are less than 70 days left in this year's congressional session. That is not much time to tackle the ambitious agenda they have set for themselves. And it certainly is not much time to address the critical issue of child care in America. But Congress must make passing Child Care legislation one of its top priorities.

But we must always remember that government programs are never the final solution. Parents raise children -- not governments. Yet while it's our national responsibility to help parents meet those responsibilities, the private sector can -- and must-- take on a greater role.

Just this past week at the White House, the President released two major reports. A Treasury Department report demonstrates not only that the private sector is becoming a stronger

partner in child care. It shows that business investment in child care is not only good for families, it's good for the bottom line. Another report -- from the Labor Department -- highlights family-friendly businesses that have become models throughout the country. The Labor Department will now help serve as a clearinghouse for companies interested in establishing or improving their child care opportunities.

As all of us know, it's here, where businesses and child care providers and advocates are working together at the local level -- that so much of the real work of improving child care and expanding opportunities for our working parents is taking place. Milwaukee has many strengths -- including a wealth of community and neighborhood organizations, as well as an involved business sector. I know businesses here have come together to provide quality child care options for their employees -- and that the medical community is working hard to improve health and safety standards to cut down on illness and injury in child care centers. This institution, the Milwaukee Area Technical College, is also making important contributions, by offering an associate degree and certification program in child care, and by providing quality child care that meets the needs not only of the student population, but the entire surrounding community.

So today, I want to commend you for coming together to ensure working families here in Milwaukee and across Wisconsin have the safe, affordable child care they so desperately need to be good parents, and good workers, and to lift up their lives. Please know that we are doing all we can in Washington, D.C., to support your efforts.

In urging Congress to act on this issue of child care at a White House event a few days ago, the President asked the audience: "Do you believe that the early years are as important as all the evidence says? Do you believe that we could hardly do anything better for America's families than to relieve them of the burden of worry about their children while they're at work? In other words, do you believe that this should be an urgent priority for America?"

I know that the people in this room would respond to those questions with a resounding "yes." And I'm confident, that if we work together, with the help of strong national and state and community leadership, we will succeed.

February 5, 1998

Warm greetings to everyone gathered in our nation's capital for the 20th anniversary celebration of Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families.

Zero to Three has a proven record of focusing on the critical early years of childhood development. Hillary and I were privileged to host last year the White House Conference on Early Childhood Learning, the first-ever White House conference on this subject. This conference confirmed by science what parents and grandparents have known for years: that the nurturing, stimulation, and love provided by parents and other caregivers play a determining role in a child's intellectual and emotional development.

It was the late Sally Provence, one of the founders of Zero to Three, who taught so many of us about the critical importance of the first three years of life. Sally had the extraordinary ability to translate groundbreaking research into a down-to-earth, commonsense, respectful, and loving approach to babies and their parents and other caregivers. Zero to Three is carrying on this tradition admirably by nurturing leaders in the infant/family field, training professionals from every discipline, promoting innovative programs that foster the healthy development of infants, toddlers, families, and communities, and supporting parents, families, and all who care for our country's youngest citizens.

Hillary and I are proud to serve as Honorary Chairs of this celebration because we have been and will continue to be your partners in one of the most important and challenging endeavors our nation has ever faced: providing all our country's babies and young children with the resources, opportunities, and relationships to ensure their fullest development. Zero to Three has made invaluable contributions to this work for the past 20 years, and we look forward to your continued partnership and achievement on behalf of infants, toddlers, and their families.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
ROSE GARDEN CHILD CARE EVENT
APRIL 23, 1998

Good morning. The President and I would like to thank all of you for joining us this morning. Welcome to Secretary Herman, Secretary Shalala, members of Congress, business leaders, and child care advocates.

I want to acknowledge members of the Treasury Working Group on Child Care, who I've just met with this morning to discuss the growing role that business is playing in expanding and improving child care. Appreciation to Doug Price, CEO of First Bank of Colorado; George Stinson, CEO of General Converters and Assemblers; John Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO -- and Linda Chavez Thompson who is representing him here today; Randall Tobias, CEO, Eli Lilly; Sanford Weill, CEO of Travelers Group; and Marcy Whitebook, National Co-Director of the Center for the Child Care Workforce. I also want to acknowledge the business leaders here who are members of the Department of Labor's "Honor Roll" of companies who have created more family friendly workplaces. Thank you all for coming.

I'm so pleased that we're also being joined by some of the daughters who are taking part in this year's "Take Your Daughters to Work Day." You are learning not only about a particular job, but also about the many challenges parents face balancing the obligations of work and family. We're here to talk about one very important part of that struggle -- child care.

Forty years ago, when I was growing up, most mothers stayed at home to take care of their children. But, times have changed dramatically, as many of you daughters of working parents know so well. Today, three out of five mothers with children under age six work outside the home, and at least five million school-age children are left unsupervised during those critical after school hours.

Yet while the demand for quality child care is growing, that care is either unavailable or unaffordable for millions of America's working families. For too long, America's parents have struggled with too little information, too few choices, and far too many worries. It's time -- once and for all -- to help our parents succeed at both home and work.

