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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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September 28, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Barbara Chow

SUBJECT: DPC Weekly Report

1. Drunk Driving --.08 BAC: The Transportation conference did not meet this week, but is expected to convene Monday. Chairman Wolf is expected to offer a compromise on the .08 BAC issue. The original Lautenberg measure would give states three years to adopt .08 BAC, with failure to do so resulting in a 10% loss in federal highway funds and 5% each year thereafter. We understand that the Wolf compromise would create a growing sanction for failure to adopt the .08 standard, starting at 2%, and steadily increasing to an 8% loss of highway funds. Currently, 18 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico have .08 BAC as their impaired driving standard. Of the remaining states, 30 have .10 BAC as their impaired driving standard and two states (MA, SC) do not have a set BAC level (a "per se standard") at which someone is considered too impaired to drive. We are continuing to work closely with the Chief of Staff, OVP, Legislative Affairs and OMB on targeted outreach. On Friday, MADD President Millie Webb – who lost her daughter and nephew and suffered severe burns in a crash involving a .08 BAC driver – asked us to convey her personal thanks to you for your ongoing support and your Thursday .08 BAC remarks.

2. Guns - - Report on Gun Injuries: On October 8, the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics is planning to release a Gun Injury Report, which includes the total number of nonfatal gunshot injuries and firearm-related deaths from 1993 to 1997. The report includes data showing the number of shootings that were the result of an assault, suicide, homicide, or accident. Key findings from the report include: (1) the number of gunshot wounds from assaults treated in hospital emergency rooms fell 39%; (2) homicides committed with a firearm fell 29%; (3) 80% of all crime-related gunshot victims were male, almost half were black males and about one quarter were black males ages 18 to 24; (4) over half of the victims of nonfatal gunshot wounds from crime were younger than 25; and (5) 28% of all violent victimizations were committed with a firearm.

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3. **Welfare - - Immigrant Access to Benefits:** The Administration has taken two recent actions to reduce unnecessary collection and reporting of immigration and Social Security number (SSN) information related to immigrant benefits. Last week, five agencies issued a notice that a very rigorous standard of "knowledge" would have to be met before triggering the provision in the welfare reform act requiring agencies to report immigrants they know to be undocumented. This notice follows guidance issued the week before, clarifying that states have flexibility to design their application forms and procedures so that questions about the immigration status and SSN of non-applicant family members does not deter eligible family members in a mixed-status household from applying for benefits. While the agencies have and will continue to actively reach out to immigrant groups, advocates, and state officials on these matters, we opted for a low-key rollout to avoid Congressional backlash.

4. **Welfare - - Food Stamps:** In your FY 2001 budget, you proposed to make it easier for low-income working families to own vehicles and receive food stamps, as well as to restore food stamp eligibility to about 165,000 legal immigrants by 2005. We have been pursuing a number of avenues to get these items considered in final negotiations. In addition, we have been preparing for a possible event on October 4 where you could announce new food coupons for approximately 500,000 senior citizens to exchange for fresh produce at farmers markets, roadside stands, and community-supported farms. At the event you could also announce other efforts to reduce domestic hunger and call on Congress to adopt your food stamp initiatives.

5. **Education - - Glenn Commission Report:** The National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century, chaired by Senator John Glenn, issued a report on Wednesday examining the current state of math and science education. Specifically, the report recommends state, district and school level assessments of what teachers need to deliver high-quality math and science education; professional development aligned to meet those needs; reward and incentive programs for exemplary teaching; recruitment and retention efforts to bring more high-quality people into the classroom; and improved support for teachers including higher salaries. The report recommends an annual investment of $5 billion, with every dollar of state funds matched by two dollars on federal funds, to accomplish this effort

6. **Education - - Cincinnati Merit Pay Program:** Cincinnati has become what is believed to be the first public school district in the country to scrap its traditional teacher salary structure and replace it with a schedule that bases pay on classroom performance. In a 54%-46% vote, the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers approved the plan, which will be implemented in the 2002-2003 school year. Unlike plans in some districts and states, the Cincinnati model does not link teacher pay to student test performance. Instead, it increases pay for educators who meet teaching goals set by the district. The hallmark of the plan is the creation of five career categories. Beginning teachers will be labeled "apprentices" and can progress through the system to become "novice," "career," "advanced," and "accomplished" educators, provided they meet the district goals. Frequent, in-depth evaluations administered by a principal and a consulting teacher will determine whether teachers advance in the career categories, stay in the same categories,

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or slide back into a lower one. In addition to classroom observations, teachers will be required to submit portfolios that include logs of parent contacts, sample lesson plans and student work, a list of professional development activities, and a grade book.

