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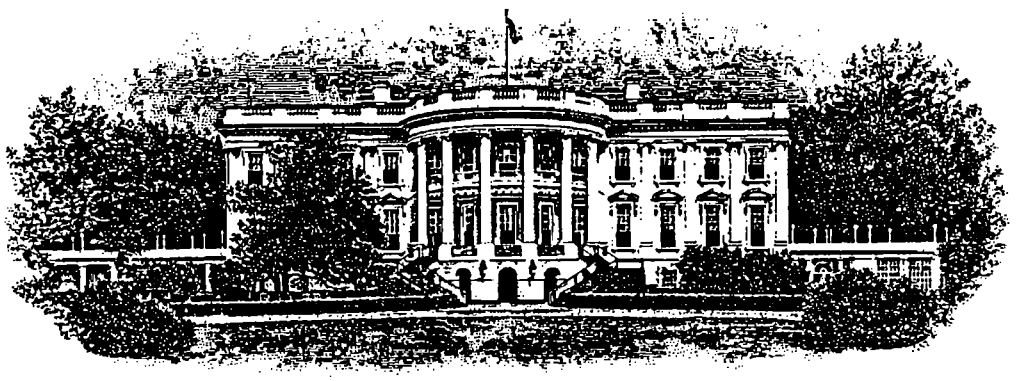
PRESIDENT CLINTON AND OLDER AMERICANS



1995 White House Conference on Aging

ADMINISTRATION RECORD AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction/Highlights

Seniors and Economic Security
- Restored Economic Health
- Stable Social Security Program
- Reliable Pension System
- Enhanced IRAs
- Access to Home Equity
- Health Reform

Seniors and Health Care
- Health Reform
- Protecting and Strengthening Medicare and Medicaid
- Long Term Care
- Disabilities Initiatives

Seniors and Housing
- Increased Housing Opportunity
- Stronger Neighborhoods and Cities
- Fair Housing for All Americans
- Reinventing HUD to Meet Community Needs

Protecting Seniors Against Crime
- 1994 Crime Bill
- Department of Justice Initiatives

Seniors and Service
- Corporation for National Service
- Service in Other Agencies

Seniors and Human Services
- Social and Human Services
- Education
- Environmental Protection
- Energy
- Parks and Recreation

Employment and Training for Older Workers

Older Veterans and Retired Military Personnel

Government Research and Older Americans

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND OLDER AMERICANS: ADMINISTRATION RECORD AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Two years ago, President Clinton entered office with a vision for keeping the American dream alive as we prepare our nation for the challenges of a new century.

The end of the Cold War has changed the way we think about our national security. A new global economy has emerged, where goods, services, and information speed around the globe. And an aging society presents new opportunities and challenges for all of us.

When President Clinton took office, Americans were struggling in this new world. A harsh recession thwarted growth, holding unemployment up and wages down. Middle class American families, playing by the rules, were working harder and harder just to stay in place. Older Americans, after years of working hard and saving, found inflation and rising health care costs consuming more and more of their incomes and savings. Education costs were rising out of control, at a time when education was more important than ever to raise standards of living.

President Clinton believes that Americans who work hard and play by the rules deserve to be rewarded, and he has led a fight to restore the American dream. Americans of all ages are benefiting from this Administration's successes in restoring economic health, expanding educational opportunities, increasing homeownership, and fighting crime.

This document describes some of these successes and other Administration initiatives to employ the energy of older Americans and help us all lead productive, dignified lives well into the 21st century.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ADMINISTRATION SUCCESSES

Heightening the Importance of Seniors Issues. At the beginning of his Administration, President Clinton elevated the position of Commissioner on Aging to Assistant Secretary status to make certain the interests and concerns of older Americans are at the table when decisions are made. Recognizing the unfulfilled need to create a strategic plan for aging to guide us into the 21st century, President Clinton called for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging, after the 1991 Conference failed to take place.

Restoring Economic Security. After 12 years of trickle down economics which quadrupled the deficit and limited opportunity, the President fought to enact the largest deficit reduction package in history, reducing the deficit three years in a row, by over $600 billion. In just over two years, President Clinton's economic strategy has triggered the best combination of robust job creation and low inflation in 25 years.

