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CENTRO PRESENTE

Trabajando con la comunidad Centroamericana en Massachusetts

April 25, 2000

Irene Bueno
Domestic Policy Advisor
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Bueno:

I am writing on behalf of Centro Presente, an immigrant-led organization that works with the Central American immigrant community of Massachusetts. We are also members of the Salvadoran-American National Network (SANN).

As you know, SANN has been very active in efforts to amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). We understand that the White House has been very supportive of our efforts, and for that, we thank you. We also understand that, currently, there is marked interest in Congress to approve legislation to increase the number of temporary visas for highly-skilled workers (H-1B visas). We believe that this is a propitious moment to include a NACARA amendment as part of a broader package that seeks to ameliorate labor shortages throughout the United States and in several business sectors.

As part of SANN's strategy to ensure that the interests of the Salvadoran, Central American and Haitian communities are addressed at this key moment, Centro Presente has sent letters to the entire Massachusetts Congressional delegation urging them to include a NACARA amendment in any legislation that increases the number of H-1B visas. Copies of these letters have been included for your information. We also want to take this opportunity to urge you and the Clinton Administration as well to take advantage of this golden opportunity to bolster and energize your support and advocacy on behalf of the Central American and Haitian communities.

We thank you in advance for your support. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 497-9080, ext. 11.

Most sincerely,

Maria Elena Letona

M. Elena Letona, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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CENTRO PRESENTE

Trabajando con la comunidad Centroamericana en Massachusetts

April 24, 2000

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Kennedy:

I am writing on behalf of Centro Presente, an organization which has been working for the past 18 years for the integral development of the Central American immigrant community of Massachusetts. Immigration issues have long been a priority for our organization. In particular, we have been very active in efforts to amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). In that sense, we thank you deeply for introducing S. 1592, which, in effect, seeks an amendment to NACARA. As you are aware, the population to benefit from a NACARA amendment is an incredibly hard-working population, and we believe that they have contributed tremendously to the economic growth that this great nation has experienced over the past few years.

I and a co-worker of mine recently stopped by your office and talked to your counsel Ms. Ester Olavarria. She was incredibly helpful and kind. Our meeting with her made us realize how fortunate we are as immigrants living in Massachusetts to have a senator such as yourself who so cares about enacting fair and sensible U.S. immigration policy.

During our visit to Washington, D.C. we learned about the imminent approval of legislation to increase the number of temporary visas for highly-skilled foreign workers (H-1B visas). We want to take this opportunity to remind you that, thanks to your leadership, the Central American and Haitian immigrant communities have had legislation pending in Congress (S. 1592) to amend NACARA. We believe that this is a propitious moment to include S. 1592 as part of a broader package that seeks to ameliorate labor shortages.

As you are aware, the United States has experienced unprecedented economic growth and many economists, including Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, and other business leaders have expressed concern over future labor shortages that may slow down the economy. We believe that the high-tech industry is not the only sector to be experiencing a labor shortage. Other key sectors such as those that employ predominantly Central American and Haitian immigrant labor (hotels, restaurants, health care, child care, etc.), are also experiencing labor shortages.

By filling low-wage jobs in a tight labor market, Central American and Haitian refugees and immigrants have significantly contributed to the growth of the U.S. economy. In addition, they play a vital role in the economies of their native countries through family remittances. As you know, Central America and Haiti have only in the past few years begun to take positive steps to build legitimate and viable democracies. However, their economies continue to be quite vulnerable, a situation that was exacerbated by recent natural disasters (Hurricanes Mitch and George). Thus, Central American and Haitian immigrants living in the U.S. are a crucial factor in the stability of their home countries through the billions of dollars they send annually to loved ones back in their native countries.

Finally, their contribution to the U.S. economy notwithstanding, the uncertain immigration status of many Central American and Haitian refugees and immigrants makes them vulnerable to work-related abuses such as harsh working conditions and the constant threat of deportation should they not abide by unreasonable work demands. A NACARA amendment would alleviate these conditions for a significant number of these hard-working refugees and immigrants.

In closing, we want to reiterate our appreciation for the leadership you have provided over the past two years to amend NACARA and for the support you have always demonstrated for immigrant rights. We sincerely hope that you will continue to play such an important leadership role by ensuring that the priority concerns of the Central American and Haitian communities are heard and addressed. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 497-9080, ext. 11.

Most sincerely,

María Elena Letona

M. Elena Letona, Ph.D.
Executive Director

cc: M. Echaveste, White House
I. Bueno, White House
E. Olavarria

Published Tuesday, June 6, 2000, in the San Jose Mercury News

EDITORIAL

The opinion of the Mercury News

Janitors get their raise, but how do they live?

UNIONIZED janitors in three cities went out on strike this year. Not so in San Jose and the Bay Area, to great relief of all.

The 5,500 members of the union that cleans most of the big office buildings in a four-county area ratified a contract that will boost their pay at the end of three years to about $10 an hour. Cleaning contractors originally offered 4 percent annual raises, while the union wanted 16 percent. But it took an all-night bargaining session, with an additional sweetener on health insurance, to get there.

Most of the janitors are Mexican-Americans who crossed the border as undocumented workers. They used the threat of a walkout as a moral cudgel, knowing that a strike would have drawn embarrassing national attention to the gulf between rich and poor in Silicon Valley. But they also had some key allies in church leaders, politicians, and most importantly, a handful of CEOs of high-tech firms that hire union contractors.

With the strong backing of the AFL-CIO, which has switched from scapegoating illegal immigrants to courting them, the janitors proved to be determiend and tough. But then, you have to be to live on less than $17,000 in the valley.

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Published Wednesday, May 31, 2000, in the San Jose Mercury News

ERIC BENHAMOU

Valley must narrow the wage gap

BY ERIC BENHAMOU

THE future, they say, is made here. Silicon Valley reinvents it every day. We pioneer new technologies, experiment with business models and push innovation to new limits. Yet, for all the wealth that our new economy generates, we aren't immune to the risks associated with creating a society where a few remain below the threshold of full participation. We call this phenomenon ``the digital divide."

This social fracture develops gradually, not by design, not by irresponsibility, not by lack of hard work or lack of merit. It happens when the pace of change accelerates beyond everyone's natural abilities to adapt. The conflict that opposes Silicon Valley janitors and their employers (janitorial services contractors) over hourly wages is symptomatic of these risks.

It would be easy for the high-tech employers to ignore the problem. After all, these janitors don't work for us. At least, not directly. Our ruthless focus on our core business drives us to outsource all services for which we lack full competencies. Some might say: Let the janitorial services contractors deal with it. We just want our offices cleaned for the lowest rates possible.

This mind set -- reinvesting every ounce of energy and every cent of profit in our business future -- served Silicon Valley well until a few years ago, when we discovered flaws in this picture. We ignored the need to create a community as we created an industry. We found out we needed teachers, nurses, and yes, janitors.

At 3Com, we are building our digital future. Core to our beliefs is that information technology can be deployed intelligently and enhance everyone's standards of living. We do not pay all our employees the same. We pay for performance and we force ourselves to differentiate between the most and the least deserving of us. And we also expect the least skilled of our jobs to command decent wages, and to enable all these workers to live and function within our society. Failure to acknowledge that such a threshold exists borders on irresponsibility.

For some, it is a plain moral question of social equity. For others, it is a pragmatic need to address a business risk before it develops into a crisis. For others yet, it is a matter of dealing with the guilty feeling one experiences at the thought that yesterday's business lunch leftovers were magically cleaned up at night by someone who lives in a storage shed.

The current situation with our janitors is a symptom of a broader problem. We are pricing basic living standards beyond the reach of an untolerably high percentage of the population. This problem is of our own making. Not unlike our well-chronicled educational system debacle, it can be solved with a little money spent now, or allowed to fester over time at a much greater cost to us all. As leaders of the high-tech industry, we are being put to the test. While some may ignore a serious problem in the making for a while longer, I trust many will join me and San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales and see in the janitors' case an opportunity to make our ideas known about which kind of a Silicon Valley we stand for.

Eric Benhamou is chairman and CEO of 3Com Corporation.

Irene Bueno
05/09/2000 11:36:26 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Ruth M. Samardick/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:
Subject: bill numbers

Registry Date bill
H.R. 4172 - Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX)
S. 2407 - Senator Harry Reid (D- NV)

Central American and Haitian Parity Act of 1999
H.R. 2722 - Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), Guttierez (D-IL)
S. 1592 - Senator Durbin (D- IL)

A CLEAN SWEEP

THE SEIU'S ORGANIZING DRIVE FOR JANITORS SHOWS HOW UNIONIZATION CAN RAISE WAGES.

BY HAROLD MEYERSON

On Friday, April 7, I came upon one method of increasing the income of the working poor that, I confess, had never even occurred to me. The janitors of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1877, embroiled in a countywide strike, were marching down Wilshire Boulevard from downtown Los Angeles to tony Century City, roughly an eight-mile walk. Ten years earlier, another such march had culminated in one of the LAPD's periodic riots, when police set upon the marchers in Century City, beating and injuring scores. This time L.A.'s city attorney was in the parade's front row, flanked by a dozen other elected officials, Jesse Jackson, and a host of ministers, priests, and rabbis. But that wasn't all that was different about this march.

As the janitors left downtown, the people on the sidewalks—few of whom had known in advance about the march—started giving them a thumbs-up sign. After a couple of miles, the sidewalk passersby weren't just signaling their support; they were cheering. Then, as the march reached Beverly Hills, people on the sidewalk—first one, then a couple, then a bunch—did something I'd never seen. They darted into the street and handed the janitors cash. Spontaneous redistribution—something never before noted in any recorded history of Los Angeles.

Seventeen days later, L.A.'s janitors won themselves a considerable nonspontaneous redistribution: a wage increase of about 26 percent, spread over the next three years. The janitors who work at either end of their April 7 march—downtown or in Century City, areas almost entirely unionized—will see their hourly pay rise from just under $8 to just over $10. (At that rate, it's possible that one parent in a two-working-parent family could afford to work just one job—and actually get some time with his or her kids.) Janitors in other, less unionized parts of town will see an even greater percentage increase.

This, of course, was the far greater miracle: that a union 98 percent of whose members are immigrants—80 percent Central Americans, 55 percent women, and all of them poor—could wrest this kind of settlement from the nation's largest building service contractors and real estate investors. The settlement is a tribute to the spirit and tenacity of the janitors themselves, to the cohesiveness of the L.A. labor movement, and to the manifest strategic smarts of the international union to which the janitors belong, the SEIU. The settlement, so to speak, is the result of a three-level exceptionalism: the local, the central labor council, and the international are each about as good as it gets in the American labor movement today.

From which follows a depressing corollary: The vast majority of American unions, at all levels, have yet to make a dent in the growing problem of low-wage work. Unionizing the workers in easily relocatable sweatshops, for instance, has proven all but impossible. In industries that can't flee—service, transport, health care, and tourism—unionizing the work force has been possible, but only by dint of extraordinary efforts.

WHO ORGANIZES?

Since 1995, when John Sweeney won the presidency of the AFL-CIO on a platform that emphasized organizing above all else, a number of major internationals have done just that—and have genuine membership growth to show for it. Unfortunately, that number is roughly 10 out of the 68 unions that belong to the federation.

> IN SERVICE INDUSTRIES THAT CAN'T FLEE, UNIONIZATION OF LOW-WAGE WORKERS CAN TRIUMPH, BUT ONLY WITH HEROIC EFFORT.

Some among the Organizing Ten have focused their efforts on low-wage workers. The Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE!) has had major breakthroughs in the organizing of textile and nursing home workers; the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) union has won excellent contracts for previously low-wage hotel employees; the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) has launched a major drive to organize Head Start workers. By every measure, though, the union with the greatest success at organizing low-wage workers is the SEIU. In recent years, the Service Employees have unionized well over 100,000 home health care workers and nursing home workers. It is currently waging campaigns to organize security screeners at airports, many of whom work at the minimum wage.

HAROLD MEYERSON is executive editor of *LA Weekly* and a member of *Dissent* magazine's editorial board.

MICHAEL CAULFIELD/ASSOCIATED PRESS

But the SEIU's signature campaign has been its Justice for Janitors effort. Initiated in 1985 during John Sweeney's tenure as SEIU president, J for J has become known throughout the country as one of the most noisy, rambunctious, disruptive—and successful—efforts both to organize and win raises for workers at or near the bottom of the economy. Indeed, one such disruption—a rush-hour sit-down blocking one of the bridges across the Potomac, pulled off under the very noses of the police detail assigned to guard the bridge—became a major point of contention between Sweeney and Tom Donahue, who was Sweeney's opponent during the 1995 campaign for the AFL-CIO presidency. The role of labor, Donahue insisted, was to build bridges, not block them. Sweeney countered that he'd built as many bridges as anyone in the labor movement, but there was a time to block bridges, too: when management was recalcitrant. It wasn't nice—it infuriated motorists—but then, the janitors have never depended on the kindness of strangers. More than any other union, the SEIU—under both Sweeney and his successor Andy Stern—has understood that the only real power of the poor is the power to disrupt. And no other union has channeled that disruption in so brilliant and productive a way.

A number of the SEIU's campaigns to organize low-income workers, of course, have yet to yield anything, and the gains the union has won at the table for many of the low-wage workers it has organized have been modest. But the union has also known some sterling successes, and the campaign that the L.A. janitors waged this spring stands out as one of those rare moments in contemporary unionism when virtually everything clicked. It's an object lesson in how a union can transform the living standards, and the lives, of the working poor. But it's also an illustration of just how daunting that task really is.

At first glance, the very idea that L.A.'s janitors could sustain and win a strike seemed preposterous. With an average hourly wage of $7.20, they were in no position to have socked away a rainy-day fund. The fact that they were spread across roughly 900 different work sites meant that bonding together as an effective union was anything but easy; it also made setting up effective picket lines very difficult. (The local has 8,500 members.) The fragmented and byzantine structure of the industry also complicated matters greatly, compelling the union to negotiate up front with 18 different building service contractors while conducting back-channel discussions with a like number of building owners. In this kind of structure, the least wealthy, or most stingy, service contractor could easily gum up a settlement.