I want you to hear just a few of the voices of those parents who are desperately struggling to find the child care they need. One working mother from Fayetteville, North Carolina writes me that “it takes everything we earn to pay for our house, food, transportation and child care. Something has got to change.” Another working parent from New York City, says: “No parent should have to worry about leaving their most precious gift in the hands of strangers.”

Today, we are going to hear about important efforts in the private sector to provide child care assistance to our working families. But business alone cannot meet this country's urgent child care needs. Today, only 1% of child care revenue comes from the private sector. We need to encourage the private sector to do more. But here in Washington, we too have an important role to play. That's why the President has proposed, as part of his balanced budget, an historic investment in child care. And many of the members of Congress on both sides of the aisles -- including those here today -- have introduced bills to make child care better, safer, and more affordable.

No parent should ever have to worry that they can't afford child care when they have to work. And no parent should ever have to worry that their children aren't safe in child care.

We have an important opportunity to make a difference. And we must seize it. If we do, millions of America's working parents across the country can look back at this session of Congress and say: America helped fulfill its promise to this nation's working families, and invested in future of our next generation.

Now I'd like to introduce the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR NATIONAL HEALTH MUSEUM RECEPTION
RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC
MARCH 18, 1998**

- I am extremely pleased to be able to join you today as you lay the 'foundation' for the National Health Museum. Under Dr. Koop's leadership, I'm sure that this museum will be a great success.
- Dr. Koop has worked tirelessly and courageously to improve the public health of every American. This museum is but one example of how his extraordinary vision is helping to bring health information and better health care to the citizens of our country, whether they live in the biggest cities or in the most remote towns. I'm extremely pleased that the National Health Museum will not only have a hands-on, high tech home here in Washington, but will also reach into the living rooms and offices of millions of Americans by having a presence on the internet.
- Few issues affect Americans -- especially children -- the way health care does. Parents fret constantly about their children's slightest cough, their smallest hiccup. Better access to information about how to take care of the health of our children is desperately needed by millions of American parents. This museum will not only be a repository of information about the health field, but hopefully it will also contain information that parents can readily access that will help them in addressing the concerns they have about their child's health.
- Once again, I would like to thank Dr. Koop for his leadership and vision, and I want to wish the museum the best of luck in the coming years.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
ROSE GARDEN CHILD CARE EVENT
APRIL 23, 1998

Good morning. The President and I would like to thank all of you for joining us this morning. Welcome to Secretary Herman, Secretary Shalala, members of Congress, business leaders, and child care advocates.

I want to acknowledge members of the Treasury Working Group on Child Care, who I've just met with this morning to discuss the growing role that business is playing in expanding and improving child care. Appreciation to Doug Price, CEO of First Bank of Colorado; George Stinson, CEO of General Converters and Assemblers; John Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO -- and Linda Chavez Thompson who is representing him here today; Randall Tobias, CEO, Eli Lilly; Sanford Weill, CEO of Travelers Group; and Marcy Whitebook, national co-director of the Center for the Child Care Workforce. I also want to acknowledge the business leaders here who are members of the Department of Labor's "Honor roll" of companies who have created more family friendly workplaces. Thank you all for coming.

I'm so pleased that we're also being joined by some of the daughters who are taking part in this year's "Take Your Daughters to Work Day." Because we've all come together today to spotlight an issue that will have a direct impact on your lives in the not so distant future: and that's the urgent need to provide America's working families with quality, safe, and affordable child care.

Forty years ago, when I was growing up, most mothers stayed at home to take care of their children. But, times have changed dramatically, as many of you daughters of working parents know so well. Today, three out of five mothers with children under age six work outside the home, and at least five million school-age children are left unsupervised during those critical after school hours.

Yet while the demand for quality child care is growing, that care is either unavailable or unaffordable for millions of America's working families. For too long, America's parents have struggled with too little information, too few choices, and far too many worries. It's time -- once and for all -- to help our parents succeed at both home and work.

I want to read you just a few of the voices of those parents who are desperately struggling to find the child care they need. One working mother from Fayetteville, North Carolina writes that "it takes everything we earn to pay for our house, food, transportation and childcare. Something has got to change." Another working parent from New York City, says: "No parent should have to worry about leaving their most precious gift in the hands of strangers."

Today, we are going to hear about important efforts in the private sector to provide child care assistance to our working families. But business alone cannot meet this country's urgent child care needs. Today, only 1% of child care revenue comes from the private sector. We need

to encourage the private sector to do more. But here in Washington, we have an even more important role to play. That's why the President has proposed, as part of his balanced budget, an historic investment in child care. And many of the members of Congress on both sides of the aisles -- including those here today -- have introduced bills to make child care better, safer, and more affordable.

No parent should ever have to worry that they can't afford child care when they have to work. And no parent should ever have to worry that their children aren't safe in child care.

Today, we have an important opportunity to make a difference. And we must seize it. Congress doesn't have much time to act. But if they do, millions of America's working parents across the country can look back and say: America fulfilled its promise to this nation's working families, and invested in future of our next generation.

Now I'd like to introduce the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala.