

**PRESIDENT CLINTON HIGHLIGHTS SUCCESS OF
THE BRADY LAW, CALLS FOR PASSAGE OF FURTHER GUN MEASURES**
November 30, 1999

Today, President Clinton will commemorate the sixth anniversary of the successful Brady Law by announcing new Justice Department figures demonstrating the continuing effectiveness of this historic legislation. Today's new figures show that Brady background checks have prevented over 470,000 felons, fugitives, stalkers and other prohibited buyers from purchasing firearms since 1993. In addition, Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers will today launch "Online LEAD," a new crime-fighting technology that will enhance law enforcement efforts to trace crime guns and crack down on illegal gun traffickers.

Noting that the success of Brady background checks and crime gun tracing have helped reduce violent gun crimes by over 35 percent since he took office, the President today will also urge Congress to make passage of common sense gun legislation a top priority next year.

KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE WRONG HANDS. The Department of Justice will release new data from the FBI reporting that Brady background checks have prevented over 470,000 felons, fugitives, stalkers and others prohibited from purchasing firearms since the historic law took effect. The Justice Department will also provide information on the successful first year of operation of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which processed over 8.7 million background checks and stopped over 160,000 gun sales to restricted individuals since its implementation last year. Among sales denied by the FBI under NICS this year, 72 percent, were based on a felony conviction, 15 percent were for domestic violence or restraining orders, 4 percent were for illegal drug abusers, and 3 percent were for fugitives from justice.

CRACKING DOWN ON ILLEGAL GUN TRAFFICKERS. The President will also point out today that Treasury Secretary Summers is unveiling "Online LEAD," a new crime-fighting technology that will enhance the ability of law enforcement to detect and deter the illegal traffickers who supply weapons to criminals, juveniles and other prohibited persons. The "Online LEAD" program will provide every Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms field office in the nation with instant access to information on over one million crime gun traces. The program will also enhance investigations under the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative (YCGII), an Administration effort to trace crime guns and crack down on illegal gun traffickers. The President recently secured over \$51 million to expand YCGII from 27 to 38 cities.

MAKING PASSAGE OF COMMON SENSE GUN LAWS A TOP PRIORITY. The President today will also call on the Congress to build on the success of the Brady Law and federal gun tracing initiatives by making passage of sensible gun safety legislation the first order of business when it returns next year. The Congress failed this session to pass common sense measures to extend background checks and tracing records to all transactions at gun shows, ban violent juvenile offenders from possessing guns when they turn 21, mandate child safety locks to be sold with every handgun, and ban the importation of high capacity ammunition clips.

- **Passing common sense gun legislation.** While the Administration's successful strategy of keeping guns out of the wrong hands has contributed to record declines in crime, recent tragic shootings reinforce the need to redouble our efforts to protect American children and families from gun violence. For months, Congress has failed to enact common-sense gun legislation. Congress must finish its work and pass a balanced, bipartisan juvenile crime bill that includes strong gun measures that would: close the gun show loophole; require child safety locks for handguns; ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips; and bar violent juveniles from owning guns for life.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON: HONORING OUR COMMITMENT TO
LAW ENFORCEMENT
October 21, 1999**

Today, President Clinton will commemorate the 5th anniversary of the Administration's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program by honoring this year's recipients of the "Top Cops" awards. The awards are given annually by the National Association of Police Organizations to law enforcement officers for outstanding service to their communities. At today's event, the President will urge Congress to provide full funding for the COPS program, which has funded over 100,000 community police officers to date and spread community policing to thousands of police departments nationwide. He will also endorse legislation by Sen. Joseph Biden to extend the successful COPS program for five more years.

RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS. The "Top Cop" awards given by NAPO pay tribute to law enforcement officers from across the country for their exceptional service for the preceding year. "Top Cops" are nominated by their fellow officers and are selected from hundreds of nominations. This year, 32 officers from 9 states and the District of Columbia will receive the distinguished Top Cops award, including 5 officers that are funded through the COPS program.

FIGHTING FOR RESOURCES TO KEEP OUR STREETS SAFE. This week, the FBI announced that serious crime fell in 1998 for the seventh year in a row -- the longest continuous decline in crime on record. The murder rate has dropped to its lowest point in 31 years. The President will point out today that community policing has been a key part of the Administration strategy to turn the tide on crime -- and he will call on Republicans not to undermine the future of community policing and the COPS program.

- *Clinton Administration budget: Protecting law enforcement priorities.* The President today will call on Congress to fully fund his \$1.27 billion COPS initiative for FY 2000 that will: help put an additional 30,000-50,000 officers on the street; provide law enforcement with the latest crime-fighting technologies; help fund new community prosecutors; and target funds to engage the entire community in preventing crime.
- *Republican spending bill threatens progress on community crime fighting.* The Republican spending bill would cut COPS by nearly \$1 billion. The Republican FY 2000 Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bill reduces funding for COPS to just \$325 million. Compared to the President's budget, the Republican proposal means 3,000 fewer police officers for our streets in the next year alone. It fails to meet law enforcement technology needs, and it provides no funding for new community prosecutors, or for community crime prevention.

TAKING THE NEXT STEP ON COMMUNITY POLICING. The COPS Program, created in the historic 1994 Crime Act, expires next year by statute. Today, the President will endorse bipartisan legislation to be introduced by Senator Biden with the support of 45 co-sponsors to extend the COPS program through the year 2005.

- Senator Biden's legislation, modeled after the President's 21st Century Policing Initiative, will invest more than \$5.5 billion over five years to provide communities with resources to

put more officers on the street and give them the tools they need to make those streets safe. Specifically, the legislation provides: (1) \$600 million to hire, redeploy, and retain police officers; (2) \$350 million to fund law enforcement technologies such as crime mapping and DNA analysis; and (3) \$200 million to hire community prosecutors to work with community police and neighborhood residents to prevent and combat crime.

A RECORD OF PARTNERSHIP WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT. The Clinton Administration has built the COPS program with the strong support of mayors and police chiefs from across the country, NAPO, and every major national law enforcement organization in America. In addition to COPS, the Clinton Administration has helped to dramatically expand resources for state and local law enforcement.

- *Boosting assistance for state and local law enforcement by 500 percent since FY 1994.* Over the past seven years, the Clinton Administration has provided direct new resources for state and local crime fighting and prevention efforts, increasing state and local assistance by over 500 percent -- from \$849 million in FY 1994 to \$5.1 billion in FY 1999. State and local law enforcement agencies have used this funding to strengthen their forces; buy new equipment, patrol cars, computers and crime-fighting technologies; build new prisons; and deploy new strategies to reduce crime.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO COMBAT YOUTH VIOLENCE

October 19, 1999

At a youth violence conference at the Capitol today, President Clinton will speak with over 350 teen leaders from around the country about the key priorities for the nation's future. First, President Clinton will urge Congress to pass a budget that invests in young people and makes education our first priority. Second, the President will release the second Annual Report on School Safety and announce that the Justice Department, in partnership with MTV, will distribute multimedia toolkits to prevent youth violence. Finally, President Clinton will call on Congress to enact common-sense gun laws and long-overdue hate crimes legislation.

DEMANDING A BUDGET THAT INVESTS IN AMERICA'S FUTURE

- Today, President Clinton will call on Congress to pass a budget that makes education America's number one priority. He will demand a budget that reduces class sizes and funds other critical education initiatives, puts up to 50,000 more community police on the streets and protects the environment, and saves Social Security while paying down the debt. He will call on Congress to make the tough choices to accomplish all of this while maintaining our fiscal discipline, strengthening Social Security and Medicare, and paying down the debt.

UNVEILING NEW TOOLS TO PREVENT SCHOOL VIOLENCE

- **Second Annual Report on School Safety.** On Sunday, the FBI released new statistics showing that in 1998 serious crime dropped for the seventh year in a row, the longest continuous decline in nearly 40 years, and that the murder rate reached its lowest point in 31 years. Building on that good news, the President today will release the findings of the second Annual Report on School Safety – a report that gives parents, principals, youth, and policymakers a snapshot of school crime, as well as information on practical steps they can take to make schools safer. Key findings on school crime include:

-- While homicides in school remain extremely rare, multiple victim school homicides have increased. Less than one percent of the total number of children nationwide who were murdered or committed suicide were killed at school. And the number of school-associated violent death incidents decreased from 55 in the 1992-93 school year to 46 in the 1997-98 school year. However, the number of multiple victim homicide events has steadily increased from zero in 1993-94 school year to five in the 1997-98 school year.

-- Overall crime rates are down at school and away from school. The overall school crime rate declined from 155 school-related crimes for every 1,000 students ages 12 to 18 in 1993, to about 102 crimes in 1997. Between 1993 and 1997, crime victimization rates outside of school declined from 139 crimes for every 1,000 students to 117 crimes.

-- Most school crime is not serious violent crime. Serious violent crime at schools comprises about ten percent of all school crime, and has continued to decline. About 90 percent of all injuries at school were not the result of violence, but were unintentional (e.g.,

through falls, sports). Property crimes constitute the majority of school crime: in 1997, thefts accounted for 61 percent of all crime committed against students

-- Fewer students are carrying weapons to school and getting into fights. Between 1993 and 1997, there was a decrease in the percentage of high school students -- across sex, grade, and ethnic subgroups -- who carried a weapon on school property, as well as a decline in the percentage of students who got in physical fights on school property. The number of students expelled for bringing a gun to school decreased from 5,724 in the 1996-97 school year to 3,930 in the 1997-98 school year.