President Clinton is committed to promoting economic security and opportunity across generations. He is working to strengthen and preserve the Social Security program, he signed the Retirement Protection Act to make the pension system more reliable, and he supports enhanced IRAs to help pay for long-term care. The Administration continues to support and expand the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage, which has allowed 11,000 seniors -- 60 percent of whom were women living alone -- to use the equity in their homes to meet their financial needs.

Fighting for Health Security. President Clinton will continue to fight for health security for all Americans and to contain health care costs for families, businesses, and government. As he has consistently stated, there are first steps that can be taken this year to reform the insurance market and help families provide long-term care for a sick parent or disabled child.

The President strongly opposes proposals to cut the Medicare and Medicaid programs to balance the budget or pay for tax cuts for the wealthy. At the same time, the Clinton Administration has worked to strengthen and improve the Medicare and Medicaid programs by combating fraud and abuse, and enhancing quality, and promoting preventive services. The First Lady has initiated a campaign to promote the use of mammography screening by older women to detect and prevent breast cancer.

Improving Long-Term Care. The Clinton Administration knows the critical importance of long term care to the elderly, people with disabilities of all ages, and their families. That is why the President has consistently supported expanding state administered home care services, tax clarifications and consumer standards for private long term care insurance, and penalty-free withdrawals from IRAs to pay for long term care services.

Strengthening Housing and Supportive Services. Existing-home sales totaled 3.97 million in 1994, the largest total since 1978. The Clinton Administration is increasing housing opportunity, creating stronger neighborhoods and cities, and fostering fair housing for all Americans, giving special attention to senior housing needs. The Administration has strengthened and streamlined the Non-Profit Elderly Housing Section 202 Program, and has funded 700 service coordinators to link elderly and disabled people with supportive services in their communities.

The Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act programs provides an opportunity to renew and strengthen critical services such as home delivered meals, transportation, elder abuse prevention, and legal and advocacy services. The Clinton Administration will fight to keep the Older American Act programs strong and intact.

Increasing Education and Service Opportunities. Because education is the key to preparing Americans for the new economy, President Clinton is expanding opportunities for lifelong education: From pre-school to youth apprenticeship to direct lending for college loans to National Service to training for a new job in mid-career. At a time when education is more important than ever to succeed and prosper in the new economy, cutting education or National Service is like cutting defense spending in the middle of the Cold War.

President Clinton sees older Americans as a reservoir of talent and experience. He forged a bipartisan effort to establish the Corporation for National and Community Service to provide an outlet for this talent and experience and to rekindle the ethic of service in America. He will fight to support and protect the Corporation's National Senior Service Corps programs -- Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

Fighting Crime. To make Americans more secure at home, President Clinton fought the special interests to enact a tough Crime Bill. The 1994 Crime Bill places 100,000 police on the streets, bans deadly assault weapons, expands the death penalty, and supports smarter prevention efforts which offer young people a way out of the cycle of drugs and violence. The Crime Bill provides special protection to the elderly by taking tough measures against telemarketing fraud -- increasing penalties if people over age 55 are targeted, and requiring criminal background checks for professionals who care for elderly or disabled persons.

The Administration is bolstering these Crime Bill initiatives through aggressive health care fraud enforcement, a "Safe Return Program" to help locate and protect missing Alzheimer's Disease patients, and increased funding for Elder Abuse Prevention programs.

Expanding Research. Support for research initiatives that focus on the special needs and concerns of older Americans has been expanded in agencies across the Administration -- from Alzheimer's disease research at the National Institutes of Health, to aging research and geriatric training at the Department of Veterans Affairs, to research on dental adhesives at the Department of Commerce.

Protecting National Security. Finally, President Clinton believes that for America to be strong at home, it must be strong abroad. He has fought to preserve the great tradition of American leadership for which older Americans sacrificed so much.

President Clinton has dedicated his presidency to fighting for what's good for ordinary Americans of all ages every day. He is fighting to expand opportunity for all, to infuse a new sense of responsibility in the country, and to put the American community on a path of restored hope and opportunity.

SENIORS AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

The Clinton Administration is committed to promoting economic security and opportunity across generations. The President's top priority since taking office has been to restore America's economic health and to ensure that all Americans can reap opportunities in the changing economy.

Restored Economic Health

6.34 million jobs have been created during the Clinton Administration -- two-and-a-half times as many new jobs as during the previous Administration. And in 1994, more jobs were created in high-wage industries than in the previous five years combined.

The unemployment rate is at 5.5%, down from over 7% at the start of this Administration, resulting in 1.8 million fewer people unemployed.

The deficit is projected to decline for three years in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was President. The deficit will be $616 billion less over five years because of the Clinton deficit plan. It will also drop in half as a percentage of national income -- from 4.9% to 2.4%.

Core inflation under the Clinton Administration rose just 2.6% in 1994 -- this is the lowest year of core inflation since 1965.

Stable Social Security System

For decades, Social Security has provided economic security to older Americans and the President is committed to strengthening and preserving the program. The President will not support proposals that use Social Security benefits to balance the budget or pay for tax cuts for the wealthy. And the President will work with the bipartisan Advisory Council on Social Security to preserve the long-term integrity of the Social Security Trust Fund.

The Administration has already taken steps to bolster public confidence in Social Security by strengthening and streamlining the program. We worked with the Congress to make the Social Security Administration (SSA) an independent agency, and now SSA is working hard to improve customer service and satisfaction -- through its 800 number, by reducing the number of pending disability claims and by mailing Personal Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statements (PEBES) so Americans know the retirement benefits they can expect. In the year 2000, PEBES statements will be sent automatically to approximately 123 million younger workers (age 25 and over).

In 1994, the SSI program provided approximately $27.7 billion in assistance for needy aged, blind and disabled people.

Reliable Pension System

People deserve a pension system that they can rely on -- so President Clinton signed the Retirement Protection Act in December 1994. Now, workers and retirees will be able to count on receiving the pensions they have earned.

The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation has improved its service to retirees receiving benefits from terminated plans, identified 12,000 missing participants, and has initiated a "Know Your Pension" outreach campaign so workers can understand their retirement benefits and PBGC's guarantee.

The President believes in the importance of maintaining strong retirement systems for all Americans. He strongly opposes the House Republican Contract tax legislation, which would reduce retirement benefits for Federal employees and increase their contributions to help finance a tax cut primarily for wealthy individuals and corporations.

The Department of Labor's Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration (PWBA) helps to protect the economic future and retirement security of working Americans. In FY 1993, PWBA recovered approximately $183 million on behalf of plans. And, in conjunction with the Solicitor's office, PWBA is active in litigation protecting older Americans' pensions.

PWBA is initiating a campaign to promote public awareness of the need to save for retirement. With the Administration on Aging, PWBA provide information and materials on basic pension benefits issues to seniors and other constituencies.

Enhanced IRAs

The President's Middle Class Bill of Rights would expand the availability of deductible Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to millions more middle income families, and allow them to withdraw contributions tax-free for long-term care expenses, the cost of education, first time home buying, or medical expenses.

Access to Home Equity

The Administration has continued to support and expand the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage, which allows seniors to use the equity in their homes to meet their financial needs, without having to sell their homes or move. This program has helped 11,000 seniors to date -- 60 percent of whom were women living alone, and the numbers are increasing. The Administration has joined with the AARP to urge Congress to renew the program when it expires at the end of September.

Health Reform

Even with Medicare and Medicaid, out-of-pocket health care costs for older Americans living on fixed incomes are more than three times higher than for the rest of the population. That is why the Administration continues to fight for first steps in health reform, expanded long term care, and a strengthened Medicare program.

SENIORS AND HEALTH CARE

The Clinton Administration remains firmly committed to guaranteeing health security to all Americans and to containing health care costs for families, businesses and federal, state and local governments. The Administration continues to strengthen and improve existing programs that address the health and long term care needs of older Americans.

Health Reform.

As the President has consistently stated, **this year we can take the first steps in health reform**. The Congress can, and should, reform the insurance market; make coverage affordable for working families; help workers who lose their jobs keep their health insurance; continue the start made already to level the playing field for the self-employed; and help families provide long-term care for a sick parent or a disabled child.

Protecting and Strengthening Medicare and Medicaid

The Medicare and Medicaid programs, administered by the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), provide access to health care for close to 70 million people, or one in four Americans. Both programs celebrate 30th anniversaries in 1995.

The Clinton Administration is fighting to protect these programs. Republicans want to cut Medicare by between $250 and $350 billion and federal Medicaid spending by between $160 and $190 billion between now and 2002. These cuts will mean shifting a staggering financial burden to elderly and disabled Medicare beneficiaries; dropping coverage or shrinking benefits for the elderly, disabled, or mothers and children on Medicaid; and significant cuts in payments to hospitals, physicians and other providers.

At the same time, the Administration is working to strengthen and improve Medicare and Medicaid. Since 1993, HCFA has made significant improvements in Medicare and Medicaid by combating fraud and abuse, simplifying program administration, enhancing quality, enhancing coordination and integration of health care, improving access to affordable and quality health care, strengthening managed care, improving beneficiary services, and empowering states.

On May 1, the First Lady kicked off a nationwide campaign to promote the use of mammography screening by older women to detect and prevent breast cancer, the second leading cause of death among American women, with the highest incidence among women over 65. Although Medicare covers screening, 60% of older women do not take advantage of this benefit.

HCFA has initiated a Consumer Information Strategy to help Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries achieve better health through increased utilization of preventive services. This campaign promotes Medicare's new coverage of flu shots and mammography screening.

Improving Long-Term Care

President Clinton knows that long-term care is of critical importance to the elderly. That is why the Administration has consistently supported expanding state administered home care services. It's also why we support tax clarifications for private long-term care insurance and consumer standards for long-term care so that insurance policies are worth more than the paper they're written on. As part of the Middle Class Bill of Rights, the President supports penalty-free withdrawals from IRAs to pay for long-term care services.

In November 1994, as part of initiatives aimed at improving nursing home residents' rights and quality of life, HCFA expanded penalties used to enforce nursing home quality.

The President's 1996 budget includes $18.5 million to the Administration on Aging to provide grants for states for developing better in-home and community-based care for the elderly.

The Department of Labor's Women's Bureau maintains an extensive clearinghouse of employer sponsored elder care programs, and publishes five implementation guides on: Adult Day Care, Case Management, Information & Referral, Respite Care, and Transportation.

Disabilities Initiatives

The Clinton Administration is committed to supporting the 49 million Americans with disabilities in their efforts to exercise their full rights and responsibilities, to live as independently as possible, and to be productive throughout their lives. To reach those goals, the Administration has launched a full-scale review of disability programs and policies in order to ensure that Federal initiatives are guided by these goals.

Between 1992 and 1994, HHS' Administration for Developmental Disabilities awarded $3 million to university affiliated programs for the development of interdisciplinary training programs to prepare professional staff to provide services to older persons with developmental disabilities.

Health Professions Training

Within the U.S. Public Health Service, twenty Geriatric Education Centers in 17 states facilitate the training of health professionals and develop new curricula on geriatric education.

SENIORS AND HOUSING

The Clinton Administration is increasing housing opportunity, creating stronger neighborhoods and cities, and fostering fair housing for all Americans, giving special attention to senior housing needs.

Increased Housing Opportunity.

During the first two years of the Clinton Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

- Funded 7,665 units of elderly housing and 2,559 units of disabled housing;
- Insured more than 2.2 million loans for homeowners, with 788,000 of these for first-time homeowners;
- Initiated an innovative partnership with pension funds to help build 2,500 units of housing;
- Provided rental assistance to 102,000 low-income households; and
- Provided 100,000 new units of housing through the HOME program in FY 1994.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development continues to pursue initiatives designed to specifically address the needs of older Americans:

- This summer, HUD and the Administration on Aging will jointly announce examples of "best practices" in selected public and assisted housing developments that serve elderly and disabled residents. These awards will cite developments that excel in coordinating with community agencies to assure services to the residents and integration into the broader community.
- Strengthened and streamlined the Non-Profit Elderly Housing Section 202 Program by simplifying the application process, providing clearinghouse activities with an 800-number for program information; and establishing guidelines for uniform application of rating criteria. HUD continues to improve the program by linking elderly housing with supportive services.
- To provide older Americans housing options with which they are comfortable, HUD has established rules under which public housing agencies may designate public housing projects as "elderly only."
- Funded 700 service coordinators to link elderly and disabled persons with supportive services in the community; the Department expects to have service coordinators in every eligible assisted housing development.