The primary asset the janitors brought to their strike, of course, the sine qua non of their victory, was their local, which has taken them a dozen years to rebuild to a position of strength. Up until 1983–1984, Los Angeles, like most nonsouthern U.S. cities, had a unionized janitorial work force (which in Los Angeles was heavily black). In 1983 the local signed a contract with the service contractors providing its members with an hourly wage of $7.32.

At the same time, thousands of Central Americans began moving to Los Angeles, many fleeing the U.S.-backed wars that were raging in their homelands. Building service contractors began discharging their unionized workers and hiring refugees. No other American city experienced quite so wholesale a substitution of one work force for another. None of L.A.'s new janitors made anything like $7.32 an hour. Instead, they made the federal minimum wage—then $3.35 an hour, just 44 percent of the rate set by the union contract. "Almost immediately after the ink was dry on the contract," says Jono Shaffer, who came to L.A. to start up Justice for Janitors a few years later, "the union had to go into renegotiations, dropping wages just to keep some members in the buildings." From 5,000 members in 1978, the local shrank to 1,800 in 1985.

Throughout the mid-1980s, many of SEIU's janitorial locals were under assault from contractors either able to exploit a changing work force or just indulging in the rampant union-busting of the time. In 1985 the union hastily assembled its first, impromptu Justice for Janitors campaign in Pittsburgh, where management was trying to win major givebacks. In 1986 SEIU decided to shore up its position in building services by making J for J a national—and proactive rather than reactive—campaign. After an initial victory in Denver, J for J came to Los Angeles in 1988.

Reorganizing the L.A. local proved particularly arduous. "In a sense," Shaffer recalls, "the new local began on the Olympic Boulevard bus from Century City [home to many high-rises] to Pico Union [home to many janitors], the 2:30 A.M. bus. It was the janitors' private bus; there sure wasn't anyone else on it, and it was the one place where they were together and could talk freely about their work."

By the early 1990s, the janitors had unionized Century City, strengthened their position in downtown, and formed a distinct, statewide janitors' local. With accomplished J for J organizer Mike Garcia as its new president, the local plunged into a series of campaigns organizing janitors in L.A.'s numerous suburbs and edge cities, and persuading the building contractors to recognize the union and agree to the terms of its L.A. master contract. Characteristically, these campaigns combined on-site strikes; pressure from local pols, clerics, and community groups; and the occasional intervention of the buildings' owners on the janitors' behalf. The pay scale for these newer recruits, however, lagged behind that in the downtown area and in Century City. This is a common pattern among janitors' locals, where suburban membership, like suburban high-rises, tends to be newer and less dense than in downtown areas.

WHAT IT TAKES TO ORGANIZE

Simply by setting up J for J, Sweeney was going where most of the rest of American labor feared to tread. The campaign required SEIU to make alliances with community groups and hire a slew of young organizers off campuses and from community-based organizations. This was far from common practice at the time because most unions viewed such groups and organizers as too radical or because organizing was just not a union priority, or for both reasons.

The L.A. janitors' local got more than its share of such organizers, however. Together with members who'd been politically active in their homelands and had led the fight to create a distinct janitors' local, they set about building a union that involved the maximum number of members in its work and decision making (a practice at which HERE, the hotel and restaurant union, has also excelled). Over the past five years, as the local grew to represent 70 percent of the janitorial work force in L.A.'s class-A office properties, members learned to represent one another in grievances and to lead meetings; they also mastered the arcane structure of their industry. Late this March, with their contract about to expire and talks with employers at an impasse, the union convened a meeting of its 100 or so stewards. There, says Triana Silton, the staffer in charge of J for J in Los Angeles, the union's leaders told the stewards, "If we go out, you folks will have to run the strike." Which, the stewards pledged, they would.

Still, any field commander about to go into battle has to feel a little nervous, and a week before the strike began, Silton called her predecessor Shaffer. "She wanted reassurance that we weren't about to embark on a countywide strike [Los Angeles is by far the most populous county in the United States] with 25 people," says Shaffer. "I told her what she knew but wanted to hear anyway: We'd have a thousand." And so they did.

By day, as the newscast helicopters hovered overhead, the janitors (at times numbering well over 1,000) marched down L.A.'s boulevards and threw together rallies with the speed and mobility of Patton's Third Army. (On one occasion, they rustled up 500 members and half of L.A.'s city council on three hours' notice so that Ted Kennedy, passing through town, could endorse the strike.) At sunset, the real work of the strike began as members dispersed to the myriad of office buildings around town. "With so many buildings out, you couldn't possibly have staff at more than a handful," Shaffer says. "At most work sites, the members ran the strike and the picket line and the scab patrols."

In the end, the union pulled roughly half its members onto the streets in its effort to shut down the cleanup of L.A.'s office buildings. The net the janitors strung had plenty of holes in it, but the nighttime cleanings in many of the city's most prominent buildings were incomplete and haphazard, when they happened at all.

Local 1877 had had plenty of practice mobilizing its members. In a city where labor has played the decisive role in election after election over the past four years, the janitors were the most politically active union in town. "In the election of November '98," says local president Garcia, "we turned out for 1,500 shifts [a shift means walking a precinct or working a phone bank]—more than any union." The local worked under the aegis of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, whose operation focuses on turning out both union members and new immigrant voters. "For this," says the group's Executive Secretary-Treasurer Miguel Contreras, "the janitors are critical. Their members get home from their jobs at 4:00 A.M., and show up for a precinct walk at 7:00 A.M."

With the janitors as its shock troops, the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor has become the election day powerhouse of L.A. politics. Since Contreras assumed its leadership in 1996, the federation has intervened in 17 district races—all hotly contested, at all levels of government—and has prevailed in 16 of them.

The federation brought its own distinct clout to the janitors' strike; combined with the janitors' own efforts, it's no mystery why Local 1877 went into the strike with a statement of support from 48 L.A.-area elected officials or, as the strike unfolded, why it won further statements of support from the county supervisors, both houses of the state legislature, a unanimous city council, and Republican Mayor Richard Riordan. Not since the 1994 earthquake had so many L.A. electeds come together for the same cause.

The intervention that many of these officials made on the janitors' behalf was anything but casual: Councilmembers were arrested for civil disobedience; assembly members sat on the janitors' side of the table during bargaining sessions; congressmen addressed rallies; Ted Kennedy, Dianne Feinstein, and Al Gore came to town and spoke for their cause. Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa, County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, and the mayor publicly and privately pressured their building-owner buddies to settle.

One factor in generating such singular solidarity among the electeds was apparent on the day of the janitors' march, at the post-primary breakfast that the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor hosted for pols it had helped in the previous month's primary. The breakfast was held in a hotel along the janitors' parade route, so the assembled pols could come outside and bless the janitors as they passed. However, the absence of one pol—nine-term Congressman Marty Martinez—was felt more than the presence of all the others.

In the March primary, the federation had broken with all precedent to oppose Martinez's re-election. Martinez had a career 90 percent AFL-CIO voting record, but he was the most lackadaisical of members, and, worse, he had swapped his vote to the White House (for a freeway extension) during the 1997 fight over fast track, neglecting to notify the unions he was about to switch sides. When state senator Hilda Solis, a stellar pro-labor legislator with wide support, challenged Martinez, the federation endorsed her and poured in an army of volunteers, the greatest number of whom came from the janitors. Solis clobbered Martinez, 69 to 31 percent—and the ghost of poor Marty hung over the breakfast as a grim reminder to all the electeds of the fate that might await them if they spurned the unions' cause.

Adding oomph to the janitors' clout was just one of the federation's endeavors on the janitors' behalf. This year, contracts expire for 300,000 of the 800,000 union members whose locals are federation affiliates, and the federation has turned the local labor movement into a kind of mutual-aid society. Even before the janitors' strike began, it convened a rally of 10,000 members from all the different unions whose contracts were up, and almost all these unions were to provide the janitors with money, food, and bodies in the weeks ahead. Locals that had long been indifferent to such struggles honored the janitors' picket lines this time around. The operating engineers—who maintain elevators, air conditioning systems, and such in office buildings all across town—offered full pay from their own strike fund to any members who didn't cross the janitors' lines. Before the strike, the operating engineers had never given any indication that they cared whether the janitors lived or died.

IN THE 1980S, NATIONAL COMPANIES TOOK OVER THE BUILDING SERVICE INDUSTRY. BY ORGANIZING NATIONALLY, THE SEIU COULD WIN VICTORIES LOCALLY.

SOLIDARITY ON A BIGGER STAGE

Nor was the janitors' simply a local strike. The chief building maintenance contractors they were fighting were national, even global, corporations. The companies, Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), and pension funds that owned L.A.'s high-rises owned high-rises all across the nation. And accordingly, the janitors' international union had decided to turn their strike into a national one.

What the SEIU had done was line up the expiration dates of its janitorial contracts in most major cities so that, as nearly as possible, they would coincide or at least follow one another in close succession. The L.A. janitors walked first, but within two weeks they were followed by the janitors in Chicago and San Diego, at the same time that New York's janitors settled without a strike. One week after the L.A. strike ended, janitors were slated to strike in Cleveland, and so it goes, one city after another, through October.

The union is merely following the consolidation of the industry. In the 1980s, save in those cities where the unions were exceptionally strong (New York, San Francisco, downtown Chicago), building owners created a protective shield behind which they could deny all responsibility for the union-busting of the Reagan years. They handed over the task of hiring, firing, supervising, and paying the janitors to the hitherto small-scale and local building service industry. (The amounts these contractors agreed to pay the janitors, however, still had to be cleared with the building owners.) In short order, these contractors grew mightily, and soon the industry came to be dominated by such nationwide companies as American Building Maintenance (ABM) and OneSource (until relatively recently, a Danish-based conglomerate called ISS/DESCO Services).

Moreover, the ownership of class-A office properties has also been consolidated in recent years. In the 1980s, most of downtown L.A.'s high-rises were owned by foreign (chiefly Japanese) investors. Today, the city's choice properties are owned primarily by REITs and pension funds—the same REITs and pension funds that own choice properties throughout the nation. According to an April survey in the *Los Angeles Business Journal*, 51 percent of the class-A property on L.A.'s west side—that is, the highest-rent buildings in all of Los Angeles—was owned by pension funds, and another 21 percent by REITs. Moreover, according to figures compiled by the SEIU, the largest class-A property owner in southern California is also the largest in the United States—Chicago-based Equity Investments, which owns 77 million square feet across the country. Another major L.A. real estate owner, Warren "Ned" Spiecker, has 41 million square feet of office property on the West Coast.

When L.A.'s janitors struck, then, SEIU leaders were already talking with these owners and contractors on a national level. "We met with ABM, OneSource, Equity, the major owners in New York and L.A. prior to the contract expirations," says SEIU president Andy Stern. "We made clear that these were integrated, though not common, negotiations. When we sat down with owners and contractors in Chicago or L.A.," Stern continues, "they understood that this wasn't simply a discussion about Chicago or L.A."

So did SEIU's janitors all across the nation. As the date for the first contract expiration neared, the international set up a series of teleconferences among members in different cities, members of one local flew across the country to sit in at the bargaining sessions of another local, and a nationwide solidarity developed among the janitors. (Solidarity is the concept that unions most frequently invoke and most seldom cultivate.) It was this cross-city bond that underlay the threat that the international's leaders conveyed to the owners and contractors: If the local on strike in L.A. against ABM, say, sent one picket to a building cleaned by ABM in New York, the New York janitors wouldn't clean the building. By the final week of the L.A. strike, ratcheting up the pressure, SEIU put this plan into action. "Members from 1877 [the L.A. local] flew to Seattle, Denver, San Francisco, San Jose, and their pickets were honored," says SEIU Building Service Director Stephen Lerner. "We just did a couple of buildings in each city for one night, but we planned to escalate considerably if the strike had to go into its fourth week."

The international's threat to the nationwide owners and employers worked because, on the management side of the table, size matters. The building owners—for whom the janitors' wages are just a small part of their overall expenses—can bring pressure on the contractors, from whom janitors' wages take a bigger bite. This is why the SEIU prefers to negotiate directly with the owners, which it's able to do only in the cities where it's strongest.

In Los Angeles, Stern says, "large numbers of the owners were much more interested in settling—and settling quickly—than the contractors." Indeed, in the final negotiations, the major building owners jointly threatened the contractors by suggesting they weren't really indispensable to performance of janitorial work. On the Thursday before the strike settled, says Rob Maguire, one of L.A.'s mega-owners, "we told them that it had to be finished by Monday and that we were prepared to enter into a separate agreement with the union if they didn't get it done."

Where buildings were owned by pension funds—many of them directed by trustees selected by the public-sector unions whose funds they invest—the international's involvement was even more direct, if less conspicuous. The two largest pension funds in the United States are CalPERS and CalSTIRS, for California's public employees and its teachers. The dominant public employee union in California happens to be the SEIU. "Clearly, a lot of calls were made by CalPERS and CalSTIRS," says one source close to the negotiations.

TIME AND AGAIN, L.A. MOTORISTS SHOOK THEIR FISTS—IN SUPPORT OF THE STRIKERS.

One other service that the SEIU performed for the janitors—and here, the help came more from a consortium of California locals than from the international—was to sponsor prestrike polling and focus groups to assist 1877, and other SEIU locals facing the prospect of a strike, in honing their message. Truth be told, though, the janitors didn't need much help. From the moment they took to the streets, they plainly struck a nerve.

The most astonishing sight in the janitors' strike—and I saw it repeatedly—was of motorists stuck in traffic for 15 or 20 minutes as the janitors marched across an intersection. Time and again, drivers got out of their cars and shook their fists—not in anger, but in clamorous support.