-- Minority students and younger students feel less safe at school than others. Black and Hispanic 4th-grade students were more likely to report feeling "very unsafe" at school than white students (9 percent and 6 percent, respectively, compared to 2 percent of white students). Notably, 12th grade students of any race were less likely than 4th or 8th grade students to report feeling "very unsafe" at school.

- **Providing resources and solutions for young people in partnership with MTV.** Today the President will also announce that the Justice Department -- in partnership with MTV and the Department of Education -- will send out 200,000 copies of an enhanced CD with an interactive conflict resolution program, and a Youth Action Guide focused on mentoring and other steps young people can take to prevent youth violence. The guides and CDs will be sent to youth-serving organizations such as after school programs, Boys and Girls Clubs, juvenile justice and law enforcement agencies as part of MTV's year-long anti-violence campaign. First kicked off by the President at the White House School Safety Conference last year, the MTV campaign has been educating young people on youth violence issues and linking them to national anti-violence resources.

CALLING ON CONGRESS TO FINISH THE JOB ON GUNS AND HATE CRIMES

- **Enacting common sense gun legislation.** Six months after the tragedy at Columbine High School, the President will call on the Republican leadership now do its part to reduce youth violence by passing common sense gun legislation. The President will challenge the Congress to finish its work and quickly pass a balanced, bipartisan juvenile crime bill that includes strong gun measures that would: close the gun show loophole; require child safety locks for handguns; ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips; and bar violent juveniles from owning guns for life.
- **Passing an expanded Federal hate crimes law.** The President will also urge Congress to pass the bipartisan Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999. This legislation, if enacted, would strengthen current law by making it easier to prosecute crimes based on race, color, religion and national origin and by expanding coverage to include crimes based on sexual orientation, gender and disability.

“Voices Against Violence” Congressional Teen Conference
Question and Answers
October 19, 1999

Q: What is the “Voices Against Violence” Congressional Teen Conference?

A: Sponsored by Minority Leader Dick Gephardt and the House Democratic Leadership, “Voices Against Violence” is a national teen conference designed to provide youth with the unique opportunity to impact the Congressional debate on youth violence and to create a national anti-violence message for their peers and develop local solutions. Over 350 teen leaders, who have shown exceptional leadership in combating violence in their communities, have been sponsored by over 100 members of Congress and their local school districts to attend. Many of the participants are themselves victims of violence who have chosen to turn their personal tragedies into proactive solutions.

Over the course of this two-day conference, students will share their ideas with members of Congress, national law enforcement and education officials and entertainment industry leaders regarding possible solutions to youth violence. They will also convene with their peers from regions all across the United States to identify the top five issues that they believe to be the primary causes of youth violence. Their end goal will be to produce a resolution with recommendations on reducing youth violence that they will use as a blueprint to establish Youth Advisory Councils back home.

Q: What other information is contained in the Annual Report on School Safety?

A: Key findings include: (1) While homicides in school remain extremely rare, multiple victim school homicides have increased; (2) Overall crime rates are down at school and away from school; (3) Most school crime is not serious violent crime; (3) Fewer students are carrying weapons to school and getting into fights; and (3) Minority students and younger students feel less safe at school than others.

The report is composed of three parts: (1) A statistical analysis of the nature and scope of the school violence problem in the United States and abroad; (2) Highlights of the 54 community programs that the President recently awarded grants under the brand new Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative to encourage more community-wide collaboration on combating youth violence; and (3) A summary of information on model school violence prevention programs that have demonstrated effectiveness, such as the “Kid Power Program” in Jacksonville, Florida, which has successfully reduced youth violence and anti-social behaviors by as much as 40 percent among participating first through fifth graders.

Among other key findings, the report reveals that hate crimes in schools are often underreported, in part due to varying state definitions. However, some preliminary data

show that 15 percent of 11, 13, and 15-year-olds had been bullied because of their religion or race, and 30 percent had been bullied with sexual jokes, comments or gestures directed at them. The next annual school safety report will contain new data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) which initiated its first school hate crimes survey on hate language and graffiti in school in January.

Q: What are the prospects of Congress passing a Juvenile Justice bill this year?

A: This issue shouldn't be one of prospects or politics -- it should be all about public safety. On the same day of the 6-month anniversary of the tragedy at Littleton, the student leaders participating in the "Voices Against Violence" Conference will complete their work by ratifying a House resolution on reducing youth violence. Yet, ironically, in six months the Republican Leadership hasn't found the time to pass a Juvenile Justice bill with even the most modest, common sense gun safety provisions.

The President is willing to do his part to keep our communities safe -- by putting more police on the street, cracking down on illegal gun traffickers and providing new school safety resources to schools, like Columbine High School, that have been touched by such tragic acts of violence. However, it's now time for Congress to do their part and bring a bill to the floor that strengthens our nation's gun laws by preventing criminals from purchasing guns at gun shows without background checks; requiring safety locks to be provided with every handgun sold; banning the importation of high capacity ammunition clips; and barring the most violent juvenile offenders from ever possessing firearms.

We are interested to see if the teen conference leaders' youth violence resolution reaches the House floor before the Juvenile Justice bill does.

Q: What is your reaction to the news that Republicans, in the dead night, removed the Hate Crimes legislation from the pending appropriations bill?

A: The Administration believes that is a very wrong and bad decision. In just the last year we've had a series of tragedies that have reminded us of the need to send a strong message to those who sow hate and try and divide us. This isn't a Democratic or Republican problem, it's a problem that America needs to solve together. There is broad support for this measure nationally, and the President will not give up on this effort.

Q: How many hate crimes are there each year? Are hate crimes increasing?

A: In 1998, there were 7,755 reported incidents of hate crimes -- down from 8049 reported incidents in 1997. However, these statistics show that hate crimes are still a serious problem in this country. Furthermore, hate crimes based on sexual orientation increased by over 12 percent in 1998, confirming what many advocates have been saying all along. But these statistics almost certainly under-report hate crimes to a significant extent, despite improvements in reporting. There are two reasons for thinking that current

statistics under-report hate crime. First and most important, submission of hate crimes data to the FBI is voluntary, and many law enforcement agencies do not submit data at all or submit incomplete data. In addition, many victims of hate crimes fail to report the incidents because of fear, humiliation, or language difficulties. For example, 60% of the victims of anti-gay incidents who reported their incidents to private tracking groups did not report the incidents to the police, in many cases because of a fear of mistreatment or unwanted exposure.

**Labor/HHS/Education Bill
Investment and Accountability
Q&A
September 24, 1999**

Q: The President has said that the House Republican Labor/H bill undercuts efforts to improve accountability. What is he talking about?

A: The President believes that the way to improve our public schools is through investment and accountability. In addition to his work to ensure that all students are held to challenging academic standards, he has proposed an accountability plan that would turn around low-performing schools, improve teacher quality, end social promotion, institute discipline policies, and require school report cards. To support states, school districts, and schools in meeting these tough accountability provisions, the President has proposed a number of initiatives including expanding after school and summer school programs, reducing class size in the early grades, and providing tutors so that all students learn to read independently by the end of third grade and can reach high academic standards. Unfortunately, rather than work with the President to increase accountability and invest in what works, Republicans have passed an appropriations bill that slashes key programs and doesn't increase accountability.

Q: What cuts in particular undercut your accountability plan?

A: Smaller classes and after school and summer school programs help students meet challenging standards and end social promotion. Yet the Republican bill fails to fund the President's class size reduction initiative and provides \$300 million less than the President's balanced budget does for after-school programs. It also cuts the Reading Excellence Act by \$86 million, which means that 330,000 fewer students will get reading tutoring. The bill also provides \$264 million less than the President's budget does for Title I, which helps disadvantaged students reach high standards; and the bill fails to set aside any money for the President's plan to turn around failing schools. All of these cuts undermine efforts to hold students to high academic standards and improve public schools.

Q: How does investment improve accountability?

A: Investment and accountability go hand in glove. By setting high standards and serious accountability measures and then ensuring that schools and students have the necessary tools to reach them by investing in what works we put in place the key components of a world-class school system.

Q: Republicans say that they are for accountability in the form of vouchers which they say will force schools to get better or be closed. Why is your plan better than that idea?

A: Vouchers decrease accountability rather than increase it by sending public money to schools that are not accountable to the public for academic results or even sound fiscal practices. The President's proposal to turn around low-performing schools, which the Republicans fail to fund in their appropriations bill, sets aside resources for states and school districts to use to fix failing schools and sets out a clear timeline for this process. However, rather than simply abandoning students in failing schools by giving a few vouchers and forgetting about the rest, the Presidents plan turns around failing schools or closes them and ensures that all students have high quality public options.

Q: How does the President know his ideas will work? Have they been tested?

A: The President's plan is based on successful practices occurring around the country. High standards, investment, and accountability are a proven formula that has worked in many places around the country such as North Carolina, Kentucky, Texas, and Chicago to improve student achievement. The President believes that all students must have a world class education and that is why he has proposed his Education Accountability Act and the essential investments that accompany it.

Gun Ads
September 17, 1999

Q: What is your reaction to the advertising campaign Handgun Control is planning to launch on gun legislation?

A: We think it is essential that Congress hear the message loud and clear that the American people want action on common sense gun legislation. The President has repeatedly urged Congress to act quickly to pass reasonable gun legislation. Last week, Mayors and Police Chiefs from across the country delivered the same message to Congress. And recent events further underscore that we must take action to help keep our communities and our children safe from gun violence. The advertising campaign sounds like it will send the same message to the American people that the President has been sending for months: we've endured too many tragedies for further delay. Congress must meet its responsibility and pass a common sense gun bill immediately.