- Insured 11,000 reverse annuity mortgages, enabling seniors who are house rich but cash poor to have the security of a steady income to pay for health care and other needs.

- Published an Assisted Living Facilities rule to develop or rehabilitate buildings that support increased independence for elderly individuals.

The Administration's Department of Agriculture (USDA) has financed 153,920 units of rental housing for elderly in rural areas. In addition, USDA's loan and grant housing programs, funded at $35 million and $25 million, help more than 8,000 senior households remove health or safety hazards in their homes.

USDA has funded projects to review housing needs of the rural elderly, conduct outreach conferences and forums, and to identify barriers to delivery of needed housing to seniors.

With the Elderly Housing Coalition, HUD sponsored a White House Conference on Aging "Mini Conference" in February 1995. The recommendations from this Mini Conference will be an integral part of debate at the national White House Conference on Aging.

Stronger Neighborhoods and Cities

The Administration's Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities initiative gives communities across America critical resources for economic and social development.

In the first two years of the Clinton Administration, the Section 108 program successfully infused $579 million into economic development projects.

Fair Housing for All Americans

Aggressive HUD action is reducing barriers to homeownership caused by unlawful discrimination.

As part of efforts to eliminate lending discrimination, HUD has signed best practice agreements with the Mortgage Bankers Association and individual lenders.

Reinventing HUD to Meet Housing and Community Development Needs.

The Clinton Administration and Secretary Cisneros have proposed dramatic restructuring of HUD to respond more fully to local needs and local efforts to help people improve their lives. These changes include: giving maximum flexibility to decisionmakers at the neighborhood, local and state levels; supporting initiatives that help lower-income families become self-sufficient; and creating an entrepreneurial FHA Corporation.

PROTECTING SENIORS AGAINST CRIME

The Clinton Administration passed the smartest, toughest, and most comprehensive Anti-Crime bill in this country's history... a bill that provides police, prisons, punishment and prevention so that the streets we live on are safer. The Administration's Department of Justice (DOJ) supports the Crime bill initiatives through a multi-front assault on crime, abuse and discrimination against the elderly.

1994 Crime Bill

The Clinton Crime bill attacks crime and protects seniors on multiple fronts:

- Puts 100,000 new police officers on the streets in our neighborhoods and cities. Deployed in community policing, these officers will work with neighborhood residents to prevent as well as solve crimes.
- Bans deadly assault weapons and helps keep guns out of the hands of criminals.
- Provides for mandatory life imprisonment of three-time, repeat violent offenders.
- Gives at-risk youth something to say "yes" to by providing them with afterschool activities and other positive alternatives to gangs, guns and drugs.
- Increases funding for proven prevention programs that bring together sheriffs, police chiefs, and councils of senior citizens in efforts to reduce crime against older citizens.
- Takes tough measures against telemarketing fraud -- increasing penalties even further if persons over age 55 are victimized or targeted.
- Protects the elderly by requiring criminal record background checks for persons employed in caring for the elderly or disabled.
- Ensures that the death penalty is an option in federal cases in which the murder victim is particularly vulnerable because of age or disability.

Anti-Fraud, Anti-Elder Abuse, and Anti-Discrimination Initiatives

The Administration's Department of Justice (DOJ) has taken **aggressive action against health care fraud**, recovering an unprecedented $411 million in fraudulent health care claims -- a large percentage of which was robbed from the Medicare program.

DOJ's **"Safe Return Program"** helps locate and protect missing Alzheimer's Disease patients. 12,000 patients are registered under this program and a nationwide hotline is available for people to help locate missing individuals. President Clinton requested nearly $1 million for the "Safe Return Program" in his 1996 budget.

A newly released report, funded by a $1 million grant from the Department of Health and Human Services, states that reports of domestic abuse against the elderly increased from 117,000 in 1986 to 241,000 in 1994 (National Center on Elder Abuse, 5/2/95). To counter this trend, President Clinton's 1996 budget includes **a $1.5 million increase for Elder Abuse Prevention programs** at the Administration on Aging that build on partnerships with local aging networks, adult protection services, law enforcement agencies, and domestic violence programs.

DOJ's Office for Victims of Crime helped organize the **National Conference on the Victimization of the Elderly**, participates in numerous state conferences on elder abuse, and helps train police officers in proper response to elder abuse.