The strike had two immediate effects on the city. First, it pushed the reality of low-wage work smack into everyone's face. (Even L.A.'s TV newscasts—the most substance-free in the land—were compelled to cover the janitors' daily marches and mention the wage rates at which they worked.) Second, the janitors provided the city with its first plausible and visible solution for poverty-wage work: unionization. In middle-class L.A., let alone in upwards-of-middle-class L.A., I've not detected any overwhelming public sentiment to unionize low-wage workers. But the janitors forced Los Angeles to confront its transformation into the national capital of low-wage work on a less theoretical level. Behind the spontaneous cash donations in the streets of Beverly Hills was not only guilt about such manifest poverty in the midst of such manifest plenty, but also a kind of civic relief: At last, somebody was doing something about what Los Angeles had become—a city with a vanishing middle class and an explosion in the number of Angelenos at work for poverty-level wages.

For affluent Los Angeles, then, the strike produced an altogether unanticipated wave of—let's call it civic improvement, as Charles Dickens would define civic improvement. The cardinal, whose record of support for working-class struggle has been mixed, but who performed a special Mass for the janitors and called his building-owner parishioners on their behalf, was never truer to the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. The mayor, whose record of support for working-class struggle has been way more mixed than the cardinal's, was never more attentive to his city's deepest dilemma. The inhabitants of this first world metropolis, whose normal level of economic and political consciousness ranges from "false" to "un," were never more sensitive to, and willing to remedy, the plight of those who live there at near–third world wages.

But what has the strike meant to the other Los Angeles, from which the janitors come? How, if at all, has it altered the prospects for organizing?

Los Angeles may be one of the nation's most diverse metropolises, but what happened to the demographics of building maintenance in the 1980s happened to virtually all of blue-collar Los Angeles. At the turn of the century, the Los Angeles working class is almost entirely Latino. And of Latinos' affinity for unions, there can be no doubt (most particularly in Los Angeles, where labor is Latino-led and the most visible locals are Latino-dominated). Proposition 226, the 1998 initiative that would have greatly curtailed unions' political activity, was rejected by state Latino voters by a 75 to 25 percent margin. Black voters didn't reject it that decisively, nor did union members.

But if pro-union sentiment were sufficient to create a unionized workplace, the rate of unionization in the United States would be closer to one-third than its current 14 percent. To the nonunion sector of the L.A. working class (that is, virtually all of it), the janitors' strike can be viewed in two ways. "This strike can both scare immigrants and inspire them," says Maria Elena Durazo, leader of the only local union in town (HERE Local 11) with a record of immigrant organizing, collective bargaining, and political participation comparable to the janitors'. "It can be daunting. It all depends on what the respective unions do in their industries. Do we do the day-to-day work of challenging and developing immigrant workers [to become activists and leaders] in their workplaces? If we don't, the strike on its own won't inspire a whole spontaneous movement. It takes a particular kind of union, with tough organizers and a tough organizing program."

The SEIU's commitment to such "tough" organizing is unrivaled in the labor movement. When Sweeney was president, the union was spending nearly a third of its budget on organizing, at a time when the average for almost every other union was about 2 percent. Under Stern the cut for organizing has risen to 47 percent, requiring the international to reduce, and in a few cases eliminate, some of its departments. Even among the Organizing Ten, it's only in the SEIU that the organizers clearly outnumber everyone else on staff. The international has also set targets for its locals: In the first year of the program, it encouraged them to spend 10 percent of their resources on organizing; in the second year, 15 percent; in the third year, 20 percent. It also provided locals with the assistance to make that transition.

The Service Employees' leaders are still raising the ante. At its upcoming convention, the SEIU will consider a proposal for a dues increase to establish new nationwide funds for organizing and bargaining in specific sectors. "The next time the building service contracts come up, in 2003, imagine what we could do if we had $10 million to supplement what the locals have set aside," says Stern. "Imagine what it could mean for organizing, too. This nationwide approach has long been common for industrial unions, but the strategy can also be applied to Hilton and Starwood [hotels], to hospital chains and nursing home chains, and to building services."

This is exactly the kind of proposal that most unions have tended to avoid, at least since Walter Reuther's day. It asks the members to pay more today, or give up a level of servicing to which they're accustomed, for a program that may produce more organizing—and, thus, greater union density in their sector or locale and, thus, maybe, better wage settlements—in the future. John Wilhelm won wide acceptance for this kind of trade-off when he ran the HERE local in Las Vegas, as it grew from 15,000 members to nearly 60,000. But it's relatively easy to understand concepts like union density and its relation to wage scales in a one-industry town surrounded by 300 miles of desert. The SEIU's members are being asked to make such a trade-off when things like union density and its relation to wages are harder to see. The union leaders figure that the success of the newly coordinated janitor strikes will help them make their point.

Outside the SEIU, HERE, UNITE!, and a handful of other unions, however, this level of commitment to and strategic thinking about organizing is not yet evident. Over the past half-decade in Los Angeles, organizing drives have fizzled for lack of the kind of corporate strategy that the SEIU brought to its building service division, or for failure of long-established locals to activate their members in organizing new ones.

ORGANIZING THE NEW LABOR FORCE

Meanwhile, the janitor and hotel worker unions are beginning to assume within L.A.'s immigrant community the kind of full-service tribune role that the garment unions played in the immigrant communities of New York in the early twentieth century. Indeed, merely to meet their members' needs, these unions cannot bargain simply for wages and benefits. HERE Local 11 won a groundbreaking provision in its last contract that gives hotel workers a full year to return to their jobs with their seniority intact in the event that the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) deports them, and that requires the hotel to re-employ them if they can come back within a two-year period. The janitors won a similar, though considerably more modest, provision in their new contract.

Both the SEIU and HERE took the lead in persuading the national AFL-CIO earlier this year to rescind its long-standing support for sanctions against businesses that employ undocumented immigrants. The AFL-CIO is now conducting a series of hearings around the country on the question of whether there should be a new amnesty for illegals, and the L.A. federation has pledged to turn out a crowd of 5,000, including the cardinal, when the national federation brings its road-show to town in June. Amnesty is a very practical concern for virtually all unions that organize since the rank-and-file leaders of their drives—not just in Los Angeles, and not only among janitors—are increasingly immigrants, whom, increasingly, the INS is deporting. But amnesty's appeal reaches far beyond the unions' ranks, and Mike Garcia took the occasion of the janitors' contract ratification vote—covered by a swarm of Spanish-language newscasts and newspapers—to announce that the union's next major battle would be for the new amnesty.

The strike has confirmed a new order in the political firmament of Latino California. The janitors, in tandem with the hotel workers, have supplanted the United Farm Workers (UFW) as the political powerhouse and moral beacon of local Latino politics. Twenty-five years ago, the UFW and its allies walked more precincts in Latino L.A. than anyone else, cultivated the support of governors and senators, and came to symbolize the entire Latino (in those days, it was "Chicano") cause. Today, it's the janitors who walk the most precincts, who've amassed the broadest political backing, who've caught the imagination and won the allegiance of this new, larger immigrant community—that is, of L.A.'s working class. One index of this: By the strike's second week, people were buying the janitors' signature red T-shirts off their backs; by the third week, knockoffs of the T-shirts began popping up in the garment district. Another index: Throughout the strike, L.A.'s more nationalistic Latino officials, whose candidates the janitors have opposed and defeated in election after election, nonetheless felt compelled to come to the janitors' rallies. To have been missing in action, or deemed insufficiently pro-janitor, would have amounted to political suicide.

Such is the decay of the laws protecting organizing, and of most unions' capacity to organize, that the janitors' stunning success is no guarantee that organizing in Los Angeles will pick up—much less that the silver bullet has been found for the travails of the city's low-wage earners. Then again, my *LA Weekly* colleague Joseph Trevino tells me he stopped by a meeting in the Latino neighborhood of Lincoln Heights about a week after the strike ended. Citizens for a Better Environment, a group that organizes in L.A.'s nonwhite working-class communities, had convened the meeting to build support for a campaign to expose the neighborhood's high rates of cancer. And as the meeting went on, as the participants grew more animated, the talk was increasingly of the janitors, some of whom lived right down the block: of the dedication they'd shown, the example they'd provided, the standard they'd set for the entire community. Abruptly, the spirit of the meeting was that of the janitors' battle cry, that old UFW slogan they had made credible for a new generation: *Sí, se puede* (Yes, we can do it).

Maybe they can. ◆

ASOSAL

ASSOCIATION OF SALVADORANS OF LOS ANGELES

A Non-Profit Organization

660 S. Bonnie Brae St.
Los Angeles, CA 90057
(213) 483-1244
Fax (213) 483-9832

e-mail:asosal@pacbell.net
www.asosal.com

FAX TRANSMITTAL

COVER SHEET / CARATULA

TO/PARA: *Irene Bueno*

POSITION/POSICION: *Special Assistant to the President*

FAX #/No. DE FAX: *(202) 456-1907*

No. OF PAGES/# DE PAGINAS (INCLUDING COVER) *3*

FROM/DE: Luis Hernandez - ASOSAL (213)483-1244

DATE/FECHA: *06-29-00*

REGARDING/ASUNTO: *FYI*

I ~~tell~~ ~~[illegible]~~ your [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

So for all those reasons, I commend your organization for its efforts b/c w/o you we could not even have any hope for [illegible] [illegible].

On behalf of ME, I thank you for this award. She expressed her deepest appreciation for this honor ~~[illegible]~~ and she asked me to express to you how important your org is to the work she does at the WH ~~[illegible]~~

~~Before I make~~

The President also wanted me to read this short [illegible] greetings.

Read short

Echo President short [illegible]

- Thanks
Last 3 years
- Admin has a track record of ~~providing~~ fighting fairness to immigs ~~[illegible]~~ + their family.

- Passed legislation to restore welfare benefits but hotly for [illegible]
- Public Charge   EITC
- NACARA
- NACARA Reg

Current prog.
- Parity leg.
- Registry Date
- ~~INS Restructure~~
- Improve INS by ~~[illegible]~~ making more efficient, reducing backlog, ~~$~~ [illegible] svc
- making $ available for ~~[illegible]~~ ESL
- Focus on Hispanic Educ.

- Prospects of these proposals ~~[illegible]~~ don't look good unless members of Cong who oppose + it's an election year [illegible] will happen ...

Current proposals
- Welfare
- ESL
- INS Rest
- Parity
- Registry Date
- Educ

~~[illegible]~~ What will make a diff ... what gives us hope are groups like ASOSAL + it's committed members like you are - doing the hard work of ~~[illegible] organizing yourself~~ you know that you can make a diff.

- There are ~~some~~ many people who believe that ~~[illegible]~~ what they do doesn't matter but you know what you do is the only thing that matters

- You know that you must organize your community
- educate your comm about issues + [illegible]
- you must register to vote if you are eligible
- Vote

ASOSAL AWARDS

ASOSAL instituted its annual awards during our First Annual Dinner in June of 1998. At that time, we thought that our awards should symbolize the roots of the Salvadoran people, our pro-immigrant nature, and our closeness to the religious message of social justice. For those reasons, we decided to name our two awards, the PIPIL Award and the Monseñor Romero Award.

The PIPIL Award represents the roots of the Salvadoran people as they were the dominant population of El Salvador when the Spaniards invaded the American continent. We also equate the PIPIL Award with our pro-immigrant nature because the Pipiles immigrated to El Salvador from what is now Mexico. The award is presented to a person who has contributed to the goal of permanent residence and immigration fairness for Salvadorans and Central Americans in the United States. The award consists of a ceramic vase replica of those made by pre-colonial civilizations in El Salvador on top of a wooden foundation

The Monseñor Romero Award represents the message of social justice embodied in the figure of the slain Archbishop of San Salvador, a tireless worker for the human rights of the Salvadoran people. The award is presented to a person in the religious sector or in the area of social justice, who has demonstrated the willingness and the action to promote the rights of the Salvadoran community in the United States. The award consists of a painting of Monseñor Romero by Salvadoran artist Rafael Escamilla.

ASOSAL

The Salvadoran Association of Los Angeles, ASOSAL, is a grassroots based, non-profit California Corporation founded in April of 1991 by Salvadorans who had the goal of obtaining permanent immigrant status for the Salvadoran community. Today, permanent residence is still a goal for hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans and ASOSAL remains committed to this goal not only for them, but for other Central Americans as well.

The purpose of our organization is to help satisfy some of the most important legal needs Central Americans have by providing quality, low-cost immigration legal services.

We also promote the participation of our legal clientele in the active solution of their problems by promoting their participation in community organizing efforts as the best direction to obtain sustainable social changes in our community.

Today, the immigration obstacle is not the only problem faced by our community. For that reason, ASOSAL has expanded its pledge to community development areas such as youth empowerment, economic development, and the continuance of our cultural traditions.

MEMORANDUM

TO: IRENE BUENO

FROM: ROCHELLE THOMPSON

SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES TRIP/ASOSAL

DATE: JUNE 30, 2000

Friday, June 20, 2000

D.C. (National Airport) to Los Angeles

- You will take a cab to National Airport

National	departs	Friday, June 30	7:35am	American Airlines (flt. 339)
Dallas/Ft. Wor.	arrives		9:42am	
Dallas/Ft. Wor.	departs		10:41am	American Airlines (flt. 2413)
Los Angeles	arrives		11:51am	

- Luis Hernandez will be at the airport to pick you up.
- You have a room reserved for you at the **Wilshire Grand** [Grand Doma?]

930 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90057
1-888-773-2888 213-688-7777
Confirmation # 1124169

Los Angeles, CA to DC (Dulles)

- Luis Hernandez will drop you off.

Los Angeles	departs	Sat., July 1	9:05am	United Airlines (flt. 962)
Wash/Dulles	arrives		5:09pm	

- Your husband will pick you up.