Gun Enforcement/Juvenile Crime Bill
September 16, 1999

Q: What is the status of juvenile crime and gun legislation?

A: While there had been some speculation that Republican leaders wanted to convene the conferees this week, in light of yesterday's adjournment it is clear that the juvenile justice bill is stalled once more. We hope that conferees will meet next week. Five months have passed since Columbine, and just last night another tragic incident of gun violence took place at a church in Texas. Again, we urge Congress to move quickly and pass a juvenile crime bill with common sense gun provisions to give our communities more tools to keep families and children safe from gun violence.

Today Show
Questions and Answers
June 18, 1999

Guns

Q: Will you veto the bill over the Dingell amendment on gun shows?

A: We are confident that once the dust settles, the Congress will want a real solution – not a phony one—to make sure that criminals can't purchase guns at gun shows. Yesterday's House vote keeps open the loophole which allows criminals to buy guns at gun shows. The legislation keeps the dangerous loophole open by shortening the amount of time law enforcement has to conduct Brady background checks and by making it harder for law enforcement to trace guns sold at gun shows that later turn up in crimes. We plan to keep the pressure on Congress as it proceeds to conference on this bill to return to the bipartisan consensus provisions passed in the Senate.

Q: Doesn't the Dingell amendment require background checks at gun shows? Aren't you really splitting hairs by saying it leaves huge loopholes in the law?

A: Not at all. This is a watered down version of gun shows legislation backed by the NRA. It would significantly shorten the amount of time law enforcement has to do a Brady background check at gun shows from 3 business days to 24 hours. According to the FBI, if this 24-hour rule were applied to all background checks conducted over the past six months, an estimated 17,000 criminals would have been able to buy guns. Any proposal that would put guns in the hands of 17,000 criminals simply defies common sense, is dangerous, and should be rejected. We support legislation passed by the Senate that would close this dangerous loophole once and for all, and will work with the Congress to pass the bipartisan Lautenberg version.

Q: Weren't you pushing for a measure to increase the age of handgun possession from 18 to 21 years old? Do you think this will pass?

A: We are hopeful that the House today will pass an amendment that will prohibit sales of handguns by unlicensed dealers to those under the age of 21. Our proposal would have gone further to not only prohibit sales but also possession – but we think this is a good first step.

Earlier this week, Vice President Gore released a joint Treasury-Justice report on gun crime in the age group of 18-20. This age group leads all others in using guns to commit both homicides and non-lethal crimes, including assault, rape, and robbery. Moreover, 18, 19, and 20 year-olds ranked first, second, and third among all age cohorts in the

number of gun homicides committed in 1997. And, crime guns recovered by law enforcement from 18 to 20 year-olds are mostly handguns, especially semiautomatic pistols. The report concludes from these findings that the high rate of crime in the 18-20 age group is linked to excessively easy access to firearms – and provides a strong basis for the House to pass the common-sense gun amendment before it, to further restrict their access to handguns.

Brady Report

Q: If the Brady Law has helped to detect and block over 400,000 illegal gun sales, how many of these persons who tried to buy guns illegally have you prosecuted? The gun lobby and its supporters say that if you really wanted to strengthen the Brady Law, you would focus on putting all of these criminals behind bars. What is your response?

A: We do focus on putting gun criminals behind bars. Since the NICS was implemented 6 months ago, the FBI has been actively referring cases to ATF and state and local law enforcement for further investigation and potential prosecution. Ultimately, we won't take every case, but we have asked Congress for more funds to hire ATF agents and federal prosecutors to do the best follow-up possible. I would also note that, prior to the NICS' implementation, Brady denials were the responsibility of designated state and local law enforcement officials. With the NICS now up and running, we expect to take more Brady-related cases.

Unfortunately, some have been taking the gun lobby at its word, and have not gotten the full story on this issue. Let's review the facts:

The Brady Law has stopped over 400,000 illegal gun sales. By surveying local law enforcement officials and tracking the number of gun applications rejected by the FBI, we know this to be true. Prior to Brady background checks, guns were bought and sold on the honor system.

Two-thirds of the illegal gun sales we stop involve persons who have been previously convicted or are currently indicted for a felony crime. The remaining third involve domestic violence misdemeanors and restraining orders, drug addicts, mental deficient, and other prohibitions in state and federal law. Although some of these persons may not be serious criminals – or may have committed their crimes many years ago and are no longer a threat to public safety – it is very reasonable to assume that, by stopping them from buying a gun, we have prevented gun crimes and violence.

Gun crimes are down by virtually every measure. FBI crime statistics confirm that, since 1993, gun-related crime is down by more than 25 percent. The overall number of violent crimes is down, and so too is the percentage of violent crimes committed with guns.

The number of gun criminals doing time in state and federal prisons is up by 25 percent since 1992 (from 20,681 to 25,186), and the number of serious gun criminals (those serving sentences of 5 or more years) in federal prison is up by nearly 30 percent. This is because we work more closely with state and local law enforcement – who investigate and prosecute most gun crimes – to vigorously enforce gun laws.

This Administration has increased funding for state and local law enforcement by more than 500 percent, helped local law enforcement trace a record number of crime guns, proposed increased funds for new ATF agents and federal prosecutors, and more. We need these resources to investigate and prosecute more gun cases. Unfortunately, the gun lobby and critics of our enforcement record have not backed up their tough talk with resources.

Juvenile Crime Bill

Q: The House passed some tough measures to crack down on juvenile crime, including a McCollum amendment to prosecute 14 year-olds as adults, and increase penalties for kids who bring guns to school. Do you support the bill?

A: [Assumes passage of juvenile bill and bipartisan Goodling prevention amendment]
The Administration supports a comprehensive approach to addressing the problem of youth crime and violence. Which is why the President has taken the lead in addressing youth violence on all fronts – from the media to the gun industry to parental responsibility.

We support the base juvenile crime bill (H.R. 1501), a bipartisan bill that promotes graduated sanctions for youthful offenders and provides needed resources to states to combat juvenile crime. And we were pleased that the House passed additional funds to help keep our kids out of trouble in the first place. However, we do have some concerns with particular provisions that would treat certain juveniles prosecuted in the federal system too harshly by failing to provide needed safeguards for younger juveniles, and juveniles who are charged with less serious crimes. We will work with the Congress to address on these concerns as the bill proceeds to conference.

Q: What do you think of the Hyde amendment on media violence that failed?

A: Let me first say that we support serious efforts to address the issue of media violence and its effects on our young people. That is why the President has already begun to take concrete action in this area by challenging the entertainment industry to live up to its responsibilities, working with theater owners to require photo ID for young people trying to get into R-rated movies, and initialing a Surgeon General's report on youth violence and an FTC study of the entertainment industry's marketing practice.

We did, however, oppose the Hyde amendment to ban the distribution of certain violent material to teenagers. There were serious constitutional concerns raised about this proposal, and as drafted, it appeared virtually impossible to enforce.

Strengthening Community- Police Relationships
Questions and Answers
June 9, 1999

Q: Instead of simply collecting data, why didn't the President ban racial profiling outright?

A: As the President said today, racial profiling is wrong. Stopping or searching individuals on the basis of race is not consistent with our commitment to equal justice under law and is not effective law enforcement policy. For that reason, all federal law enforcement agencies already repudiate racial profiling as a legitimate law enforcement tool.

The real need—at the federal as well as the state and local levels—is to ensure that law enforcement officers act in accordance with their broad policies against racial profiling. In order to truly solve this problem, it is critical that we have the hard facts -- instead of mere anecdotes -- about when and where it occurs. Having this data can guide future proposals to combat this problem. That is why the President the ordered the federal agencies to take leadership on this issue and start to collect and report data on the race, ethnicity and gender of persons stopped and searched by federal law enforcement agents. Once the agencies have collected and reported on the data for a year, we will review the recommendations, based on this data, on how we ensure greater fairness in federal law enforcement's procedures.

Q: How does the Conyers legislation relate to the President's directive?

A: The President's directive will combat racial profiling by instructing the federal law enforcement agencies to collect and report data, the Conyers legislation seeks to assist state and local law enforcement agencies (who comprise the vast majority of law enforcement in this country) to collect and report similar data on traffic stops. The data collected under both the President's directive and the Conyers bill will give us a better national picture of law enforcement stops and searches, and the individuals who are subjected to them. In this sense, the two complement each other—and indeed, one reason the President issued his directive was to encourage states and localities to collect data about racial profiling and to push Congress to enact legislation to support there efforts. To best accomplish this goal, we do support some modest, but important revisions to the Conyers bill to ensure that the data collected is used for research purposes only -- and cannot be used in future lawsuits against police departments.

Q: Doesn't the federal government engage in a form of racial profiling right now—that is, doesn't the INS stop drivers at the border in part based on their ethnicity?

A: The question in INS searches is a complicated one, because national origin is an element

of the criminal offenses that the INS investigates and ethnicity is obviously related to national origin. It is critical, however, that the INS take every precaution against stopping or hassling drivers simply because they look Hispanic. We hope that the data collection and reporting efforts that the President is directing today will reveal whether and where INS officials have abused their stop and search authority in ways that unfairly target Hispanic individuals.

NOTE: Do not go near this topic unless explicitly asked about it.

Q: Do you have any comment on the *Louima* decision yesterday?