7. Children and Families - - Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization (VAWA): On Tuesday, after your event in New Mexico, highlighting the importance of VAWA programs, the House overwhelmingly voted to reauthorize VAWA 415-3. The next day, you sent a letter to the Senate, urging immediate consideration of freestanding VAWA, before its authorization expires on September 30. Senator Lott, however, has signaled that he plans to use VAWA as a "sweetener" to pass other legislation, including possibly bankruptcy reform. Women's groups are sending the message that VAWA should not be added to legislation that is harmful to women.

8. Health Care - - Update on Reallocation of CHIP Funds: After reading reports that 40 states are scheduled to lose the unspent portion of their 1998 CHIP funds, you asked whether we should take a position that would allow these states to keep a portion of their unspent funds. Obviously, this would have the impact of reducing the scheduled redistribution of CHIP funds to the 10 states that have spent their entire 1998 allotment. They will likely argue such an action would effectively reward states that have been slow to implement the program. From a pure policy perspective, we believe it would be advisable to allow states that have not spent all their money to retain a portion of their funds, as we do not want these states to have any excuse for not moving aggressively to implement their programs. In addition, states that have spent all their funds would still receive an increase in their allotment – just not as large as it would have otherwise been. However, we expect that the Congress will come to a consensus on what the formula for such a redistribution should be. In fact, earlier this week, the Commerce Committee marked up a compromise that allows the states that have not spent their entire allotments to keep approximately 60 percent of the $2 billion in unspent funds. The remaining $700 million would be divided amongst the 10 states (including NY) that have spent their entire 1998 allotments. We would advise that HHS provide technical assistance to the states, with an acknowledgement that there should probably be a reallocation of dollars, but that the principle of rewarding "good states" should not be significantly undermined. Within that construct, we would strongly recommend that we not specify the percentage split, but instead defer to the legislative process.

agree

ok

PASS VAWA (S 2787) AS A FREESTANDING BILL

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

September 28, 2000

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 150,000 members of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I urge you to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA – S 2787) before the adjournment of the 106th Congress. AAUW believes that all women have the right to live in a safe environment, and to ensure continuation of that vital right, VAWA must be reauthorized.

The bi-partisan VAWA bill, sponsored by Senators Biden and Hatch, has 71 co-sponsors and virtually no opposition. On September 26, the House overwhelmingly passed (415-3) their version of VAWA (HR 1248). **Since the authorization expires in just two days, it is essential that the Senate act quickly. However, it is vital that the bill be considered by itself, not attached to another piece of legislation, or amended by riders or provisions that are controversial or harmful to women, such as the Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1999 (HR 833) or the Pain Relief Promotion Act of 1999 (HR 2260).**

The Senate must pass VAWA to ensure continued and enhanced funding for services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims in communities nationwide. Without these programs, tens of thousands of women will have nowhere to turn in the aftermath of violence. AAUW believes that S 2787 builds on the congressional commitment to making our schools, streets, homes, and workplaces safe for women and children.

Once again I urge to you press the Senate leadership for a stand-alone floor vote on S 2787 to ensure that these programs can continue to protect women from violence. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Zirkin, Director of Public Policy and Government Relations, at 202/785-7720, or Jamie Pueschel, Government Relations Manager, at 202/785-7730.