A DOJ grant to the AARP will help educate providers of services to the elderly about their Americans with Disabilities Act responsibilities and the elderly about their rights under the law.

DOJ conducts studies and analysis to document the magnitude of crime perpetrated against the elderly, providing policy-makers with necessary information about the scope of this criminal activity.

SENIORS AND SERVICE

While others see the demographic changes as simply adding burdens to society, President Clinton sees older Americans as a reservoir of talent and experience. President Clinton has put a high priority on encouraging an ethic of service in America, and he knows that older Americans are ready and eager for this service.

Corporation for National Service

President Clinton forged a bipartisan effort to establish the Corporation for National and Community Service as a means for rekindling the ethic of service in America. The Corporation's National Senior Service Corps (NSSC) gives older Americans the opportunity to continue service to communities in need.

The NSSC is a network of federally-supported programs that helps people age 55 and older find service opportunities in their home communities. The Senior Corps programs -- Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) -- are a vital part of the Administration's National Service focus. In FY 95, NSSC programs were funded at $136 million; for FY 96, President Clinton has requested $168.4 million for the programs, an almost $33 million increase.

- 80,000 children, teenagers and their families are supported by the services of Foster Grandparents every year. The nearly 24,000 Foster Grandparents provide more than a 4-fold financial return on the federal dollars invested in the program.

- Over 12,000 Senior Companions help more than 32,000 frail elderly live independently.

- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) participants provide over 80 million hours of service annually to communities across the country.

Nearly one-half million older people serve in the Senior Corps Programs, and yet waiting lists of both people wanting to serve and of individuals seeking the services exist at every site. That is why President Clinton continues to request additional support for Senior Corps programs, and will fight to protect them from budget cuts proposed by Republicans.

Service in Other Administration Agencies

In 1993, the Environmental Protection Agency joined forces with the Corporation for National Service to tap the skills of older volunteers in groundwater protection activities. The first sites were located in Anaheim, CA, Eugene, OR, and Tallahassee, FL, and eight or nine similar projects are expected in FY 95.

The EPA, along with the Departments of Agriculture and Interior, have launched the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement (EASI), a coalition of environmental, senior and volunteer organizations and agencies dedicated to providing opportunities for the elderly to protect the nation's environment.

The Small Business Administration's Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), a volunteer association of retired business men and women, provide one-on-one management and business counseling and training to approximately 285,000 business owners per year and conduct 4,000 technical workshops.

SENIORS AND HUMAN SERVICES

In education, supportive services, and environmental protection, the Clinton Administration is working to expand opportunities and promote healthy lives and environments. In all of these areas, the Administration is working with older Americans to address important needs unique to our later years.

Social and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging (AoA) continues to administer the programs under the **Older Americans Act**, which for 30 years have provided critical daily social and human services to older Americans and their families. AoA distributes funds to states to provide support for services designed to help the elderly remain independent -- such as nutrition programs, social services for the frail elderly, transportation, elder abuse prevention, and legal and advocacy services.

- In 1993, through Older American Act programs, 820,583 persons received transportation services; 794,591 persons received home delivered meals; 2,368, 584 were served congregate meals; and 3,034,000 received information and referral services.

- The Clinton Administration will fight to keep the Older American Act programs -- a proven partnership between Federal, state, and local government -- strong and intact.

In FY 94, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded more than $1 million to nonprofit organizations for projects that help elderly individuals access the Food Stamp program. USDA's commodities and food surplus programs provide vital food assistance to the elderly.

The Administration on Aging assisted in expedient delivery of disaster relief assistance to elderly victims of the Midwest Floods, the Los Angeles earthquake, and other disasters and has continued to follow up through local area agencies on aging.

Education

President Clinton has demonstrated his belief that education is critical to building America's future through numerous achievements including: Increased Head Start by $760 million and proposes an additional $400 million in FY 96 for the program; Proposed a $347 million increase in funding to help states and communities proceed with their education reform agenda as part of Goals 2000; Signed the Student Loan Reform Act, allowing more students access to flexible repayment arrangements for financing education; and Signed the School to Work Act, to equip students with the skills necessary to pursue work or post-secondary training.