A: We hope and believe that yesterday's decision sends a strong signal to abusive and corrupt cops that illegal behavior and excessive use of force will not be tolerated. The vast majority of law enforcement do their jobs fairly and with honor -- which is why it is important for us to support these dedicated officers and acknowledge our gratitude to them for their service. But as a society, we must continue to send the message that we will not tolerate those officers who breach the public's trust by abusing their positions of authority. Yesterday's jury decision should have conveyed this message.

Q: Your directive refers to the creation of "field tests" to begin to collect data. Does this mean that the federal agencies don't have to cover all of the law enforcement agencies under their control? Can they exclude whole sub-agencies such as INS or Customs from the data collection directive?

A: The directive grants some discretion to the agencies in deciding the exact scope of their data collection and reporting systems. But agencies such as the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Drug Enforcement Agency, and Customs Service -- all of which conduct stops and searches of individuals as a matter of course -- clearly will be part of the first "field tests" implemented by the agencies.

Q: Can you comment on the status of the *Diallo* case?

A: The FBI, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York and the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division continue to work closely and actively with the Bronx District Attorney's Office on this investigation. However, given that this is still an active investigation, we cannot say anything more.

Q: In March, the President announced new initiatives to help build trust between police and the communities they serve. What is the status of these initiatives?

A: These initiatives are part of the 21st Century crime bill unveiled by the President last month. During consideration of the juvenile crime bill, the Senate missed an important

opportunity to move forward on these important police integrity proposals. On a party line vote, the Senate defeated an amendment by Senator Biden to authorize these and other policing initiatives proposed by the President. We will continue to urge the Congress to pass our police integrity proposals and 21st Century Policing Initiative as part of the appropriations process.

Q: What is the Administration's response to the juvenile crime/gun bill unveiled by Republicans last night?

A: Unfortunately, the Republican bill introduced last night confirms our worst fears about how Republicans in the House intend to proceed with juvenile crime and gun legislation. After pleading for more time to allow the Judiciary Committee to follow normal processes, the House Leadership is now planning to bring a partisan bill directly to the floor, with little or no opportunity for Democrats to debate the issues and offer amendments. But even worse, the House Republicans seem to be making whatever changes to the Senate bill that the NRA demands. The Republican bill apparently will not cover many events at which hundreds of guns are sold. It will not necessarily cover unlicensed sellers who walk around at gun shows with "for sale" signs on their backs. It will weaken Brady background checks at gun shows. And it will make it more difficult for law enforcement to trace many of the guns that are sold at gun shows and later used in crimes. We oppose this "Lautenberg Lite" version of the bill, and will work to amend the bill when it reaches the House floor. We should be strengthening the Senate-passed provisions, not emasculating them in order to please the NRA.

NRA Gun Shows Amendment
June 1, 1999

Q: Today's Washington Times reports that the NRA intends to put forth its own amendment to close the gun show loophole, and that the NRA believes it has the votes to pass this measure. Will you support the NRA's amendment?

A: Since the House did not take up any legislation to close the gun show loophole before leaving for the Memorial Day recess, we are hardly in a position to say whether or not legislation the House *intends* to take up when it returns will be satisfactory to the President.

Given our experience over the past few weeks, however, we do not believe that gun show legislation ghost written by the NRA will be an acceptable alternative to the American people. In the Senate, the NRA already tried to riddle gun show legislation with new and dangerous loopholes, but it failed. The NRA should be on notice then: the President will read the fine print of any gun show amendment considered by the House -- and he will insist that it not include any new gun lobby loopholes.

**Littleton School Shooting
Question & Answer
April 24, 1999**

Q: Mr. President, in your radio address today, you said that you would be sending new legislation to the Congress to keep guns out of the hands of children and to make schools safer. What more can you tell us about the proposals? And why are you sending them to Congress now?

A: First, let me say that the issue of youth violence, guns, and school safety is an area that we have been working on for some time now. And every year of my Administration we have fought to do more and more on these issues. We established the first safe schools program, banned the juvenile possession of handguns, and passed zero tolerance for guns in schools. We have significantly expanded afterschool programs, worked with law enforcement to trace many more crime guns to their source, and put more community police in our schools. And -- perhaps most importantly -- we have put the issue of gun violence at the center of our anti-crime efforts -- passing the Brady Law, the Assault Weapons Ban, and other meaningful firearms legislation that have resulted in gun-related violence dropping by more 25 percent since I took office. But as the shooting in Littleton reminds us: there are no quick and easy answers to this problem.

The bills I mentioned earlier today in my radio address are also something we have been working on for some time now -- and especially since the School Safety Conference last October. At the Conference, we talked about how to improve and strengthen our Safe and Drug-Free Schools program by developing more comprehensive strategies that get schools, law enforcement, mental health professionals, and juvenile justice authorities all working together to prevent violence and drug use. And we also learned from the communities that were impacted by school shootings last year, that the federal government could do even more to help respond to these tragic shootings -- as well as to help states develop their own response teams. So these are some of the things we will recommend in our new Safe and Drug-Free Schools legislation.

As for firearms legislation, as part of our 21st Century Crime Initiative we have been working on for some months, we have been considering new proposals to build on our existing efforts. Some of these you know already. For instance, we have proposed conducting background checks at all gun shows, and making permanent the waiting period requirements of the Brady Law. We have also proposed banning violent juveniles from owning guns when they turn 21, and providing child safety locks with every gun sold. But I will have more to say about these proposals in the coming days and weeks.

Littleton School Shooting
Questions and Answers
April 21, 1999

Q: Now that there are more details on the shooting in Littleton, have you made any more decisions on actions you plan to take to prevent these horrible school shootings from occurring in the first place?

A: As the President mentioned last night, we stand ready to assist local law enforcement, the schools, families, and the entire community of Littleton in this time of crisis. We are prepared to send a crisis response team to Colorado, and it is my understanding that the FBI is assisting local law enforcement at the crime scene.

But it is important to mention that beyond the immediate situation, we already have taken a number of actions to address the school shootings and the broader problem of school violence. We met with the leaders from other communities recently affected by school shootings to get their recommendations on what additional steps we could take to prevent and respond to such crises. As a result, at our White House Conference on School Safety held last October, the President announced: new resources to add more police officers in schools; the creation of an emergency response team, Project SERV, to respond to violent deaths in schools; a Safe Schools-Healthy Students Initiative to give communities access to a broad array of federal resources to prevent school violence before it starts; and the principles of a strengthened Safe and Drug-Free Schools program to make sure that schools adopt rigorous and comprehensive school safety plans.

In addition, we've sent to every school in the country an annual report on school safety -- to give principals, parents, and teachers an accurate picture of the school violence problem nationwide -- as well as a guide on the early warning signs of violence, to help principals and teachers identify behaviors in young people that could lead to violent outbreaks. And throughout our Administration, the President has taken action to help keep guns out of the hands of kids and away from our schools, including signing into law the Gun-Free Schools Act to promote zero tolerance for guns in schools, and the Youth Handgun Safety Act to prohibit juvenile handgun possession.

But clearly, there is more that must be done. Incidents like what happened in Littleton must never be viewed as tolerable or acceptable. As the President said last night, we will review the all the facts of the case, and then make an honest assessment of what more we can do to prevent situations like these from ever happening again. And we will consider whether we can include any relevant proposals in our crime and education reauthorization bills -- both of which we expect to release within the next few weeks.

Q: The President made a number of policy announcements six months ago at the White House Conference on School Safety. Have you taken any actions to further these

policies since he announced them last October?

A: Yes, we have. With respect to the \$65 million made available to help schools hire more school resource officers, the COPS Office has received hundreds of applications from communities across the country, and we expect to release these funds shortly. Second, the Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services launched the Safe Schools-Healthy Students Initiative a couple of weeks ago. School districts have until June 1, 1999 to apply for \$380 million in grants for three years to fund coordinated, comprehensive community-wide responses to school safety. In addition, we have provided \$12 million in our FY 2000 budget to fund our emergency response team to school violence, Project SERV, and the details of our Safe and Drug-Free Schools overhaul plan will be sent to Congress in the next couple of weeks as part of our the Elementary and Secondary Education reauthorization.

Q: The gunmen in yesterday's incident reportedly had more than just guns, but were also armed with a variety of explosives. Is there anything more that can be done to help restrict juvenile access to explosives?

A: As part of the omnibus crime bill we expect to launch in the next few weeks, we are considering a number of firearms-related initiatives which may be included in our proposal. We will certainly review whether there are any specific proposals which would address some of the issues raised in the Littleton incident with regard to youth access of explosives and guns.

Concealed Weapons Referendum Q&A
April 21, 1999

Q: The Colorado State legislature is considering a concealed weapons bill similar to the referendum that recently failed in Missouri. What is your position?

A: We believe that there were very serious public safety concerns with the Colorado concealed weapons bill. We were pleased when Missouri voters rejected a similar referendum proposal. As Governor of Arkansas, President Clinton vetoed a similar piece of legislation. This ill-conceived proposal would have permitted even some convicted criminals to carry concealed firearms, and it would have allowed people to carry concealed weapons in venues such as sporting events, hospitals, and bars.

The First Lady took an active role in opposing a similar measure in order to protect the children of Missouri. We believe her efforts to call attention to some of the dangers of the NRA backed proposal -- through efforts to get out the vote and other means -- had a positive impact on what turned out to be a very close vote.

COPS Program Q&A's
April 13, 1999

Q: There have been recent criticisms of your COPS Program, suggesting that the program has not actually reduced crime. What is your response?

A: There is no question that the COPS Program is helping to reduce crime and improve public safety across the nation. Numerous police chiefs can attest to the positive impact the COPS Program has had in helping them fight crime and bring the violent crime rate down to its lowest level in a quarter of a century. Crime is down in all categories and in every region of the country. And community members, mayors, and other elected officials will tell you the same thing: COPS has made a difference.