ASOSAL event:

❁ Conference Session
Lunch with the Episcopal Bishops Frederick Borsh and Jon Bruno.
12:00pm

❁ Meeting with local Hispanic media
3:30pm
❁ Annual awards dinner presentation.
7:00pm-9:30pm

Emergency Phone Contact
Eduardo Rodriquez 213-483-1244

See attached for program details

AMERICAN EXPRESS

Corporate Services

Attention :	Irene Bueno	Record Locator :	VTYRWJ
Fax Number :	12024561907	Agent ID :	SV
Generated On :	6/27/00 @ 11:38 AM	Page:	1

1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N W - O E O B 87 - Washington, DC 20502
Phone: (202) 456-2250 / Fax: (202) 456-6670

Account Name
AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVEL
OEOB ROOM 87
WASHINGTON DC 20502
TEL 202-456-2250/FAX 202-456-6670

Travel arrangements
prepared exclusively for :

Irene Bueno

June 30, 2000 **Friday**

AMERICAN AIRLINES Flight: **339** COACH - Class S80 **Seat : 8F**
From : **WASH/NATIONAL** **DEPARTING AT 7:35 AM** CONT BREAKFAST Flight time: 03:07
To : **DALLAS/FT WOR** **ARRIVING AT 9:42 AM** 1,192 Miles
Departure Terminal: TERMINAL B
Arrival Terminal: TERMINAL C

AMERICAN AIRLINES Flight: **2413** COACH - Class Boeing 757 **Seat : 32C**
From : **DALLAS/FT WOR** **DEPARTING AT 10:41 AM** SNACK/BRUNCH Flight time: 03:10
To : **LOS ANGELES** **ARRIVING AT 11:51 AM** 1,235 Miles
Departure Terminal: TERMINAL B
Arrival Terminal: TERMINAL 4

July 1, 2000 **Saturday**

UNITED AIRLINES Flight: **962** COACH - Class Airbus 320 **Seat : 9F**
From : **LOS ANGELES** **DEPARTING AT 9:05 AM** BREAKFAST/SNACK Flight time: 05:04
To : **WASH/DULLES** **ARRIVING AT 5:09 PM** 2,288 Miles
Departure Terminal: TERMINAL 7

January 2, 2001 **Tuesday**

THANKS FOR CHOOSING AMERICAN EXPRESS

"Itinerary Only"

ASOCIACION DE SALVADOREÑOS DE LOS ANGELES

ASSOCIATION OF SALVADOREANS OF LOS ANGELES

ASOSAL

Rochelle Thompson
Office of Maria Echaveste
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Rochelle:

We planned this itinerary for Ms. Echaveste's trip to Los Angeles; we expect to have the same itinerary for Irene Bueno.

Thursday. June 29, 2000

Arrival to Los Angeles

If the arrival is at noon or early afternoon, we will plan a meeting with community leaders at 7:00 PM on this day. This is a meeting to talk about the current efforts of the White House to help the issue of immigration affecting Central Americans.

Friday, June 30, 2000

9 AM – 10 AM Recognition from the Los Angeles City Council for Ms. Echaveste and US Ambassador to El Salvador, Anne Patterson. Place: Los Angeles City Council Chambers, City Hall.

11 AM If her arrival to Los Angeles is on Thursday evening, we will plan the meeting with community leaders at this time.

12:30 PM Lunch offer by the Episcopal Bishops Frederick Borsh and Jon Bruno for Ms. Echaveste and Ambassador Patterson.

3:30 PM Meeting with local Hispanic media

7PM – 9:30 PM Annual awards dinner presentation, Wilshire Grand Hotel, Downtown Los Angeles.

Plane and hotel reservations will be made accordingly. The hotel reservation will be made at the Wilshire Grand Hotel. We would like to have a response to this itinerary by Wednesday June 21, please let me know if you have questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Eduardo Rodriguez

Eduardo Rodriguez
Community Development Director

660 S. Bonnie Brae St. Los Angeles, California 90057 ☐ Tel. 213/ 483-1244 ☐ Fax 213/ 483-9832
www.asosal.com ☐ e-mail: asosal@pacbell.net

ASOSAL

ASOCIAC SA VA O ÑOS LOS ANGELES

ASSOCIATION OF SALVADORANS OF LOS ANGELES

A Non-Profit Organization

EL SALVADOR

May 1, 2000

Ms. Maria Echaveste
Deputy Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ms. Echaveste:

Greetings on behalf the Salvadoran Association of Los Angeles (ASOSAL) thanks for accepting our Pipil Community Service Award. As you already know, ASOSAL dinner will take place on Friday June 30, 2000, at the Wilshire Grand Hotel, 930 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles CA 90017. From 6:00 PM to 9:30 PM.

In order to complete all the information for the Dinner Journal, we need to have a one page biography and your picture, by May 11, 2000, this way we will be able to start with the process of preparing for publication and printing of journal two weeks before the event.

At the same time we need to find out if you can arrive on Thursday June 29th, in order to arrange meetings with, Los Angeles Times, La Opinion, and other Spanish and English media stations, meetings with community organizations, City of Los Angeles representatives and Mayor Richard Riordan. Hotel accommodations and Airfare will be cover by ASOSAL.

I will be contacting your office to follow up with this request, or if you have any questions please call me at (213) 483-1244 or (213) 483-4061.

Sincerely,

Carlos Ardon
Executive District

660 S. Bonnie Brae St. Los Angeles, CA 90057 ▲ (213) 483-1244 Fax (213) 483-9832
www.asosal.com ▲ e-mail: asosal@pacbell.net

Commendation

In the ASOSAL's awards dinner

June 30, 2000

It is a pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all those who have gathered for the ASOSAL's Third Annual Awards Dinner.

Through its ongoing advocacy, education and legal services The Salvadoran Association of Los Angeles, has had a positive and lasting impact on many lives specially on those who now are permanent residents of the United States of America. I join ASOSAL in honoring Professor Rudy Acuña, Mr. Thomas Chabolla, Honorable Anne Patterson and Ms. Maria Echaveste, for all their support and hard work on behalf of the Salvadoran and Central American communities.

On behalf of the people of the United States, I extend best wishes for continued success.

William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States.

TRAVEL EXPENSES FROM OUTSIDE SOURCE

HITE HOUSE OFFICE

In order to consider whether the Government may accept from an outside source payment of your travel, subsistence and related expenses under the GSA travel rule or 5 C.F.R. 2635.204(f), you must complete the information below. You must submit this form and related documentation and receive approval PRIOR to commencement of travel. Failure to receive PRIOR approval may result in you having to pay the travel expenses yourself. The outside source need not be a 501(c)(3) organization, but if it is, please state so on this form and include the IRS determination letter.

CONTACT PERSON: Rochelle Thompson

PHONE NUMBER: 67143

DATE OF REQUEST: 6/27/00

Please include a copy of the letter of invitation.

Your Name and Position: Irene Bueno – Special Asst. to President + Senior Advisor to DCOS

Nature of Meeting or Event: ☐ Official ☐ Political

…ig or Event Description and HOW IT RELATES TO YOUR OFFICIAL OR POLITICAL DUTIES:

To deliver a speech

Dates of Travel: 6/30/00-7/1/00 **Destination(s):** Los Angeles, CA

Pe…ns or Entity Making The Payment (please also note any financial interests of the person or entity known to you that may be affected by the exercise of your Government responsibilities):

Contact at Organization Making the Payment: Carlos Ardon

Address of Organization: 660 S. Bonnie Brae St.
Los Angeles, CA 90057

Phone: 213-483-1244

Expense:	Amount:	Method:*
Transportation (specify): Comm Air	$214.00	☐ In Kind ☒ Reimbursable ☐ Other (Political Only)
Lodging:		☐ In Kind ☐ Reimbursable ☐ Other (Political Only)
…als:		☐ In Kind ☐ Reimbursable ☐ Other (Political Only)
Misc. (specify):		☐ In Kind ☐ Reimbursable ☐ Other (Political Only)

*Payment may be made either in-kind or by check made payable to the U.S. Treasury; you may not directly receive payment by either cash or a check made out to you.

This form and any accompanying memorandum of approval must be attached to your travel authorization. You MUST complete a travel voucher listing all expenses (regardless of payment method) following the trip.

Please send this form to the Counsel's Office (Room 128, OEOB) at least three (3) days before commencement of travel

TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNSEL'S OFFICE ☐ Approved ☐ Disapproved **Pursuant to:** ☐ 31 U.S.C. § 1353 ☐ 5 C.F.R. 2635.204(f)

Co…l's Signature ____________ Date ____________

Asosal
660 S Bonnie Brae St.
LA CA 90057
213-483-1244

ASOSAL

Fax

To:	Rachelle Thompson	**From:**	Dora Alicia Tejada
Fax:	202-456-1907	**Pages:**	2
Phone:		**Date:**	6/27/2000
Re:	Hotel Reservation to Ms. Bueno	**CC:**	

Urgent **For Review** **Please Comment** **Please Reply** **Please Recycle**

Hi Rachelle !!

I did the reservation to Mrs. Irene Bueno, if you have any question please call me at 213-483-1244 ext. 102,

HOTEL: WILSHIRE GRAND

ADDRESS: 930 WILSHIRE BLVD.

LOS ANGELES, CA 90057

TELEPHONE: 1-888-773- -2888

CONFIRMATION # 1124169

Again if you have any question or need more information call me,

Thank you,

DORA

Lunch is @ 12:00pm.

→ Luis Hernandez → he knows her.

WILSHIRE GRAND
HOTEL & CENTRE

930 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90017
TEL (888) 773-2888
FAX (213) 612-3989

Thank you very much for your reservation.

We will make every effort to provide accommodations of your requested rate or preference.

We will do our best to have your accommodations ready when you arrive. Our check-in time begins at 3:00 p.m. and we suggest, if possible, that you plan to arrive after that hour. We regret that we cannot guarantee the availability of accommodations prior to check-in time.

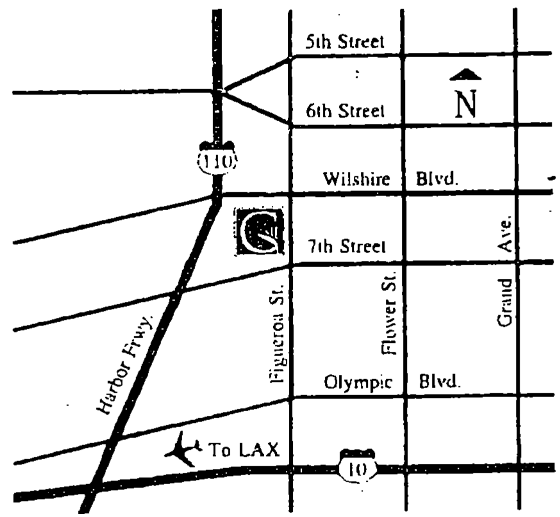
Reservations will not be held beyond 6:00 p.m. unless guaranteed by credit card or advance deposit.

In the event of a cancellation please ask for a cancellation number to insure proper processing. Cancellation must be received by 6:00 p.m. the day of arrival or one night's room and tax will be charged.

Valet parking is available on Francisco Street. Entrances on both 7th Street and Wilshire Blvd.

We're looking forward to having you with us at the Wilshire Grand Hotel & Centre.

FROM:	Directions to the Wilshire Grand
L.A.X.	Take the 405 FRWY (north) to the 10 FRWY (east) to the 110 FRWY (north). Exit from 110 FRWY at 9th St., turn right from the offramp, travel 2 blocks to Figueroa St. Turn left on Figueroa St., travel 2 blocks to 7th St. The Wilshire Grand is on the northwest corner of Figueroa St. and 7th. St.
The North Burbank Santa Clarita Valley or San Francisco	Take the 5 FRWY (south) to the 110 FRWY (south "towards San Pedro"). Exit from the 110 FRWY at Wilshire Blvd. Turn left from the offramp, travel 1 block. The Wilshire Grand will be on the right hand side of the street.
The South Anaheim or San Diego	Take the 5 FRWY (north) to the 101 FRWY (north "towards Los Angeles")to the 110 FRWY (south). Exit from the 110 FRWY at Wilshire Blvd. Turn left from the offramp, the Wilshire Grand will be on the right hand side of the street.
The West Santa Monica or Beverly Hills	Take the 10 FRWY (east) to the 110 FRWY (north). Exit from the 110 FRWY at 9th St. Turn right from the offramp, travel 2 blocks to Figueroa St. Turn left on Figueroa St., travel 2 blocks to 7th St. The Wilshire Grand is on the northwest corner of Figueroa St. and 7th. St.
The East Pomona W. Covina or San Bernardino	Take the 10 FRWY (west) to the 101 FRWY (north "towards Los Angeles") to the 110 FRWY (south). Exit from the 110 FRWY at Wilshire Blvd. Turn left from the offramp, the Wilshire Grand will be on the right hand side of the street.



TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

NUMBER: ____________________

DATE OF REQUEST: 6/27/00

Please Print

Last Name / First Name: Bueno, Irene

Extension: 66558 | Room: 1FL/WW | ☒ White House Staff ☐ Advance ☐ Other: ________

2. PURPOSE(S): To deliver a speech

EVENT DATE(S): 6/30/00

3. ITINERARY *(List all cities including those through which flights are routed):*

Origin: Washington

Destination: Los Angeles, CA

Return to: Washington

4. DEPARTURE

Date:	Time:	Mode:
6/30/00	7:35am	Comm. Air

RETURN

Date:	Time:	Mode:
7/1/00	5:09PM	Comm Air.