Sincerely,

Sandy Bernard

Sandy Bernard
President

1111 SIXTEENTH ST. NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20036 202/785-7700 FAX 202/872-1425
email: info@aauw.org http://www.aauw.org

NOW LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND 1522 K STREET, NW, SUITE 550, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 (202) 326-0040 FAX (202) 589-0511

September 28, 2000

Dear Senator,

The Violence Against Women Act runs out in two days. The Senate must act IMMEDIATELY! Do not let VAWA die—pass S. 2787, the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. The bipartisan VAWA renewal bill, sponsored by Senators Biden and Hatch, has 71 co-sponsors and virtually no opposition. The House passed a similar bill on Tuesday, 415 – 3. YOU must demand that this bill comes to the Senate floor TODAY, freestanding and without harmful riders.

It is unacceptable for the Senate to attach VAWA to or partner it with any bill that the President has threatened to veto. One such bill is the Bankruptcy Reform Act, a bill that threatens women's economic security by:

- Making it more difficult to file bankruptcy & regain economic stability afterwards
- Pitting women and children who are trying to collect child support against powerful commercial companies trying to collect credit card and other debts
- Punishing honest low income bankruptcy filers while providing cover for individuals convicted of violating FACE (clinic violence protections)

We cannot support a bill that uses VAWA to provide cover for legislation that also hurts women. S. 2787 can be passed under Unanimous Consent today. Please just do it.

Sincerely,

Pat Reuss

Patricia Blau Reuss
Vice President, Government Relations

National Partnership for Women & Families

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

September 17, 1999

Re: **S. 625, The "Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1999"**

Dear Senator:

The undersigned women's and children's organizations write to urge you to oppose S. 625, the "Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1999."

Hundreds of thousands of women and their children are affected by the bankruptcy system each year as debtors and creditors. Indeed, women are the fastest growing group in bankruptcy. In 1999, over half a million women are expected to file for bankruptcy by themselves -- more than men filing by themselves or married couples. About 200,000 of these women filers will be trying to collect child support or alimony. Another 200,000 women owed child support or alimony by men who file for bankruptcy will become bankruptcy creditors.

S. 625 puts both groups of economically vulnerable women and children at greater risk. By increasing the rights of many creditors, including credit card companies, finance companies, auto lenders and others, the bill would set up a competition for scarce resources between parents and children owed child support and commercial creditors both during and after bankruptcy. And single parents facing financial crises -- often caused by divorce, nonpayment of support, loss of a job, uninsured medical expenses, or domestic violence -- would find it harder to regain their economic stability through the bankruptcy process. The bill would make it harder for these parents to meet the filing requirements; harder, if they got there, to save their homes, cars, and essential household items; and harder to meet their children's needs after bankruptcy because many more debts would survive.

Contrary to the claims of some, the domestic support provisions included in the bill would not solve these problems. The provisions only relate to the collection of support during bankruptcy from a bankruptcy filer; they do nothing to alleviate the additional hardships the bill would create for the hundreds of thousands of women forced into bankruptcy themselves. And even for women who are owed support by men who file for bankruptcy, the provisions fail to ensure that support payments will come first, ahead of the increased claims of the commercial creditors. Some improvements were made in the domestic support provisions in the Judiciary Committee. However, even the revised provisions fail to solve the problems created by the rest of the bill, which gives many other creditors greater claims -- both during and after bankruptcy -- than they have under current law. The bill does not ensure that, in this intensified competition for the debtor's limited resources, parents and children owed support will prevail over the sophisticated collection departments of these powerful interests.

This Bankruptcy Reform Act will reduce the ability of parents to pay their most important debt -- their debt to their children. It is for these reasons that we strongly oppose S. 625 and urge you to oppose it as well.

Very truly yours,

National Women's Law Center
National Partnership for Women & Families

ACES, Association for Children for Enforcement of Support, Inc.
American Association of University Women
American Medical Women's Association
Business and Professional Women/USA
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for the Advancement of Public Policy
Center for the Child Care Workforce
Church Women United
Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW)
Equal Rights Advocates
Feminist Majority
Hadassah
International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation ("IWIRC")
National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW)
National Black Women's Health Project
National Center for Youth Law
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Negro Women
National Organization for Women
National Women's Conference
Northwest Women's Law Center
NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund
Wider Opportunities for Women
The Woman Activist Fund
Women Employed
Women Work!
Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press
Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc.
YWCA of the U.S.A