And while the COPS Program is certainly not the sole reason for the drop in our nation's crime rate, it has been an important part of our overall crime strategy -- along with keeping guns off the street and out of the hands of criminals, tougher punishment for hardened criminals, and smarter prevention for our young people to avoid crime in the first place.

Q: One criticism is that some police departments have not used their COPS funds to hire new officers. What is your response? And how many new officers have actually been hired as a result of COPS?

A: Over 11,000 state and local law enforcement agencies across the country receive COPS funding. Only a very small percentage of these jurisdictions have been found to mispend the money, and the COPS Office is working with every local agency to resolve outstanding issues to make sure that funds are spent properly. It should be noted that use of COPS money for some purposes other than hiring new officers -- such as buying new technology to allow current officers to get out on the street -- is completely appropriate.

The COPS Program has funded more than 92,000 additional community police officers to date -- ahead of schedule and under budget. More than 50,000 officers are already on the beat helping to fight crime. The rest will join them shortly: recruiting, hiring and training new officers takes between 12-18 months, and many officers we've funded are currently in the pipeline.

Police Misconduct and Abuse Q&A
April 12, 1999

Q: The Diallo shooting in New York City has raised broader issues of concern regarding police abuse, misconduct, and racial profiling. Are you planning to take any proactive measures to address these issues?

A: With respect to the Diallo case in particular, the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, the local U.S. Attorney's Office, and the FBI are working with the local prosecutor and local authorities to ensure that every possible step is taken.

As to the larger issues of police brutality and misconduct, the criminal justice system must be fair and have the support of all law-abiding Americans. While we know the vast majority of officers are upstanding men and women, I have been deeply disturbed by recent allegations of serious police misconduct and reports of racial profiling. We must ensure that all our communities have faith in the police who are there to protect them.

That is why my Administration has vigorously enforced civil rights laws against police officers who betray the public's trust through lawlessness or brutality. Since 1993, the Justice Department has criminally prosecuted over 300 officers, resulting in more than 200 convictions.

Through my Crime Bill, I plan to propose additional investments to reduce incidents of brutality, including increased funds for integrity and ethics training and improved recruitment efforts, including college scholarships for prospective officers.

Finally, we must continue to support community policing efforts. Our community policing initiative has been instrumental in strengthening the bond between community residents and their local police, as well as reducing the victimization of minorities. My crime bill will supplement this existing initiative by creating citizen police academies that actively engage residents in community crime-fighting efforts. Building this kind of trust between police officers and their communities is essential if we are to move forward to make our criminal justice system more responsive and fairer for all of our citizens.

Gun Lawsuits Q&A
April 12, 1999

Q: Do you support the lawsuits being filed by New Orleans, Chicago, Atlanta and other cities against gun manufacturers? Are you planning to take a strong position on this issue as you did in the tobacco litigation?

A: I am watching closely all of the pending lawsuits against the gun industry. I am especially concerned about allegations -- such as in Chicago -- that some gun dealers are selling guns illegally by helping purchasers evade firearms laws or selling guns to persons who say they intend to break the law. These are serious charges which, if proven true, would demonstrate that some members of the gun industry are helping to promote an illegal market in firearms. Such disrespect for the law endangers our citizens, and if the evidence shows in any of these cases that federal firearms laws have been violated, we will take vigorous enforcement action.

In the meantime, we will continue to work closely with state and local law enforcement to trace crime guns back to their source, to prevent illegal gun sales -- especially to criminals and juveniles -- and to pass even tougher gun laws.

Concealed Weapons Referendum Q&A
April 7, 1999

Q: Yesterday, Missouri citizens rejected a referendum to allow people to carry concealed weapons in public. What is your reaction to the vote?

A: We believe that there were very serious public safety concerns with the Missouri concealed weapons referendum proposal, and we are pleased that the voters rejected it. As Governor of Arkansas, President Clinton vetoed a similar piece of legislation. This ill-conceived proposal would have permitted even some convicted criminals to carry concealed firearms, and it would have allowed people to carry concealed weapons in venues such as sporting events, hospitals, and bars. The First Lady took an active role in opposing this measure in order to protect the children of Missouri. We believe her efforts to call attention to some of the dangers of the NRA backed proposal -- through efforts to get out the vote and other means -- had a positive impact on what turned out to be a very close vote.

HATE CRIMES QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

April 6, 1999

Q: What is a hate crime?

A: As a general matter, a hate crime is a crime that is motivated by bias based on the victim's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. However, it is important to understand that hate crimes are defined by various federal and state criminal statutes, and these statutory definitions differ in their particulars from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The principal federal hate crimes statute, for example, is currently limited to acts of violence committed because of the victim's race, color, religion or national origin; it does not include crimes committed because of the victim's gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

Q: What did the President announce today?

A: Today President Clinton applauded public and private efforts to teach children about tolerance and urged Congress to quickly pass the pending federal hate crimes legislation. This legislation strengthens the existing federal hate crimes law by (1) extending the situations where prosecutions can be brought for violent crimes motivated by bias based on race, color, religion, or national origin; and (2) expanding the federal hate crimes statute to protect against hate crimes based on sexual orientation, gender, or disability. The President also announced a new public-private partnership which will focus attention on issues of hate, tolerance, and diversity in middle-grade schools. Finally, the President called on the Departments of Justice and Education to include hate crimes in its annual report card on school safety and to report on hate crimes and bias on college campuses.

Q: What did the President announce with respect to a new public-private partnership?

A: The President announced a public-private partnership that will develop a program for middle-school students to teach tolerance in the classroom and in their daily lives. The members of the partnership are AT&T, Court TV, the National Middle School Association, the Anti-Defamation League, and Cable in the Classroom, with assistance from the Departments of Justice and Education. This effort is supported by the NAACP, the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights, the National Council of La Raza, the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, the National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems, the National Education Association, and the National School Boards Association, and the Partnership expects support from other organizations that deal with these issues. Recognizing that tolerance cannot be taught in a single day and that raising awareness of diversity should be integrated into students' daily lives, this public-private partnership -- entitled "Dealing with Our Differences" -- will provide an opportunity for middle-school students to learn about the harmful impact of intolerance,

and will highlight positive ways that young adolescents are dealing with diversity issues. The Partnership will develop in-school lessons and activities supported with cable TV programming; videos and websites; a nationally-televised forum on diversity and tolerance at the end of October; and post-show lessons and activities. This partnership builds on previous Administration efforts such as issuing the following publications: "Preventing Youth Hate Crime: A Manual for Schools and Communities;" "Healing the Hate: A National Bias Crime Prevention Curriculum for Middle Schools;" and "Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime."

Q: Will this new program teach middle-school students that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle?

A: This program is about tolerance. Whatever their views about homosexuality, all people of good will should agree that no one in America should be subject to physical attack based on their sexual orientation. People have a right to be safe and a responsibility to be tolerant.

Q: What specific changes to current federal law is the President supporting?

A: The President supports pending federal legislation to expand the principal federal hate crimes statute. The current statute prohibits any acts of violence that are based on a person's race, color, religion, or national origin and that are intended to interfere with certain specified federally protected activities. The proposed legislation would make illegal these acts of violence even if they were not intended to interfere with federally protected activities. Further, the proposed legislation would prohibit any acts of violence based on sexual orientation, gender, or disability, as long as there is a connection with interstate commerce.

Q: How many hate crimes are there each year? Are hate crimes increasing?

A: In 1997, there were 8049 reported incidents of hate crimes. But these statistics almost certainly under-report hate crimes to a significant extent, and the rise in the number of reported incidents may be due to improvements in reporting, rather than to increases in crime. There are two reasons for thinking that current statistics under-report hate crime. First and most important, submission of hate crimes data to the FBI is voluntary, and many law enforcement agencies do not submit data at all or submit incomplete data. In addition, many victims of hate crimes fail to report the incidents because of fear, humiliation, or language difficulties. For example, 60% of the victims of anti-gay incidents who reported their incidents to private tracking groups did not report the incidents to the police, in many cases because of a fear of mistreatment or unwanted exposure.

Q: What other activities has the Administration undertaken with respect to hate crimes?

A: At the White House Conference on Hate Crimes in November 1997, the President announced several initiatives to ensure effective law enforcement, including the creation of working groups in every U.S. Attorney's district in the country to improve coordination among local, state, and federal prosecutors; the addition of new FBI agents and prosecutors to work on enforcement of hate crimes laws; and the development of model curriculum for training law enforcement officers to deal with hate crimes. Since the conference, the Administration has committed significant resources to assisting enforcement of hate crimes and has issued publications such as "Preventing Youth Hate Crime: A Manual for Schools and Communities" and "Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime." In his FY2000 budget, the President has requested approximately \$34 million for hate crimes enforcement.

Q: Why is this hate crimes legislation needed?

A: The legislation is needed for two compelling reasons. First, the problem of hate crimes based on sexual orientation, disability, and gender are serious, and are currently not covered under federal law. Second, the Department of Justice has been hindered in its efforts to prosecute racial hate crimes because of the need to show that the victim was attacked because he or she was engaging in a federally protected activity such as enrolling in or attending any public school or college. This amendment will ensure that all persons in the United States are protected under federal law from any hate crimes causing serious bodily injury.

Q: Why is federal hate crimes legislation necessary at all? Shouldn't this really be a matter for local prosecutors?