5. FUNDING SOURCE:

☐ Official ☐ Political ☐ 501 (c)(3) ☒ Other: ________

Note: *For travel funded by political, 501(c)(3) or other sources, an approved "Travel Expenses From Outside Source" form must be attached.*

Please Read Instructions Regarding Travel Expenses on Reverse side of this Form

6. SPECIAL EXPENSES

☐ Mini-Van Rental ☐ Privately Owned Vehicle ☐ Standard Vehicle Rental

Hotel:

Per Diem: | Air Fare:

7. TRAVELER'S SIGNATURE

(I have read and agree to the terms set forth on the reverse side)

8. FORM COMPLETED BY: *please print* Rochelle Thompson

9. APPROVING SIGNATURES:

Office Head: | Political Travel Approval *(for political travel only)*:

Chief of Staff:

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PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE
Working on Behalf of the Hispanic Community

Expanding Economic Opportunity

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

Saving Social Security. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have coupled fiscal discipline with a commitment to preserve and protect Social Security. President Clinton has pushed to eliminate the confusing and out-dated Retirement Earnings Test in order to encourage work and earnings for older Americans. Under the Clinton-Gore Administration, the life of the Social Security trust fund has been extended to 2034. President Clinton has proposed extending the program's solvency to at least 2050 by paying down the national debt and dedicating the interest savings to Social Security. The President has also pushed for measures to strengthen Social Security's benefits to reduce poverty among elderly women. These steps would be a down payment on truly saving Social Security.

Nearly 21 Million New Jobs. 20.8 million new jobs have been created since 1993, the most jobs ever created under a single Administration -- and more new jobs than Presidents Reagan and Bush created during their three terms. 92 percent (19.2 million) of the new jobs have been created in the private sector, the highest percentage in 50 years.

Record-Low Unemployment Rate. Under President Clinton and Vice President Gore, the Hispanic unemployment rate has dropped from 11.6 percent in 1992 to 6.4 percent in 1999 -- the lowest annual level ever recorded. Overall unemployment is down from 7.5 percent in 1992 to 4.1 percent today, the lowest rate in 30 years.

Income of Median Hispanic Households Up $3,880 in Past Three Years. The median income of Hispanic households rose $3,880 – or 15.9 percent -- in the past three years. Median income rose 4.8 percent in 1998 alone, higher than the rate of increase for the overall population, which was 3.5 percent.

Real Wages Are Rising for Hispanics. Median weekly earnings rose 3.8 percent between 1996 and 1998, after adjusting for inflation.

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

Strong Private Sector Growth. The private sector of the economy has grown 4.4 percent annually since 1993, compared to 3.4 percent under President Reagan and 1.8 percent under President Bush.

Tax Cuts for Working Families. President Clinton's 1993 Economic Plan provided tax cuts to 15 million hard-pressed working families by expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The average family with two children who received the EITC received a tax cut of $1,026. In 1997, the EITC lifted more than 1.2 million Hispanics out of poverty. This year the President has proposed expanding the EITC to provide tax relief to 6.8 million additional working families.

Largest Hispanic Poverty Drop in a Generation. Since President Clinton and Vice President Gore took office, Hispanic poverty has dropped from 30.6 percent to 25.6 percent, the lowest level since 1979. The Hispanic child poverty rate has fallen 15.9 percent since 1993. While this marks significant progress, President Clinton will continue to fight for policies that help to raise incomes and reduce poverty.

Minimum Wage Increased. The President raised the minimum wage to $5.15 an hour -- directly benefiting 1.6 million Hispanic workers. This year, President Clinton and Vice President Gore have called on Congress to pass an additional $1.00 per hour increase in the minimum wage.

Fighting for Paycheck Equity. The President and Vice President have called on Congress to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would strengthen laws prohibiting wage discrimination. This year, the President has proposed a $27 million initiative to help the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission and the Labor Department fight wage discrimination. In 1999, the median weekly earnings of Hispanic women represented only 56 percent of the median weekly earnings for all men.

Encouraging Investment in Underserved Communities with the New Markets Initiative. President Clinton's New Markets Initiative is helping to bring economic development and renewal to communities that have not benefited from the soaring economy by prompting approximately $15 billion in new investment in urban and rural areas. In the FY 2000 budget, President Clinton won $20 million in funding for America's Private Investment Companies, and $16.5 million in funding for the New Markets Venture Capitol Program -- two key elements of the New Markets Initiative. The President's FY 2001 budget provides tax credits and loans guarantee incentives to stimulate $22 billion in new investment in urban and rural areas.

Expanding Investment in Urban and Rural Areas. Spurring economic development in distressed communities, the Clinton-Gore Administration has created 31 Empowerment Zones and more than 100 Enterprise Communities, including 20 rural Enterprise Communities that are creating new jobs, new opportunities and stronger communities. The President won $70 million in funding for Rural and Urban Empowerment Zones in FY 2000 -- after Congress initially provided no funding.

Expanding Access to Capital with Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI). Proposed and signed into law by the President in 1994, the CDFI Fund, through grants, loans and equity investments, is helping to create a network of community development financial institutions in distressed areas across the United States. In FY 1999, funding was increased 19 percent to $95 million. President Clinton successfully worked to maintain that investment in FY 2000. This year, the President is proposing $125 million.

Closing the Digital Divide. Access to computers and the Internet is becoming increasingly important in American life, but there is a growing "digital divide" between those who have access to information technology and those who do not. Increasing access to technology and bridging that digital divide has been a top priority for President Clinton and Vice President Gore. To help make access to computers and the Internet as universal as the telephone, the Clinton-Gore Administration is proposing a comprehensive initiative to bridge the digital divide and create new opportunity for all Americans. Their FY 2001 budget includes proposals to: broaden access to technologies such as computers, the Internet, and high-speed networks; provide people the skilled teachers and the training they need to master the information economy; and promote online content and applications that will help empower all Americans to use new technologies to their fullest potential.

Taking Executive Action to Bridge the Digital Divide. In December 1999, President Clinton directed the Cabinet to take specific actions to close the digital divide, such as expanding Community Technology Centers in low-income neighborhoods, continuing to measure the extent of the digital divide, and helping low-income workers gain the skills needed to compete for high-paying information technology jobs. The President also announced the launch of the Digital Divide Network, an Internet-based information clearinghouse on public and private efforts to bring technology to underserved communities; and the formation of the Digital Opportunity Partnership, an alliance between the private sector and civil and human rights organizations to bring high technology to the doorstep of nonprofit organizations. He also announced a commitment by the Congress of National Black Churches to make the digital divide a top civil rights priority.

Nearly Three Times the Number of Small Business Loans. Between 1993 and 2000 the Small Business Administration (SBA) approved nearly 25,000 loans to Hispanic entrepreneurs under the 7(a), 504, and Microloan programs [as of 3/17/00]. In 1999 alone, the SBA granted nearly 4,000 loans, worth $750.2 million, to Hispanic small business owners -- nearly three times the number of loans granted in 1992.

Supporting Minority Business Communities and Increasing Access to Capital. Building on the efforts of the SBA, Vice President Gore unveiled aggressive plans to increase lending and business services to the Hispanic and African American business communities nationwide. SBA has entered partnership agreements with national leadership organizations, and engaged its national network of field offices and resources in the effort. SBA also licensed the first Hispanic-managed venture capital fund. In addition, the Vice President announced an unprecedented agreement between SBA and the "Big Three" U.S. automakers to increase subcontracting awards to minority businesses by nearly $3 billion over the next three years -- a 50 percent increase over current levels.

Ensuring Minority Business Owners Have a Fair Opportunity to Compete. The President signed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century into law on June 9, 1998. The Act protects the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program, a program that ensures that minority and women-owned businesses have an opportunity to compete for transportation projects. The Administration helped defeat an amendment to the House version of this bill that would have eliminated the DBE Program. In a different measure, the President also approved the creation of a new program to target assistance to minority-owned businesses in industries that continue to reflect the effects of discrimination. As a result, thousands of minority-owned businesses will be able to compete more effectively for government contracts.

Working on Behalf of Minority Farmers. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is working to strengthen programs and increase outreach targeted to underserved communities, including increasing its lending to minority and women producers. Lending to socially disadvantaged farmers increased by 44 percent last year, from $186 million in 1998 to $269 million in 1999.

Creating New Tools to Help Families Move from Welfare to Work. Since enactment of the 1996 welfare reform law, millions of families have moved from welfare to work. With the President's leadership, the 1997 Balanced Budget Act included $3 billion to move long-term welfare recipients and low-income non-custodial fathers into jobs. To fully implement this initiative, the President's FY 2001 budget allows grantees an additional two years to spend Welfare-to-Work funds. It also proposes $255 million for Fathers Work/Families Win grants to promote responsible fatherhood and support working families. The Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit provides tax incentives to encourage businesses to hire long-term welfare recipients. The President's Access to Jobs initiative helps communities design innovative transportation solutions, such as van services, to help former welfare recipients and other low-income workers get to work, and this year the President is proposing $150 million for this initiative, double last year's level. President Clinton has secured 110,000 new housing vouchers in the last two years to help welfare recipients and hard-pressed working families move closer to job opportunities, and this year he is proposing $690 million for 120,000 new housing vouchers.

Fighting for Equal Opportunity

Building One America. The President has led the nation in an effort to become One America in the 21st Century: a place where we respect others' differences and, at the same time, embrace the common values that unite us. AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson served on the Advisory Board to the President's Initiative on Race, which the President charged with overseeing this effort. The President, the Administration and the Advisory Board were actively involved in public outreach efforts -- including holding numerous public meetings and town halls -- to engage Americans across the nation in this historic effort. One of the critical elements of the President's Initiative on Race was identifying, highlighting and sharing with the nation promising practices -- local and national efforts to promote racial reconciliation. The Advisory Board presented their final report to the President on September 18, 1998, and recommended that conversations on race continue. President Clinton appointed Robert B. (Ben) Johnson as Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Office on the President's Initiative for One America, a new office the President created to follow up on the work of his Initiative on Race. The President's FY 2001 budget includes $5 million for One America dialogues to promote and facilitate discussions on racial diversity and understanding.

An Administration that Looks Like One America. The President has appointed the most diverse Cabinet and Administration in history, and has appointed more Hispanics than any other President. Hispanic Americans make up seven percent of Senate Confirmed appointments, including Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson and Small Business Administrator Aida Alvarez.

Most Hispanic Judicial Nominees In History. The President has appointed the most diverse group of judges in American history, garnering the highest percentage of top ABA ratings in nearly 40 years. Six percent of all President Clinton's judicial appointments are Hispanics, the largest number in history, including the Honorable Richard Paez, Judge, Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals; the Honorable Jose Cabranes, Judge, Second Circuit U.S. Circuit Court; the Honorable Julio Fuentes, Judge, Third Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals; the Honorable Carlos Moreno, Judge, Central District of California, U.S. District Court; and the Honorable Hilda Tagle, Judge, Southern District of Texas, U.S. District Court.

Senior Level Administration Appointments. President Clinton has appointed more Hispanics to senior level positions than any President in American history. Nine percent of Presidential appointments, including boards and commissions, are held by Hispanics. These Presidential appointees include Louis Caldera, Secretary of the Army; Edward Romero, Ambassador to Spain, George Muñoz , President of Overseas Private Investment Corporation; Norma Cantu, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the Department of Education; Saul Ramirez, Jr., Department of Housing and Urban Development Deputy Secretary; Sylvia Baca, Assistant Secretary-Designate, Department of Interior; Irasema Garza, Director, Department of Labor Women's Bureau; Ida L. Castro, Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; Patricia T. Montoya, Commissioner for Children, Youth & Families at the Department of Health and Human Services; and John U. Sepulveda, Deputy Director at the Office of Personnel Management. White House appointees include: Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff Maria Echaveste and Assistant to the President and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Mickey Ibarra.

Opposed California Proposition 209 and Similar Measures. The Clinton-Gore Administration strongly opposes state and local initiatives to eliminate affirmative action programs that expand opportunities for Hispanics and others. The Administration opposed Proposition 209 in California and filed *amicus* briefs opposing Proposition 209, which currently prohibits state affirmative action programs. The Clinton-Gore Administration opposed a similar initiative in Houston, which was defeated and opposed an initiative in Washington that is similar to Proposition 209. In all these cases, representatives of the Administration have spoken out strongly against these initiatives as unfair and a barrier to equality.

Ordered an Assessment of Affirmative Action Programs. The President ordered a comprehensive review of the government's affirmative action programs which concluded that affirmative action is still an effective and important tool to expand educational and economic opportunity to all Americans. This review of federal affirmative action programs has helped to ensure that these programs are fair and effective and that they can survive legal challenges. As a result, programs that benefit Hispanics, including students, working men and women, and business owners, remain in effect and are more likely to be upheld by the courts.

Working to Expand Civil Rights Enforcement. In FY 2000, the President won a 19 percent increase in funding for federal civil rights enforcement, including $82 million for the Civil Rights Division at the Justice Department. And this year, President Clinton has proposed $695 million for civil rights enforcement -- a 13 percent increase -- to prosecute criminal civil rights cases (including hate crimes and police misconduct), enforce the American with Disabilities Act, pursue Equal Employment Opportunity Commission employment actions and prevent housing discrimination, and other civil rights enforcement efforts.

Working to Ensure Fairness and Remove Barriers to High Quality Education. The Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Education is working to eliminate discriminatory educational practices within schools that contribute to deficiencies in minority student achievement. These priorities included the inappropriate placement of minority students in special education, limited access of minority students to challenging curricula and programs such as gifted and honors classes and the lack of comparable resources.

Ensuring Election Fairness. The Clinton-Gore Administration defended racially fair redistricting plans against claims that they were unconstitutional and prevented election day discrimination against minority voters and voter intimidation and harassment by monitoring polling place activities in a record number of states and counties. Continued enforcement efforts to ensure that citizens who rely on Spanish have the same opportunities to participate in voting-related activities as English-speaking voters.

Oppose English-Only Legislation. The Clinton-Gore Administration strongly opposed legislation to make English the official language of the United States, which would have jeopardized services and programs for non-English speakers and jeopardized assistance to the tens of thousands of new immigrants and others seeking to learn English as adults.

Increasing Voter Registration. Since 1995, the National Voter Registration Act or "Motor Voter" law has registered nearly 28 million new voters and made voting easier for millions more. [FEC, 6/99; FEC, 6/97]

Opposed California Proposition 187. The Administration opposed California's Proposition 187, which would have made illegal immigrants ineligible for public school education at all levels and ineligible for public health care services.

Working for Fair Housing. To respond to the increase in reported cases of serious fair housing violations, HUD has committed $37 million to 67 fair housing centers around the country to assist in fighting housing discrimination. In addition, the President proposed and won a major expansion (a 33 percent increase) of HUD's Fair Housing programs in FY 1999. In FY 2000, the President won $44 million for HUD's efforts to fight housing discrimination, which includes $6 million to continue the audit-based fair housing enforcement initiative started last year.

Defended Fairness. The Clinton-Gore Administration has filed more cases between 1993 and 1997 to enforce fair housing laws than any other Administration (more than 500 cases). For instance, this Administration desegregated a Vidor, Texas, public housing complex and ordered a Mississippi bank to implement remedial lending plans for minority customers who were unfairly denied loans by the bank.

Eliminated Discriminatory "Redlining" Practices. The Clinton-Gore Administration negotiated agreements with health care agencies to eliminate discriminatory "redlining" practices denying home health care services based on residential location.

Working to Ensure a Fair, Accurate and Complete Census. The Clinton-Gore Administration is working to ensure that Census 2000 is as accurate as possible using the best, most up-to-date scientific methods as recommended by the National Academy of Sciences. The 1990 Census had an undercount of 8.4 million and 5 percent of Hispanics across the nation were not counted. A fair and accurate Census is a fundamental part of a representative democracy and is the basis for providing equality under the law. The President is determined to have a fair and full count in 2000, and he is announcing new steps to encourage all Americans to participate in Census 2000. The President is launching a *Census in Schools Challenge*, to ensure that children are counted and educate both students and parents; reiterating that census information is strictly confidential; and directing federal agencies to step up activities in support of the Census.

Immigration

Welcoming New Americans. Since 1993, the United States has welcomed 4.4 million new American citizens. Faced with this unprecedented number of applications, the Administration undertook an initiative that has significantly reduced the backlog of citizenship applications and is restoring timely processing while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the process. Furthermore, the Administration's English as a Second Language/Civics Education Initiative will provide limited English speaking adults with instruction in both English literacy and critical life skills necessary for effective citizenship and civic participation.

Seeking Fairness for Immigrants. The President is urging Congress to pass legislation to restructure the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to improve services, to ensure equitable treatment of Central American and Haitian migrants under immigration laws, to allow long-term migrants to adjust their immigration status, and to correct the most egregious impacts of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996.

Defended Immigrant Rights. The Clinton-Gore Administration defeated legislative efforts which would have significantly eroded health care for immigrants. The bipartisan agreement strengthened the sponsorship requirement while preserving the basic ability of families to reunify.

Restoring Benefits to Legal Immigrants. The President believes that legal immigrants should have the same economic opportunity, and bear the same responsibility, as other members of society. In the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the Agricultural Research Act of 1998, the President fought for and succeeded in reversing unfair cuts in benefits to legal immigrants. The FY 2001 budget builds on the Administration's progress of restoring these important benefits by providing $2.5 billion over five years to allow states to provide health care to certain legal immigrant children and their families and pregnant women, to restore SSI eligibility to legal immigrants with disabilities, and to restore Food Stamp eligibility to certain aged immigrants and to legal immigrants who live in a household with Food Stamp eligible children.

Assuring Families Access to Health Care and Other Benefits. In May 1999, the Vice President doubling of the investments in bilingual teacher training as part of its Hispanic Education Action Plan. Bilingual education funding helps school districts teach English to more than a million limited English proficient (LEP) children and helps LEP students to achieve to the same high standards as all other students. It also provides teachers with the training they need to teach limited English proficient students. The Immigrant Education program helps more than a thousand school districts provide supplemental instructional services to more than 800,000 recent immigrant students. In his proposal to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the President has proposed additional help to ensure that all teachers are well-trained to meet the needs of students with Limited English Proficiency. His proposal would also make schools and districts more accountable for helping children with Limited English Proficiency master their academic subjects and learn English. The President's FY 2001 budget increases funding for these programs by an additional $832 million.

More Assistance for Migrant Children and Families. Migrant families face particularly difficult obstacles to gaining the education and training they would need to improve their standard of living. President Clinton improved the Migrant Education Program in the 1994 reauthorization, won a 16 percent increase in FY 1999, and won another increase in FY 2000 -- bringing the total to $22 million. As part of his Hispanic Education Action Plan, he also won increases for the High School Equivalency Program, the, College Assistance Migrant Program, as well as funding for a Migrant Youth Job Training Demonstration.

English Literacy/Civics Initiative. The Clinton-Gore budget requests $75 million for the English Language/Civics Initiative -- a nearly $50 million increase to help an additional estimated 250,000 LEP individuals. This program helps states and communities provide limited English proficient individuals with expanded access to quality English-language instruction linked to civics and life skills instruction, including understanding the U.S. government system, the public education system, the workplace, and other key institutions of American life.

Reducing the Drop-Out Rate Through Right Track Partnerships. The President's FY 2000 budget provides $100 million for "Right Track Partnerships" to promote partnerships between schools, employers, and community-based organizations that devise innovative community-wide approaches to increase the rate at which economically disadvantaged and limited-English proficient youth complete and excel in high school and subsequently increase the rate at which these youth go on to post-secondary education, training, and higher paying careers. This new proposal builds on last year's Hispanic Education Action Plan, which received nearly $500 million for FY1999.

Enacted a Hispanic Education Action Plan. The Hispanic dropout rate is unacceptably high, and is substantially higher for Hispanics than African-Americans and White non-Hispanics. The Clinton-Gore Administration is reaching out to Hispanic youth, encouraging them to stay in school, do well academically and graduate from high school, and go on to college so that they can compete successfully for good jobs and take advantage of promising career opportunities. The Administration proposed and won funding increases for a Hispanic Education Action Plan in the FY 1999 budget. As part of this plan, the President and Vice President proposed significant increases in a number of programs that enhance educational announced new actions to assure families that enrolling in Medicaid or the new Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and receiving other critical benefits, such as school lunch and child care services, will not affect their immigration status. The new Department of Justice regulation clarifies a widespread misconception that has deterred eligible populations from enrolling in these programs and undermined the nation's public health. In addition, the Vice President directed Federal agencies to send guidance to their field offices, program grantees and to work with community organizations to educate Americans about this new policy.

Investing in Education

Made the Largest Investment in Education in 30 Years. Maintaining his longtime commitment to education, the President enacted the largest investment in education in 30 years -- and the largest investment in higher education since the G.I. Bill.

Modernizing Our Schools. This year, the President and Vice President have proposed federal tax credits to pay the interest on nearly $25 billion in state and local bonds to modernize and rebuild up to 6,000 public schools that are overcrowded, out-of-date, and unsafe. In addition, the budget includes a new $13 billion school urgent/emergency renovation loan and grant proposal.

More High-Quality Teachers with Smaller Class Sizes. The Clinton-Gore Administration won a second installment of $1.3 billion for the President's plan to hire an additional 100,000 well-prepared teachers to reduce class size in the early grades, when children learn to read and master the basic skills. Already, 29,000 teachers have been hired through this initiative. This year's budget provides $1.75 billion, a $450 million increase -- enough to fund nearly 49,000 teachers. Research shows that minorities, and low-income students in particular, benefit academically from smaller classes.

Providing Early Education to Nearly 900,000 Children with Head Start. The President and Vice President have expanded Head Start funding by 90 percent since 1993. Head Start will reach approximately 880,000 low-income children in FY 2000 and, with the President's proposed increase for the program, will be on the way to reaching the President's goal of serving 1 million children and their families by the year 2002. The Administration also created Early Head Start, bringing Head Start's successful comprehensive services to families with children ages zero to three, and set high quality standards for both programs.

Teaching Every Child to Read by the 3rd Grade. The President challenged Americans to unite to be sure that every child can read well and independently by the third grade. In response to his America Reads challenge, more than 1,100 colleges have committed Work Study students to tutor children in reading, and more than 2 million children have been taught, tutored or mentored by national service programs like AmeriCorps, VISTA, and Foster Grandparents. In addition, colleges and universities that participate in the Federal work-study program must include at least one tutoring or family literacy project as part of its community service activities, giving priority to the employment of work-study students as reading tutors in schools participating in reading reform efforts. Grants are awarded through the Reading Excellence Act to high-poverty schools to improve the teaching and learning of reading.

Providing Safe After-School Opportunities for 850,000 Students Each Year. The 21st Century

Community Learning Centers program will provide enriching after-school and summer school opportunities for 850,000 school-age children in rural and urban communities in FY 2000. Extended learning time has not only been shown to increase achievement in reading and math, but to decrease youth violence and drug use. Funding for this program more than doubled from FY 1999 to FY 2000. For FY 2001, the President's budget calls on Congress to invest $1 billion in the 21st Century Program and to ensure that all children in failing schools have access to quality after-school and summer school opportunities. This proposal will double funding and nearly triple the number of students served to 2.5 million.

Expanding Access to Education Technology. With the Vice President's leadership, the Clinton-Gore Administration has made increasing access to technology a top priority. The President and Vice President created the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund to help connect every school to the Internet, increase the number of multimedia computers in the classroom and provide technology training for teachers. They increased overall investments in educational technology from $23 million in 1993 to $769 million in FY 2000, and tripled funding for Community Technology Centers to reach at least 120 low-income communities. Through the E-rate program, they secured low-cost connections to the Internet for schools, libraries, rural health clinics and hospitals, benefiting more than 80 percent of America's public schools. They also increased investment in education research to ensure all children benefit from educational technology. In 1999, 95 percent of public schools were connected to the Internet -- up from just 35 percent in 1994.

Getting High-Quality Teachers to Underserved Areas. President Clinton and Vice President Gore won $98 million in the FY 2000 budget to enhance teacher quality and attract teachers to high need, high poverty school districts. This year, the President and Vice President have proposed a new $1 billion teacher quality plan to recruit, train and reward good teachers. The Teaching to High Standards Initiative includes a Hometown Teacher Recruitment program to empower high-poverty school districts to develop programs to recruit homegrown teachers to address the shortage of qualified teachers.

Turning Around Failing Schools. 13 million low-income students now benefit from higher expectations and a challenging curriculum geared to higher standards through Title I-Aid to Disadvantaged Students. The FY 2000 budget provides a $134 million accountability fund to help turn around the worst performing schools and hold them accountable for results through such measures as overhauling curriculum, improving staffing, or even closing schools and reopening them as charter schools. This year, the President is proposing to double funding for this fund to turn around the nation's failing schools to ensure all children receive a quality education.

Extra Help for Limited-English Proficient Children. In 1994, President Clinton reformed the Title I program, eliminating barriers that had prevented limited-English proficient children from getting help. In the 1996-97 school year, 30% of the children served by Title I were Hispanic.

Strengthening Bilingual and Immigrant Education. The President is committed to ensuring that students with limited English skills get the extra help they need in order to learn English and meet the same high standards expected for all students. The Clinton-Gore Administration fought for and won a 35% increase in bilingual and immigrant education in the 1997 budget deal, and won another $26 million increase in the FY 2000 budget. For FY 1999, the Administration fought for and won a opportunity for Hispanic Americans. The final FY 2000 budget agreement included $436 million in increases for programs that help to improve the educational outcomes of Latinos and limited English proficient students, including Title I grants to LEAs, Adult Education, Bilingual Education, and TRIO.

Opening the Doors of College to All Americans. In 1997, President Clinton proposed and passed the HOPE Scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits to provide tax relief to nearly 13 million Americans each year who are struggling to pay for college. The Hope Scholarship helps make the first two years of college universally available to about 5.6 million students annually by providing a tax credit of up to $1,500 for the first two years of college. The Lifetime Learning tax credit provides a 20 percent tax credit on the first $5,000 of tuition and fees for students beyond the first two years of college, or taking classes part-time (in 2003, this increases to $10,000). In his FY 2001 budget, the President has proposed to expand the Lifetime Learning tax credit with the College Opportunity tax cut, which will give families the option of taking a tax deduction or claiming a 28 percent credit for the first $5,000 of college tuition and fees until 2002, and $10,000 thereafter.

Expanding Work Study and Pell Grants. One million students will be able to work their way through college because of the President's expansion of the Work Study Program, and nearly four million students will receive a Pell Grant of up to $3,300, the largest maximum award ever. The maximum award has increased 43 percent under the Clinton-Gore Administration. This year President Clinton proposed a $77 million increase in Work Study to continue to support one million awards, and a $200 increase in the Pell Grant maximum award, to raise it to $3,500. In the 1995-96 school year, 54 percent of all Hispanic students enrolled full-time in college received a Pell Grant.

Dual Degree Programs for Minority-Serving Institutions. The Clinton-Gore Administration has proposed a new program to increase opportunities for students at minority-serving institutions. Students would receive two degrees within five years: one from a minority-serving institution, and one from a partner institution in a field in which minorities are underrepresented. This new $40 million program will serve an estimated 3,000 students.

Established a Hispanic Advisory Commission. In 1994, the President issued an Executive Order on Educational Excellence for Hispanics which established an advisory commission to oversee the improvement in education for Hispanics and would work to ensure that Hispanic-Serving Institutions will have more input regarding educational goals and issues of concern to Hispanics. The Commission's report identified contributing factors impacting attainment of educational excellence, corrective policy actions, and plans for program development and funding.

Helping Students Finish College. This year the President has proposed new College Completion Challenge Grants to help reduce the college drop-out rate, with pre-freshman summer programs, support services and increased grant aid to students. This $35 million initiative will improve the chances of success for nearly 18,000 students. Currently, 31 percent of Hispanics drop out of college after less than one year, compared to 18 percent of whites.