A: The federal government has an important supporting role to play in prosecuting hate crimes. As a matter of longstanding practice, federal officials defer to state prosecutors to make the initial determination whether to bring a hate crimes case. But the problem of hate crimes is serious enough to warrant providing the federal government with authority to act if federal jurisdiction is necessary to achieve justice in a particular case. And the proposed legislation will ensure that the federal government has this necessary authority.

Q: Won't the addition of gender to the federal hate crimes legislation federalize all rapes?

A: No. The bill does not make every rape a federal crime. In addition to the violent act, there must be evidence of bias toward the victim because of the victim's gender and a sufficient connection with interstate commerce. The Act generally would not be used when state laws provide severe penalties, as in cases of rape. The more frequent use

would be in cases of violent attacks against women where there is clear evidence of gender bias but state laws do not provide sufficient penalties or where state officials conclude it is difficult to bring a successful state prosecution. In addition, federal jurisdiction would also allow federal authorities to assist states in bringing their own cases.

NRA Brady/NICS Lawsuit
December 2, 1998

- Q: Yesterday, the National Rifle Association filed a federal lawsuit attempting to block the FBI from retaining the records of law-abiding gun purchasers as part of its new Instacheck system. What is your response to this lawsuit?**
- A:** Since its enactment, the Brady Law has helped block nearly a quarter of a million illegal handgun sales and proven to be one of our most critical crime fighting tools. The FBI's policy of temporarily retaining certain records is intended to ensure the effectiveness and integrity of the Brady law's background check system, while protecting the privacy of gun purchasers. The policy is also fully consistent with federal law. We view this lawsuit as simply another attempt by the NRA and its allies to undermine the Brady law, and we will fight it as vigorously as we have fought the gun lobby's previous efforts.

Health Care Q&A's
October 26, 1998

Q: Are you disappointed that you were unable to pass any meaningful health care legislation this year?

A: I am proud that this year's budget agreement included a \$2 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) -- the largest-ever dollar increase. This increase will enable scientists to pursue a wide range of cutting edge research from Alzheimers to AIDS to new genetic discoveries. In addition, Congress responded to my request to substantially increase HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention efforts, providing \$1.4 billion for the Ryan White program. We also made a new \$130 million investment to address the severe problem of HIV/AIDS in the minority community.

I am disappointed that the Republican Leadership stopped critical health care legislation from passing including: a strong enforceable patients' bill of rights that assure critical patient protections, such as access to specialists, and an independent appeals process; the bipartisan Kennedy-Jeffords legislation that would help provide people with disabilities health care coverage so they can return to work; and tobacco legislation to stop kids from smoking before they start. I am committed to working with the next Congress to address these and other critical issues to improve the nation's health care system.

Q: Beyond addressing the challenges of Social Security, what are your plans to reform Medicare next year?

A: The Balanced Budget Act I enacted in 1997 included the most comprehensive reforms in the history of the Medicare program, including extending the life of the trust fund for a decade, implementing new preventive benefits, and creating a bipartisan commission to examine the long-term financing challenges of the Medicare program.

The Medicare Commission is now reviewing the ways to address these challenges. As with every decision regarding Medicare, we will evaluate all options in the context of whether they continue to assure high quality care for the millions of older Americans and people with disabilities who depend on this program.

Q: Recent reports show that the number of uninsured has grown substantially since you took office. Do you plan to revisit this issue, particularly in your upcoming budget?

A: I continue to be extremely concerned about the growing numbers of uninsured Americans. However, at this time, I do not intend to make any early announcements about next year's budget.

I will point out though that every one of my budgets has included proposals to expand access to quality health coverage for more Americans. Working with Congress, we have helped Americans secure health care coverage by limiting preexisting conditions, and we have made the largest investment in children's health insurance in a generation. The Administration is currently working to implement the new Children's Health Insurance Program and has launched an unprecedented outreach proposal to identify and cover the millions of uninsured children who are eligible for Medicaid or this new program but not currently enrolled.

Unfortunately, Congress has not passed some of my coverage proposals, such as allowing Americans ages 55 to 65 buy into Medicare or the Kennedy-Jeffords legislation that helps provide health insurance to people with disabilities so they can return to work.

Q: Is it true that the White House is backing away from requiring insurers to offer Medigap plans to people with disabilities?

A: It is not true. On Friday, the Health Care Financing Administration released a letter that outlines the rights of beneficiaries who have been involuntarily terminated from their Medicare Health Maintenance Organizations to gain access to supplemental "Medigap" insurance. The letter underscores that these insurers must provide these beneficiaries access to certain Medigap plans that are now offered, regardless of such factors as health status or prior history with health care claims.

Unfortunately, the law does not give us the authority to require insurers that are not currently offering Medigap plans to disabled beneficiaries to now begin to do so. The President has supported bipartisan legislation in the Congress that would remedy this legal gap by requiring all insurers offering Medigap plans to seniors to offer them as well to people with disabilities. HCFA's letter also urges states to pass laws requiring that Medigap plans are offered to people with disabilities.

The Administration continues to be extremely concerned about Medicare beneficiaries who are dropped from their HMOs, and will continue to develop strategies -- both legislative and administrative -- to help those who have been dropped by their HMOs and to help ensure that this does not happen again in the future.

Q: But Saturday's *New York Times* story said that, as a result of insurance industry pressure, the Administration backed away from an earlier more generous interpretation that would have required insurers to offer Medigap plans to disabled beneficiaries?

A: We did not back away from any previous interpretation. The law simply does not give us the authority to require insurers that do not currently offer Medigap plans to disabled beneficiaries to now offer new plans to these beneficiaries. The Administration has been supportive of legislation that would do this and is committed to helping find ways to ensure that disabled beneficiaries get the Medigap policies they need.

President Clinton: Promoting Gun Safety and Responsibility
Questions and Answers
July 8, 1998

Youth Handgun Safety Signs and Warnings

Q: Can you tell us more about the signs and warnings that gun dealers will be required to post and issue?

A: On June 11, 1997, the President signed a directive to require federal firearms dealers to post signs and issue warnings about the responsibility that gun purchasers have under current law to not transfer a handgun to juveniles -- as well as about the dangers that handguns pose to children generally.

After going through an extensive comment period -- and hearing from gun manufacturers, gun control advocates, and others -- the President today announced that next Monday the Department of the Treasury will publish in the Federal Register the final regulation requiring federally licensed gun dealers to post signs and issue warnings to handgun purchasers concerning youth handgun safety. The signs, which are 17" x 22" in size, and written warnings will be printed and distributed through the Bureau of Tobacco, Alcohol and Firearms (ATF). Approximately 90,000 federally licensed firearms manufactures, importers and dealers will have to comply with this new regulation.

Q: What happens if a gun dealer refuses to post the new signs or issue the written notices provided by ATF?

A: Any licensee who willfully fails to comply with the Gun Control Act -- or regulations promulgated under the Gun Control Act -- is subject to having his or her license revoked.

Q: How many firearms used by juveniles actually come from federally licensed gun dealers?

A: According to ATF's tracing data, nearly all firearms used by juveniles can be originally traced back to a federally licensed gun dealer; however, the firearms may have gone through several other persons in the interim. And in the 17 cities where ATF, as part of the President's Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative, is tracing all recovered crime guns -- one out of every ten is traced back to a juvenile.

Thus, there is ample evidence that for almost every gun that gets into a juvenile's hands, an adult had the opportunity -- in fact, the legal responsibility -- to stop that transfer from taking place. The signs and warnings being required by the Administration will put adult gun purchasers on notice about this responsibility and warn them about the legal sanctions that may apply if this responsibility is ignored.

Q: Can you clarify under what authority the Administration is requiring gun dealers to post these signs and issues written notices?

A: The authority for this action is two-fold: (1) 18 U.S.C. Sec. 926(a) generally provides that the Secretary of the Treasury may proscribe certain rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of the 1968 Gun Control Act; and (2) 18 U.S.C. Sec. 922(x)(1) -- or the Youth Handgun Safety Act, which was included by Senator Kohl as an amendment to the 1994 Crime Act -- prohibits, in most circumstances, juveniles from possessing handguns, and adults from transferring handguns to juveniles.

Q: Why did it take the Treasury Department so long to implement the President's directive of June 11, 1997?

A: Pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, agencies are generally required to provide notice and comment prior to issuing a final regulation. On August 27, 1997, ATF issued a notice of proposed rulemaking. The comment period for this rulemaking closed on November 25, 1997. After carefully considering the 62 comments received in response to the proposed rule, ATF drafted the final regulation being announced today.

Q: What punishments are provided for in the Youth Handgun Safety Act?

A: Juveniles who violate the ban on handgun possession are subject to mandatory probation. Adults who violate the prohibition on transferring handguns to juveniles are punishable by a prison term of 1 to 10 years, depending on the circumstances. If the transferor knew or had reasonable cause to believe that the juvenile intended to carry or use the handgun in the commission of a crime of violence, the punishment may be a fine and/or imprisonment of up to ten years. In other circumstances, the punishment may be a fine and/or imprisonment of up to one year.

Additionally, the Administration has called for increasing both of these penalties in its juvenile crime legislation. Specifically, the Administration has proposed replacing mandatory probation for juveniles with up to one year of imprisonment, and providing for a mandatory minimum sentence of three years for adults who knowingly transfer a handgun for a juvenile to use in a violent crime.

Child Access Prevention Legislation (CAP)

Q: In challenging Congress to pass federal CAP legislation, did the President specifically endorse the Durbin-Chafee bill?