Implemented the Student Diversity Partnership Program. Partnered with Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, an Indian Science and Engineering Society and the Center for the Advancement of Hispanics in Science and Engineering Education to implement the Student Diversity Partnership Program. This program will ensure an adequate supply of diverse and qualified scientists and engineers for the 21st century. In addition, the White House awarded Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring Grants to both individual mentors and institutions that foster mentoring, helping to ensure that America's future scientists and engineers come from all of the nation's racial and cultural segments of the population.

AmeriCorps College Support. Since 1993, more than 150,000 people have had the opportunity to serve their communities through AmeriCorps, with Hispanics comprising 11 percent of all participants. In 1999, nearly 50,000 young people had the opportunity to serve and earn an award of up to $4,725 to pay for college or repay student loans.

Establishing the GEAR-UP Mentoring Program for Middle School Children. President Clinton and Vice President Gore created and expanded GEAR-UP, a nationwide mentoring initiative, to help over 750,000 low-income middle school children finish school and prepare for college. GEAR-UP will expand mentoring efforts by states and provide new grants to partnerships of middle schools, institutions of higher education, and community organizations, to provide intensive early intervention services to help prepare over 750,000 students at high-poverty middle schools for college. The President's FY 2001 budget would expand services to 1.4 million students with a 63 percent increase.

Expanding Investments in Youth Education and Training. While House Republicans attempted to eliminate the successful Summer Jobs program in FY 1999, President Clinton prevailed with his request for $871 million in funding, which provided about 483,000 summer jobs for disadvantaged youth. That same year the President signed into law the Workforce Investment Act, consolidating the funding streams of the summer jobs and year-round training programs and increasing local flexibility to design youth job training programs. The Youth Opportunity Grants program provides high school dropouts between the ages of 16 and 24 with academic and job-skills training, as well as apprenticeships building and rehabilitating affordable housing. The President proposed and won $250 million for the second year of funding for this innovative program in FY 2000, allowing the program to serve up to 58,000 of the most disadvantaged young people in high poverty areas.

Teaching Job Skills and Building Homes Through "Youthbuild." Through the Youthbuild program, nearly 2,300 high school dropouts have developed valuable job skills while building or renovating homes for hundreds of low-income families. This program offers young adults, ranging in age from 16 to 24, the opportunity to gain leadership skills, earn a high school diploma or GED, learn a valuable trade, and provide much-needed housing to families nationwide. More than $170 million in grants have been made under Youthbuild since its inception in 1993, enabling over 7,800 young people to take part in building or rehabilitating more than 3,650 houses and apartments units in their communities. Of the 7,800 served by Youthbuild, an estimated 1,170 are Hispanic youth. The FY 2001 budget increases the investment in Youthbuild by 76 percent to $75 million, enough to serve about 3,330 trainees.

Improving Our Nation's Health

Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities. In 1998, President Clinton announced an initiative to end racial and ethnic health disparities. The effort sets a national goal of eliminating the longstanding disparities by the year 2010 in six key health areas: infant mortality, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and immunizations. In the FY 1999 budget, Congress took a critical first step in investing in the President's multi-year proposal and in FY 2000 provided an additional $20 million in funding, a 200 percent increase. Working with minority public health providers, advocates, and other consumer representatives, the FY 2001 budget includes $35 million for the Centers for Disease Control to continue demonstration programs to enable select communities to develop innovative and effective approaches to address these disparities.

Addressing HIV/AIDS in Minority Communities. Racial and ethnic communities make up the fastest growing portion of HIV/AIDS cases (more than 50 percent of all new HIV cases). In FY 2000, the President builds on the progress started last year with a $251 million investment in a comprehensive initiative that will improve prevention efforts in high-risk communities and expand access to cutting edge HIV therapies and other treatment needed for HIV/AIDS in minority communities. The President's FY 2001 budget includes $274 million to continue this effort.

Focused Health Efforts. The Clinton-Gore Administration established the Office of the Minority Health Research and Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health. The Administration also helped communities develop culturally-competent systems for the care of children with serious emotional disturbances through the Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Children and Families program, and negotiated agreements with hospitals and nursing homes to eliminate barriers to equal access for minorities based on language.

Working to Enact a Strong, Enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights for All Americans. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have called on the Congress to pass a strong, enforceable patients' bill of rights that assures Americans the quality health care they need. The bill should include important patient protections such as: assuring direct access to specialists; real emergency room protections; continuity of care provisions that protect patients from abrupt changes in treatment; a fair, timely, and independent appeals process for patient grievances; and enforcement provisions to make these rights <u>real</u>. Leading by example, the President directed all federal agencies to ensure that their employees and beneficiaries have the benefits and rights guaranteed under the President's proposed Patients' Bill of Rights.

Enacted Most Comprehensive Medicare Reforms in History. In the 1997 Balanced Budget, protected, modernized and extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund while offering new options for patient choice and preventive care. New preventive benefits passed include coverage of annual mammograms, coverage of screening tests for both colorectal and cervical cancer, and a diabetes self-management benefit. Proposed a plan to reform and modernize Medicare's benefits, including an optional prescription drug benefit that is affordable and available to all beneficiaries. In March 1999, the Medicare Trustees reported that the life of the Medicare Trust Fund has been extended until 2015. In 1993, Medicare was expected to run out of money in 1999.

Extended Health Care to Millions of Children with the Children's Health Insurance Program. In the Balanced Budget of 1997, President Clinton won $24 billion to provide health care coverage to up to five million uninsured children. In October 1999 the President announced new outreach efforts to enroll millions of eligible, uninsured children. Last year, the President launched a nationwide "Insure Kids Now" campaign that will bring together major TV and radio networks, healthcare organizations, religious groups and other community-based organizations to help enroll more children in the Children's Health Insurance Program, with the goal of enrolling 5 million of the estimated 10 million children eligible for health insurance under CHIP within 5 years. Hispanic children make up nearly 30 percent of all uninsured children. In order to reach this vulnerable population, the Administration and states have made special efforts to advertise the availability of the program and provide enrollment materials printed in Spanish. This year's budget includes several of Vice President Gore's proposals to accelerate enrollment of children in CHIP. The President and Vice President are also proposing a new FamilyCare program, which would give States the option to cover parents in the same plan as their children.

Nutrition for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). President Clinton won over $4 million for nutrition assistance to 7.4 million women, infants, and children through the WIC program, an increase of $108 million over FY 1999. The additional funds will allow the program to provide a monthly package of nourishing supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals to low-income women, infants and children who are at nutritional risk -- a 25 percent increase in participation since 1993. Research shows that every $1 increase in the prenatal care portion of the WIC program cuts between $1.77 and $3.90 in medical expenses in the first 60 days following childbirth. In 1996, 29 percent of the infants and 31 percent of the children who benefited from WIC were Hispanic.

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

Raised Immunization Rates to All Time High. Since 1993, childhood immunization rates have reached all-time highs, with 90 percent or more of America's toddlers receiving the most critical doses of vaccines for children by age 2. For the most critical childhood vaccines, vaccination levels are nearly the same for preschool children of all racial and ethnic groups, narrowing a gap that was estimated to be as wide as 26 percentage points a generation ago. But despite this program, as of 1997, 79 percent of white children had received the recommended series of vaccinations by age 2 compared to 72 percent of Hispanic children whom had been vaccinated against childhood disease. To help increase participation, on April 20, 1999, Secretary Shalala announced a new Spanish-language childhood immunization public awareness campaign, "Vacunelo A Tiempo Todo el Tiempo" (Vaccinate Your Children On time, Every Time), to create and distribute culturally relevant and language appropriate educational materials to help raise Hispanic immunization rates to the national average.

Expanding Coverage to Uninsured Americans. The President and Vice President have proposed a

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

Providing Health Care to Children and Pregnant Women. Under current law, states have the option to provide health coverage to immigrant children and pregnant women who entered the country before August 22, 1996. The President's FY 2001 Budget gives states the option to extend Medicaid or CHIP coverage to low-income legal immigrant children and Medicaid to pregnant women who entered the country after August 22, 1996. The proposal would cost $695 million and provide critical health insurance to approximately 144,000 children and 33,000 women by FY 2005. This proposal would reduce the number of high-risk pregnancies, ensure healthier children, and lower the cost of emergency Medicaid deliveries. The budget's Medicaid/SCHIP FamilyCare initiative also covers legal immigrant parents of children who are covered by Medicaid or SCHIP.

Strengthening Families and Communities

Helping Parents Balance Work and Family. The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) -- the first piece of legislation the President signed into law -- enables workers to take up to 12 weeks unpaid leave to care for a new baby or ailing family member without jeopardizing their job. Since its enactment, millions of Americans have benefited from FMLA, and the President has expanded leave options for Federal employees. President Clinton has called for extending this benefit to 12 million more working families and expanding the law to allow workers to take leave for family obligations such as doctors appointments and parent-teacher conferences. Additionally, in his FY 2001 budget, the President is proposing new grants to enable states and regions to develop innovative paid leave options for working parents.

Providing Incentives to Save. President Clinton signed legislation creating Individual Development Accounts, providing incentives for low-income families to save for a first home, higher education, or to start a new business, a key part of his 1992 community empowerment agenda. In FY 1999 and 2000, $10 million was awarded to establish savings accounts for over 10,000 low-income workers in 40 communities. This year, the President's budget provides $25 million for IDAs and proposes to allow low-income working families to use IDAs to save for a car that will allow them to get or keep a job.

Nearly Doubled Child Support Collections. President Clinton signed into law the toughest child support crackdown in history. Federal and state child support programs broke new records in 1999, collecting $15.5 billion -- nearly double the amount collected in 1992. The number of paternities established rose to nearly 1.5 million in 1998 – more than triple the number from 516,000 in 1992. The number of child support cases with collections rose 59 percent, from 2.8 million 1992 to 4.5 million in 1998.

Increasing Homeownership. The Clinton-Gore Administration launched a program to increase the homeownership rate of Hispanics in the U.S. through advertising, education and counseling programs and working with lending institutions to better serve the Hispanic community. The Hispanic homeownership rate rose to 45.5 percent in 1999, the highest level ever recorded.

Expanding Low-Income Housing Tax Credit by 40 Percent. In 1993, President Clinton fulfilled his promise to permanently extend the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, spurring the private development of low-income housing and helping to build 75,000-90,000 housing units each year.

Protecting Rent Subsidies for Low-Income Families. President Clinton won $10.8 billion in the FY00 budget for the renewal of all Section 8 contracts, an increase of $1.2 billion from FY 1999. This will ensure continuation of HUD rental subsidies for low-income tenants in privately owned housing.

Launched New Strategies to Reduce the High Rate of Teen Pregnancies. Teen (aged 15 to 19 years) births have fallen seven years in a row, by 18 percent from 1991 to 1998. The teen birth rate is at its lowest level since 1987. Birth rates for Hispanic teenagers have dropped 13 percent in 4 years.

Improved Access to Affordable, Quality Child Care and Early Childhood Programs. Under the Clinton-Gore Administration, federal funding for child care has more than doubled, helping parents pay for the care of about 1.5 million children in 1998, and the1996 welfare reform law increased child care funding by $4 billion over six years to provide child care assistance to families moving from welfare to work. Since 1993, the Clinton-Gore Administration has increased funding for the Head Start program by 90 percent, and in FY 2000, the program will serve approximately 880,000 children – over 160,000 more children than in 1993. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have proposed a $817 million increase in FY 2001 for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, which helps working families struggling to afford child care. These new funds, combined with the child care funds provided in welfare reform, will enable the program to serve over 2.2 million children in 2001.

Fighting Crime

Lowest Crime Rate in 25 Years. Under the Clinton-Gore Administration, America has experienced the longest continuous drop in crime on record. Violent crime rate fell 7 percent in 1998 and 27 percent since 1993. The murder rate is down more than 25 percent since 1993, its lowest point since 1967. The overall crime rate is the lowest in 25 years. Between 1997 and 1998, the Hispanic violent victimization rate fell by nearly a third.

Putting 100,000 More Police on the Streets. In 1999, ahead of schedule and under budget, the Clinton-Gore Administration met its commitment to fund an additional 100,000 police officers for our communities. As a part of the COPS Program, the President announced new grants to increase community policing in high-crime and underserved neighborhoods. To help keep crime at record lows, the President won funding for the first installment toward his goal to hire up to 50,000 more officers by 2005. This year, the Clinton-Gore budget includes over $1 billion to continue the successful COPS initiative to hire more officers, hire new community prosecutors, give police the tools they need to fight crime, and to fund community-wide crime fighting efforts.

More than 500,000 Felons, Fugitives and Domestic Abusers Denied Guns. Since the President signed the Brady Bill into law, more than 500,000 felons, fugitives and domestic abusers have been prevented from purchasing guns. And the historic 1994 Crime Bill banned 19 of the deadliest assault weapons and their copies, keeping assault weapons off our streets. The homicide rate dropped 7 percent in 1998 – almost entirely due to a decrease in homicides committed with guns. Since 1993, there has been a more than 35 percent drop in gun-related crime and a 57 percent decrease in juvenile gun homicide offenders.

Working to End Racial Profiling. To help determine where and when racial profiling occurs, President Clinton directed Cabinet agencies to collect data on the race, ethnicity, and gender of individuals subject to certain stops by federal law enforcement. The President has also supported increased resources for police integrity and ethics training and to improve the diversity of local police forces. The President also supports legislation sponsored by Congressman John Conyers to require state and local police forces to collect the same data.

Preventing Hate Crimes. As part of the historic 1994 Crime Act, the President signed the Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act which provides for longer sentences where the offense is determined to be a hate crime. The President and Vice President have repeatedly called for passage of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which would strengthen the existing federal hate crimes law. The President's FY 2001 budget includes $20 million to promote police integrity and for hate crimes training for federal, state, and local law enforcement. President Clinton also hosted the first White House Conference on Hate Crimes, which examined laws and remedies that can make a difference in preventing hate crimes, highlighted solutions that are working in communities across the country, and continued the frank and open dialogue needed to build One America.