A: The President believes that the Durbin-Chafee bill -- and similar language incorporated into broader gun legislation introduced by Senator Kennedy and Representative McCarthy -- is a good first start. It is a serious bipartisan attempt to promote gun safety and responsibility throughout our country by holding gun-owning adults who fail to keep loaded firearms out of the reach of children criminally responsible for their actions.

Fifteen states have enacted CAP laws, and a recent study by the Journal of the American Medical Association found that they reduced unintentional shootings by an average of 23%. So the President supports the Durbin-Chafee effort, and he has asked the Secretary of the Treasury and Attorney General to work with the Senators to pass the best federal CAP law possible.

Q: What are the 15 states with CAP laws?

A: The 15 states with CAP laws on the books include:

Florida (enacted in 1989);
Connecticut (enacted in 1990);
Iowa (enacted in 1990);
California (enacted in 1991);
Nevada (enacted in 1991);
New Jersey (enacted in 1991);
Virginia (enacted in 1991);
Wisconsin (enacted in 1991);
Hawaii (enacted in 1992);
Maryland (enacted in 1992);
Minnesota (enacted in 1993);
North Carolina (enacted in 1993);
Delaware (enacted in 1993);
Rhode Island (enacted in 1995); and
Texas (enacted in 1995).

Maryland Gun Enforcement Initiative

Q: What exactly is the Administration's role in the Maryland Gun Enforcement Initiative being announced today.

A: The Administration welcomes Maryland's new initiative as a way to expand collaboration with federal law enforcement in investigating, prosecuting and incarcerating illegal gun traffickers and reducing gun violence. Baltimore is already one of the 27 cities tracing all recovered crime guns as part of the President's Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative. The initiative announced today will allow the Administration to expand this effort to the entire state of Maryland. By helping Maryland trace all recovered firearms, Maryland can maximize information about the illegal sources of firearms and build a statewide strategy against illegal firearms trafficking.

Maryland's new initiative demonstrates that federal, state, and local law enforcement can work together to broaden their approach from simply reacting to gun crimes -- to a proactive enforcement strategy aimed at reducing the illegal supply of guns and preventing gun violence in the first place.

Child Access Prevention Legislation (CAP)

Q: What specific changes will the Administration be seeking to the Durbin-Chafee CAP legislation?

A: The Attorney General and Secretary of the Treasury have recommended that the proper federal role for child access prevention legislation would be to target the most egregious offenses. We support -- and, in fact, have transmitted to states -- model legislation very similar to the Durbin-Chafee bill that would encourage states to prosecute and punish negligent storing of firearms. However, we believe that federal CAP legislation should be tougher and targeted. Accordingly, after reviewing the Durbin-Chafee bill, the Attorney General and Treasury Secretary have recommended three changes:

(1) Raising the standard of liability from negligence to recklessness. This means that a person must be aware of the risk and disregard it. By contrast, a standard of negligence would apply to any person who should be aware of a risk, but is not.

(2) Elevating the offense from a misdemeanor to a felony. Since Justice and Treasury propose targeting the most egregious cases -- not simply negligence -- they support tougher penalties -- or at least one year's imprisonment.

(3) Limiting federal jurisdiction to cases where a child causes death or bodily injury.

We intend to work with Senators Durbin and Chafee to pass the best federal Child Access Prevention law possible -- and to encourage states to adopt complimentary laws as well.

Hamilton v. Accu-Tek Decision Q&A
February 17, 1999

Q: What is your response to the decision by a federal jury last week finding several of the nation's largest gun manufacturers negligent and awarding damages -- for the first time -- to a shooting victim? Do you support the decision? And do you support the lawsuits being filed by New Orleans, Chicago, Atlanta and other cities?

A: The Justice Department is currently reviewing last week's decision, which found some of the nation's gun manufacturers negligent for market and distributing firearms in a manner that allows criminals easy access to guns. I'm not in a position to comment on this particular case until the Department has completed its review.

I am watching closely all of the pending lawsuits against the gun industry. I am especially concerned about allegations -- such as in Chicago -- that some gun dealers are selling guns illegally -- helping purchasers evade firearms laws and even selling guns to persons who say they intend to break the law. These are serious charges which, if proven true, would demonstrate that some in the gun industry are helping to promote an illegal market in firearms. Such disrespect for the law endangers our citizens, and if the evidence shows in any of these cases that federal firearms laws have been violated, we will take vigorous enforcement action.

In the meantime, we will continue to work closely with state and local law enforcement to trace crime guns back to their source, to prevent illegal gun sales -- especially to criminals and juveniles -- and to pass even tougher gun laws.

21st Century Policing Initiative Event
January 14, 1999
Questions and Answers

Q: Can you explain how the President's 21st Century Policing Initiative is different from the current COPS Program?

A: The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program created in the 1994 Crime Act authorized \$8.8 billion over six years to help communities hire and redeploy 100,000 officers to our nation's streets and to promote community policing in other ways. To date, COPS has awarded over \$5.3 billion in grants to more than 11,300 state and local law enforcement agencies -- helping to fund more than 92,000 officers on the beat and train more than 21,000 officers and community residents. As these numbers suggest, for the most part the current COPS program has focused on hiring new officers and redeploying veteran officers to the streets.

The initiative launched today builds on the success of the original COPS program, but it also takes a giant step forward by giving law enforcement the tools and partners it needs to keep crime coming down well into the 21st Century. First, the 21st Century Policing Initiative continues the Administration's commitment to keep the number of officers on the beat at an all-time high, by helping communities to hire, redeploy, and retain police officers. Second, the initiative provides significant new funds to give law enforcement access to the latest crime-fighting and crime-solving technologies -- improved police communications, crime mapping, laptop computers, crime lab improvements, and more. And third, the initiative makes an unprecedented commitment to engage the entire community in the hard work of preventing and fighting crime -- by funding new community-based prosecutors, and partnerships with probation and parole officers, school officials, and faith-based organizations.

Q: How many officers have been funded by the COPS Program and when do you think you will reach your 100,000 goal?

A: Through the COPS Program, more than 92,000 additional community policing officers have been funded to date. We expect the program to meet its goal of helping communities fund 100,000 more police officers by this summer -- under budget and ahead of schedule.

Q: How many officers are actually on the street?

A: According to the COPS Office's most recent survey this summer, nearly 50,000 officers were already on the streets, and about another 25,000 were in the process of being recruited, screened, tested and trained. The COPS Office is in the process of completing

another survey that should be ready in the upcoming weeks.

Q: How do you explain the discrepancy between the 92,000 officers number you use and the much smaller number on the street?

A: The remaining police officers are in the process of being recruited, screened, tested or trained -- a process that, on average, takes about 18 months. The funds to pay these officers are available to local police departments just as soon as they are ready to hire their new recruits.

The COPS office expects -- in fact, it demands -- that local law enforcement agencies stick to their normal rigorous recruiting and hiring procedures in filling all COPS-funded positions. Nothing could be more important than hiring qualified and fully screened police to entrust with the public's safety.

Q: There have been news reports about audits of COPS grants by the Office of Inspector General. The reports suggest that there is substantial misspending by police departments of COPS grants. How widespread is this and what are you doing about it?

A: The COPS Office and the Inspector General work together to monitor COPS grants to ensure that funds are being spent properly. Many of the audits reported in the news have already been certified as closed by the Inspector General. In every other case, the COPS Office is working with the local agency to resolve any outstanding issues and bring grantees into compliance. It is important to note, however, that the audit reports reported in the news represent less than one percent of all COPS grants.

Q: What happens when the three-year federal grant runs out? Are police departments allowed to lay off officers hired with these funds?

A: Every agency knows from the outset that it is expected to pick-up the long-term costs of a COPS officer when the federal grant expires. This is part of the commitment law enforcement agencies make in order to receive the federal COPS grant. More importantly, Justice Department monitoring and media stories confirm that the majority of grantees are fulfilling their responsibilities under COPS grants.

Nonetheless, we understand that there may be some unforeseen circumstances, fiscal emergencies, or natural disasters that may prevent a police department from retaining its COPS-funded officers. In these case, the Attorney General has the authority to extend funding in special circumstances and for certain small communities (populations below 50,000). In addition, the President's new 21st Century Policing Initiative will provide even further relieve for economically distressed communities that are having difficulties

with the long term costs of retaining their officers.

Justice Department Crime Statistics

Q: What do the statistics released today show?

A: For the first part of 1998, crime continued to decline significantly. Notably, we expect serious violent crimes to fall below 3 million for the first time since the National Crime Victimization Survey began in 1973. By the end of 1998, both the overall violent and property crime rates will have fallen by well over 20 percent since 1993.

Q: How is the data you are releasing today different than the crime statistics that were recently released by the FBI?

A: Today's statistics are part of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) administered by the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics. The NCVS is a household survey that interviews about 80,000 persons age 12 and older in 43,000 households across the country twice a year. The survey measures the number and types of crimes as reported by the victims themselves, and therefore covers crimes that go unreported to the police. In contrast, the FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR) provides crime data on specified offenses as reported by the nation's state and local law enforcement agencies. Interestingly, while the UCR and the NCVS use different methods of data collection, the findings are the same: that serious violent crime is declining for the 7th year in a row.

**Questions and Answers for Top Cops Event
October 9, 1998**

Q. What did the President announce today?

- A. The President announced approximately \$70 million in grants for communities to hire more police and for states to improve their criminal history records:

(1) \$27.4 million in COPS hiring grants. The Justice Department's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) will award \$27.4 million in grants for 151 policing agencies across the country to hire 428 officers. This will bring the total number of officers funded under the President's COPS Initiative to over 88,500 -- keeping the COPS Initiative ahead of schedule and under budget.