National Campaign Against Youth Violence. In August 1999, President Clinton announced the formation of an independent, national campaign to address the problem of youth violence. The Campaign plans to launch anti-violence activities including a major media campaign, concerts, town hall meetings, in- and after-school programs. The Campaign will also highlight effective youth violence initiatives in cities across the country.

Giving Police the Tools They Need to Fight Crime. President Clinton won $230 million in FY 2000 to provide law enforcement with the latest crime-fighting and crime-solving technology. This funding will help make crime mapping technology -- which enables police agencies to track crime hot spots and target their resources to where they are most needed -- more widely available, to improve compatibility among law enforcement communications systems, and aid development and expansion of innovative tools to help law enforcement fight crime.

Largest Gun Enforcement Initiative in History. This year, President Clinton has proposed the largest gun enforcement initiative ever. The initiative would provide a record $280 million to add 500 new federal ATF agents and inspectors to target violent gun criminals and illegal gun traffickers, and fund over 1,000 new federal, state, and local prosecutors to take dangerous gun offenders off the streets. This initiative will build on the Administration's success in cracking down on serious gun criminals: the number of federal firearms cases prosecuted by the U.S. Attorneys increased 25%, from 4,754 in 1992 to 5,500 in 1999.

Safe and Clean Environment

Investing in a Cleaner Environment. The Clinton-Gore Administration won significant gains for the environment in the FY 2000 budget, including new resources to combat water pollution, protect wildlife, address global warming, and preserve precious lands across the community. They forced Congress to drop or substantially modify dozens of anti-environmental riders that would have rolled back hard-won environmental safeguards and benefited special interests at the expense of our public lands.

Environmental Justice and Redevelopment. The President issued an Executive Order on Environmental Justice to ensure that low-income citizens and minorities do not suffer a disproportionate burden of industrial pollution. The Administration identified pilot projects to be undertaken across the country to redevelop contaminated sites in low-income communities, turn them into useable space, create jobs and enhance community development.

Accelerating Toxic Cleanups and Brownfields Redevelopment. The Clinton-Gore Administration has cleaned up over 500 Superfund sites -- nearly three times as many in six years as the previous administrations did in twelve -- with clean up of more than 90 percent of all sites either completed or in progress. The Administration has leveraged nearly $1 billion in private sector investment for brownfields redevelopment.

Keeping Our Drinking Water Safe. The President proposed and signed legislation to strengthen the Safe Drinking Water Act to ensure that our families have healthy, clean tap water. The Clinton-Gore Administration has required America's 55,000 water utilities to provide regular reports to their customers on the quality of their drinking water. The Administration also proposed new rule to reduce dirty runoff and strengthen protections for 20,000 rivers, lakes and other waterways too polluted for swimming and fishing. Ninety-one percent of America's tap water from community drinking water systems now meets all federal standards.

Clearing the Air of Unhealthy Pollution. The President and Vice President have adopted the toughest standards ever on soot and smog. They proposed significant reductions in tailpipe emissions from cars, light trucks and SUVs, and launched long-term effort to restore pristine skies over our national parks and wilderness areas. Since 1993, the number of Americans living in communities that meet federal air quality standards has grown by 43 million.

Reducing the Threat of Global Warming. The Clinton-Gore Administration negotiated an international treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in an environmentally strong and economically sound way. The President and Vice President secured $1.1 billion in FY 2000 for research and development of energy efficiency and clean energy technologies, and set a goal of tripling U.S. use of bio-energy and bio-products by 2010. The President issued an Executive Order directing agencies to dramatically improve energy efficiency in federal buildings, saving taxpayers over $750 million a year when fully implemented.

Preserving Our National Treasures. The Clinton-Gore Administration has protected tens of millions of acres, from the red rock canyons of Utah to the Florida Everglades. The Administration reached agreements to protect Yellowstone from mining and save the ancient redwoods of California's Headwaters Forest. In the FY 2000 budget, the President and Vice President won $651 million (a 42 percent increase) for Lands Legacy, a historic initiative to strengthen federal efforts to preserve national treasures and provides communities with new resources to protect local green spaces.

Preserving Our National Forests. The President directed the National Forest Service to develop and propose regulations to provide long-term protection for 40 million acres of "roadless" areas within national forests and ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy the pristine wilderness. The proposed regulations would ban road building in these areas and could also prohibit logging or other activities that harm their unique ecological value.

American Leadership

Democracy for Cuba. The Clinton-Gore Administration increased efforts to promote a peaceful, democratic transition in Cuba by keeping pressure on the Castro government for change while reaching out to the Cuban people. The President has strengthened the international consensus on the need to promote human rights and democracy. The Clinton Administration has authorized humanitarian measures to alleviate the Cuban people's suffering, encouraged the emergence of civil society, and helped people prepare for a democratic future.

Supporting Our Closest Neighbors. The Administration took decisive action in assembling a financial support package for Mexico and later Brazil. In each case, the President's leadership prevented a prolonged financial crisis and its spread to other Latin American countries. In addition, the President traveled to Latin America and launched hemispheric negotiations for Free Trade Area of the Americas.

3/00

May 16. 2000

Dear Members of Congress:

Today. as throughout American history. immigrants have proven essential to the economic, political and social development of our nation. Immigrants make important contributions consistent with America's fundamental values of family, work, justice and community.

It is important that our immigration policies reflect these values and ensure that all persons enjoy equal protection and due process under the Constitution and laws of the land. Our immigration policies should also be responsive to economic needs and ensure appropriate protections and opportunities for citizens and immigrants.

Immigration reforms consistent with American values and economic needs should be a high priority on the national agenda this year.

Currently, there is wide support in Congress for immigration reforms to address the need to better educate and train citizens and lawful immigrants now here, and to increase the number of H-1B visas to admit more highly-skilled immigrants so as to meet the economic needs of certain industries experiencing shortages of workers with these skills. While we may differ on specific provisions of proposed bills, we agree that appropriate skilled immigrant admissions contribute to economic growth and job creation.

The undersigned further believe that, in addition to proposals on high skilled visas, the following issues regarding persons already in the United States or awaiting family reunification also warrant congressional action as early as possible: 1) allow Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and Haitians to apply for adjustment of status on the same terms as already provided to Cubans and Nicaraguans in 1997; 2) allow adjustment of status to all persons of good character who have resided in the United States and established ties to American communities; 3) restore the provision permitting those who are out of status but otherwise eligible for permanent residence to adjust their status in the United States; 4) reunite families by establishing a program to provide additional visas for family members of citizens and permanent residents so as to reduce unacceptable backlogs and help stabilize the workforce.

Other immigration reforms also deserve congressional action, which will be addressed in further correspondence. We believe that there is a broad consensus now that Congress should enact the proposals noted above on a priority basis in the national interest.

Sincerely,

Individuals

Henry Cisneros
Richard Gilder
Bill Ong Hing
Jack Kemp
Rick Swartz

National Organizations

Americans for Tax Reform, Grover Norquist, President
Center for Equal Opportunity, Linda Chavez, President
Club for Growth, Steve Moore, President
Empower America, J.T. Taylor, President

Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union, John Wilhelm, President
Service Employees International Union, Andrew Stern, President
United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, Arturo Rodriguez, President
Union of Needletrades and Industrial Textile Employees (UNITE), Jay Mazur, President

American Immigration Lawyers Association, Jeanne Butterfield, Executive Director
Arab American Institute, James Zogby, President
Dominican American National Roundtable, Victor Capellan, President
Haitian American Foundation, Inc., Leonie Hermantin, Executive Director
Immigrant Support Network, Shailesh Gala, President
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, Ralston Deffenbaugh, President
U.S. Catholic Conference/Migration and Refugee Services, Most Reverend Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, Chairman, National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration
National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, Karen Narasaki, Executive Director
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, Arturo Vargas, Executive Director
National Coalition for Haitian Rights, Jocelyn McCalla, Executive Director
National Council of La Raza, Raul Yzaguirre, President
National Farm Worker Ministry, Virginia Nesmith, Executive Director
National Immigration Forum, Frank Sharry, Executive Director
National Immigration Law Center, Susan Drake, Executive Director
National Puerto Rican Coalition, Manuel Mirabal, President/CEO
New America Alliance, Tom Castro, President
Polish American Congress, Edward Moskal, President
Salvadoran American National Network, Oscar Chacon, President
Southeast Asian Resource Action Center, KaYing Yang, Executive Director
William C. Velasquez Institute, Antonio Gonzalez, President

Local Organizations

Centro Presente, M. Elena Letona, Executive Director
Centro Romero, Daisy Funes, Executive Director
Haitian American Grassroots Coalition, Jean-Robert Lafortune, Chairman
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights, Sid Mohn, President
Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Mark Silverman
Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties, Wayne Feinstein, Executive Vice President
Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, Miguel Contreras, Executive Secretary Treasurer
New York Association for New Americans, Mark Handelman, Executive Vice President
New York Immigration Coalition, Margie McHugh, Executive Director

S.1592
HR 2722

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 11, 2000

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Conyers:

The House of Representatives is currently considering a variety of proposals designed to address both the industry's immediate need for high-skilled workers and the nation's need to prepare its own workers to fill these and future jobs created by the information technology revolution. The first and primary policy for increasing the availability of high skilled workers must be focused on increasing the education and training of U.S. workers. However, at times U.S. businesses need additional access to the international labor market to maintain and enhance our global competitiveness, particularly in high-growth new technology industries and particularly in tight labor markets.

In addition, as we consider allowing more foreign temporary workers into this country to meet the needs of our high tech industry, it is critical that we take this opportunity to correct two long-standing injustices currently affecting many immigrants already in our country. The Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) should be amended to provide equitable treatment for other Central American immigrants, and the Date of Registry should be changed to offer long-term immigrants with longstanding ties to this country the opportunity to apply for legal resident status.

There are a number of ideas currently being discussed in Congress regarding the H-1B visa issue. For example, the bill by Rep. Smith and Rep. Jackson Lee is pending before your committee. In addition, Chairman Dreier and Rep. Lofgren have a proposal that makes important contributions to this discussion that are worthy of serious consideration. The bipartisan proposal reported out by Chairman Goodling's Committee on Education and the Workforce makes considerable progress on the education and training component of this issue. Yet despite these efforts, no single proposal has emerged which represents a comprehensive, bipartisan compromise that members of Congress and the Administration can all support. Therefore, in an effort to advance the prospects for a bipartisan solution, the President proposes the changes to current law outlined in the following attachment. The President's proposal represents a balanced approach of a reasonable increase in the number of H-1B visas, significant provisions to protect and prepare the U.S. workforce, and measures of fairness and equity for certain immigrants already in the U.S.

I have attached the details of the President's proposal for your review. We look forward to working with you to reach a constructive bipartisan resolution on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Gene B Sperling

Gene Sperling
Director, National Economic Council &
Assistant to the President for Economic Policy

President Clinton's H-1B Visa Proposal

1. Raise the Cap on H-1B Visas for FY 2001, 2002, and 2003

Current Law		Administration Proposal	
2001	107,500	2001	200,000
2002	65,000	2002	200,000
2003	65,000	2003	200,000

2. Ensure a Significant Set-Aside for Highly Educated Workers

- Currently, the INS estimates that 40% of H-1B visas go to individuals holding a Master's or higher degree. The President's proposal preserves that proportion in the coming year, and slightly increases it in 2002 and 2003, while still significantly increasing the number of visas available to professionals with no more than a Bachelor's degree.

Administration Proposal	
2001	40% for Master's Degree and Above
2002	45% for Master's Degree and Above
2003	50% for Master's Degree and Above

- In addition, 10,000 visas are to be set aside for institutions of higher education and other research institutions.

3. Additional Fees for Building the Skills of US Workers

Current Law	Administration Proposal
$500 Fee for H-1B Visa	$2,000 for Most Employers
	$3,000 for H-1B Dependent Employers (as defined in current law) - 15% of workers are H1B

4. Additional Resources for Education and Training

- **50%** of Total H-1B Fees for Training American Workers:

  - DoL, in consultation with the Department of Commerce (DoC), will fund effective and innovative private-public partnerships to train American workers.

  - Preponderance will go to education and training for incumbent and dislocated worker training, and a smaller proportion for youth opportunity programs.

  - Special emphasis will be put on funding innovative projects that focus on groups underrepresented in the IT industry, such as women, minorities, and Americans with disabilities.

- **30%** for educational activities including National Science Foundation (NSF) programs for scholarships for low-income students in computer science, math and engineering, Graduate Research Fellowships, and merit-based scholarships; the Department of Education's Teacher-Loan Forgiveness, Upward Bound and Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) programs; and programs for and better coordination of economic dislocation assistance through the Department of Commerce Community Economic Adjustment program.

- **20%** for dramatically improving customer service at INS and DoL by speeding up application processing, reducing backlogs, and improving enforcement of employer-based immigration programs.

5. The Administration strongly supports the inclusion of the "Central American and Haitian Parity Act of 1999" (HR 2722 and S. 1592) and Registry Date legislation (HR 4172 and S. 2407) within H-1B legislation.

- Central American and Haitian Parity Act of 1999 – amends the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of status under that Act. Currently, NACARA applies only to Nicaraguans and Cubans.

- The proposed Registry Date legislation would allow certain long-term immigrants of good moral character who have been living in the United States for a long time (fifteen years or more) to apply for legal resident status.
  - The registry date provision has been in effect since 1952, and a comparable provision has been part of U.S. immigration law since 1929. The current registry date, January 1, 1972, was adopted 14 years ago. This proposal moves the registry date up an additional 14 years, to January 1, 1986.

In addition, the Administration supports extension of the attestation requirements and DoL investigative authority granted in the American Competitive Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 (ACWIA) throughout the cap increase – until October 1, 2003. Currently, the provisions sunset along with the ACWIA cap increase in October, 2001.