(2) \$41 million to improve system of Brady background checks. The President will announce more than \$41 million in Justice Department grants for 46 states to improve their criminal history records, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the Brady Law's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). The grants, provided through the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP), are funded through the President's 1994 Crime Bill. Total grants under this program now exceed \$200 million. The President will also reiterate his opposition to efforts in Congress to undermine the effective and timely implementation of NICS which is scheduled to come on-line next month.

Q. Is there any more detail you can give us on the COPS grants? Are there any large departments receiving funds?

- A. Today's \$27.4 million COPS grant announcement will help to fund 428 officers for 151 law enforcement agencies in 39 states and Puerto Rico. Most of the departments receiving grants are located in smaller jurisdictions. Among today's larger grantees: \$925,000 for St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Department in Louisiana to fund 16 officers; \$3 million for Paterson, New Jersey to fund 40 officers; and \$825,000 for Oneida County Sheriff's Department, Wisconsin to fund 11 officers.

States with law enforcement agencies receiving grants today are: AL, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI, WV, and Puerto Rico.

Q. Why are only 46 states receiving NCHIP grants? What happened to the other four?

- A. Four states -- Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, and Nevada -- either applied too late for this FY 98 NCHIP grant announcement or their applications required revisions. The

Department of Justice has reserved FY 98 NCHIP funds for these states and they will be able to receive grants once they have met their application obligations.

Q. Can you explain what the DeWine/Leahy legislation will do?

A. The Crime Identification and Technology Act of 1998:

Creates a \$1.25 billion state grant program for crime technology. The bill authorizes \$1.25 billion in grants (\$250 million each year for five years) for states to upgrade their communications technologies and criminal justice identification systems, such as automated fingerprint and DNA identification systems, and sex offender registries. This grant program will help in the integration of national, state and local systems so that law enforcement can share information in a timely manner.

Authorizes the Administration's National Criminal History Access and Child Protection Act. The bill also contains an Administration proposal -- which the President transmitted to Congress on the day of his Child Care Conference held a year ago-- to authorize a federal-state compact for the interstate exchange of criminal history records for noncriminal purposes, such as background checks on child care and elder care workers. The Compact will help to establish a framework for the exchange of criminal history records which will help to increase the accuracy and completeness of criminal history records.

Q. What is the Top Cop award?

A. The "Top Cop" awards are given by the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) and pay tribute to law enforcement officers from across the country for outstanding service to their communities during the preceding year. This year, 34 exceptional law enforcement officers will receive the award for their heroism and devotion to duty and service in their communities. The President has honored NAPO Top Cops every year since becoming President.

Q. Can you give us more detail on the White House Conference on School Safety that you are holding next week?

On October 15, 1998, the President will host the White House Conference on School Safety. The Conference will be a day-long event in the East Room of the White House that will include participation by the President, Vice President, First Lady and Mrs. Gore; workshops; a morning panel discussion; and an afternoon session that will explore best practices and model safety strategies. The Conference will include communities recently affected by school shootings and will be linked by satellite to hundreds of communities and schools across the country.

At the Conference, the President will issue the first Annual Report on School Safety, which will include: an analysis of all existing national school crime data and an overview of state and local school crime data; examples of schools and strategies that are successfully reducing school violence, drug use, and class disruption; actions that parents can take locally to combat school crime; and resources available to schools and communities to help create safe, disciplined and drug-free schools. In addition, the President will announce a number of new initiatives to help schools and communities prevent and respond to violence.

**Q&A on Orlando Hillcrest Elementary School Event
September 9, 1998**

School Poverty and Achievement Report

Q. What is the Department of Education report on School Poverty and Academic Performance?

The Department of Education released a report today that examines the relationship between school poverty and student achievement, comparing trends in the performance of 4th graders in high- and low-poverty schools on reading and math tests from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The report shows that students generally do less well if they attend a school where the majority of students are from disadvantaged circumstances. While this is a long-standing and continuing trend, the report also shows that students in high poverty schools are making progress in math, and closing the achievement gap in that area.

Q. What is a "high poverty school?"

In this report, a school in which half or more of the students come from low-income families are considered to be high-poverty. Overall, 34% of the nation's schools fit this definition. In urban communities, more than 3/4 of the schools are often high poverty schools.

Q. Do you really think that the Administration's education proposals can turn around this long-standing relationship between poverty and student learning? Aren't the problems associated with poverty simply too intractable for changes in schools alone to make a real difference?

While improving the schools alone will not entirely eliminate the effects of poverty on student learning, we are convinced that our proposals, if enacted and implemented, can make a real difference. One of the reasons that students in high poverty schools have poor achievement is because the schools have fewer educational resources--they tend to have fewer well-prepared teachers, larger classes, lower standards and weaker curriculum. At the same time, students in these schools need more help, and more time for learning, than many other students do. The President's proposals are aimed directly at these conditions. For example, the research clearly shows that reductions in class size to 18 or below--as the President has proposed--have the greatest benefit for disadvantaged students. Tutoring programs and after-school programs will also have the greatest benefit for our most disadvantaged students. The President has proposed to help recruit 35,000 well-prepared teachers for high-poverty schools, because these are the schools that are often forced to hire unprepared teachers. National standards will raise expectations for all students, but especially for students in high poverty schools, and will help strengthen accountability for the schools and school systems that serve them. In short, the Administration's education proposals are aimed at changing the conditions in schools that

are responsible for low achievement.

- Q. This report shows that reading achievement has been flat from 1992 to 1996, and that math performance has increased only slightly in the same 4 years. Why hasn't there been more progress under the President's leadership?**

First, improvements in education take time, but they are coming. In addition to gains in math performance as documented in this report, the past 5 years have also seen steady gains in SAT and ACT scores. Earlier this month the College Board reported that average SAT math score is the highest in 27 years.

Second, the gains in math achievement show that the President's approach--to start by raising standards--is the right way to go. In the early 1990's, the nation's math teachers agreed upon high national standards for what students should learn, and now those standards are being implemented in the classroom. The standards are being used to raise expectations for students, upgrade the curriculum, and retrain the teachers. In contrast, until recently there has been great controversy over the best way to teach reading, and the resulting "culture wars" between those who favor phonics and those who favor "whole language" has made it difficult to make needed improvements.

Third, there is still much more to be done. That is why the President is fighting so hard to raise standards, strengthen accountability, expand choice, and to make the needed investments in our schools, so that students can have smaller classes, modern buildings, well prepared teachers, after school programs, tutors, and other important learning opportunities.

School Safety

- Q. Are these school-based partnerships grants new? And how are they different from other actions the President has recommended with regard to putting more law enforcement in schools?**
- A.** The \$16.4 million in grants released earlier today are the first ever to go out under the COPS School-Based Partnerships grant program. The President first highlighted the program in March, when the Justice Department announced the availability of the funds. The new initiative not only encourages partnerships between local police departments and schools, but also emphasizes using community policing principles to help prevent and combat school crime.

The President has also called on Congress to pass legislation introduced by Representative James Maloney (D-CN) to help provide for the hiring of more school safety officers through the COPS program. The COPS Office has already provided funds for localities to hire school safety officers -- including Jonesboro, Arkansas which last month received a grant to hire 15 school safety officers.

Q. What else is the Administration doing on school safety?

- A. In addition to continuing to challenge the Congress to pass his comprehensive youth violence strategy to address the overarching problem of juvenile crime, the President has taken many actions to address the safety of our nation's schools:
- **White House Conference On School Safety.** In July, the President announced a White House Conference on School Safety, and proclaimed October 15, 1998, National School Safety Day. The White House Conference will be linked by satellite to communities and schools across the country, including those communities affected by the recent wave of school shootings.
 - **Early warning guide.** Last month, the President released a guide he directed the Attorney General and Secretary of Education to develop -- for teachers and principals identify and respond to the early warning signs of troubled youth that can lead to school violence. Last week, copies were sent to every school in the country for the start of the school year.
 - **First Annual Report on School Safety.** In December, the President called for the development of an Annual Report on School Safety, which will be released on School Safety Day, October 15. The report will include: an analysis of all existing national school crime data and an overview of state and local crime reporting; examples of schools and strategies that are successfully reducing school violence, drug use, and class disruption; actions that parents can take locally to combat school crime, including a local safety checklist; and resources available to schools and communities to help create safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools.
 - **Safe and Drug-Free Schools.** President Clinton expanded the Drug-Free Schools Act into the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act of 1994, making violence prevention a key part of this program, and has proposed to increase funds for the program by \$50 million in FY 99. The Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program provides support for violence and drug prevention programs to 97% of the nation's school districts.
 - **Zero Tolerance for Guns in Schools.** In October 1994, President Clinton signed into law the Gun-Free Schools Act, and issued a Presidential Directive later that month to enforce "zero tolerance" for guns in schools -- if a student brings a gun to school, that student will be expelled for a year. In 1997, over 6,000 students were expelled for bringing guns to schools.
 - **School Uniforms.** School uniforms have been found to be a promising strategy to reduce violence while promoting discipline and respect in school. Because of this, the Clinton Administration has encouraged schools to consider adopting school uniform policies by sharing with every school district a school uniforms manual prepared by the Department

of Education in consultation with local communities and the Department of Justice.

- **Cracking Down on Truancy.** Truancy prevention initiatives have been shown to keep more children in school and dramatically reduce daytime crime. The President, through the Education Department, issued a guidebook to the 15,000 school districts nationwide which outlines the central characteristics of a comprehensive truancy prevention policy and highlights model initiatives in cities and towns across the country.