Elderly people who are illiterate are less likely to be working, less likely to be homeowners, and are sicker and less knowledgeable about preventive health care services, according to recent research. To counter these trends, the Department of Education works with states to expand adult education and literacy programs and services, serving 3.9 million adults in 1993.

The Department of Education's Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind program provided $8.1 million in grants to states in FY 93. Through this program, seniors can access specialized equipment such as magnifiers for reading, telle-braille, and talking blood glucose meters.

The Department of Education's Projects with Industry program includes grants to the Administration on Aging for projects which target individuals with disabilities who are 40 years and older. And the Department's Office of Educational Research Statistics provides funds to support regional libraries for blind and physically disabled individuals.

Environmental Protection

Because older Americans face special health challenges that make them particularly susceptible to environmental threats, seniors benefit significantly from this Administration's work to improve the quality of our air, water and land, such as reduced toxic air emissions and improved drinking water safety.

Legislative initiatives sponsored by the Administration in 1994, such as the Safe Drinking Water Act Reauthorization, would have directed the Environmental Protection Agency to take measures to ensure the safety of sensitive populations, including the elderly and very young. EPA will continue to work to protect sensitive populations from environmental hazards.

Energy

Under the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program, the elderly and people with disabilities receive priority for assistance with the installation of energy saving building and heating and cooling system improvements in low-income homes. In 1994, the Weatherization Assistance Program awarded $202.9 million in grants; for 1995, awards are projected at $225.5 million.

Under the State Energy Conservation Program, the Department of Energy promotes energy efficiency and a reduction in the growth of energy demand. State projects have specifically targeted older Americans, including senior citizen weatherization and training projects, hands-on energy conservation workshops, low-interest loan programs, and senior energy savings months.

Parks and Recreation

Through the Administration's Department of Agriculture, senior citizens can purchase Golden Age Passports, giving them a lifetime entrance pass to National Parks and historic sites, for a one-time $10 fee. The USDA is improving mobility and accessibility for visitors to all recreation facilities. In addition, the standards for publications, audiovisual programs, and other media are changing to provide larger type size, hearing loops and open-captioning.

In response to increased interest in lifelong learning, the USDA Forest Service is working the national Elderhostel organization to conduct programs about National Forest resources. The USDA Forest Service annually hires almost 6,000 senior citizens, and provides training to help them transition back into the workforce.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING FOR OLDER WORKERS

President Clinton is committed to improving employment opportunities for all Americans. As we move into the information age and our economy continues to change, the Administration is working with Americans of all ages to provide new employment opportunities and retraining when necessary.

The Department of Labor's (DOL) **Senior Community Service Employment Program** (SCSEP) employs low-income Americans age 55 or older in a variety of community service activities, such as health care, nutrition, home repair, childcare, conservation, and restoration programs. In FY 1993, 100,273 people were enrolled in authorized positions, and an additional 17,774 received unsubsidized placements.

DOL's **Job Training Partnership Act** (JTPA) provides job training and related assistance to economically disadvantaged individuals, dislocated workers, and others who face significant employment barriers, in order to help them gain permanent, self-sustaining employment. Since July, 1993, five percent of the funds for a new adult program must be targeted solely to older workers. Services provided through the program include vocational counseling, jobs skills training, literacy and basic skill training, and job search and placement assistance. 16,700 people have completed this program since July 1993.

Under DOL's **Dislocated Workers Program**, older workers who have lost their jobs due to a closing of a plan or facility or who are unable to return to their previous industry or occupation may receive services such as job search assistance, retraining, pre-layoff assistance and relocation assistance. Between July 1, 1992 and June 20, 1994, 13,700 workers 55 years of age and over received assistance through the Dislocated Workers program.

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) legislation mandates the involvement of seniors in carrying out its mission. The Agency's Senior Environmental Employee (SEE) program puts to work the knowledge and experience of hundreds of seniors -- including scientists, educators, office service experts and communications specialists -- in a wide range of assignments that benefit participants and the environment.

The USDA Forest Service annually hires almost 6,000 senior citizens, and provides training to help them transition back into the workforce.

The Department of Labor's Division of Older Worker Programs participated actively in preparations for the White House Conference on Aging, including sponsoring three different focus groups targeted at rural elderly, urban elderly, and partners and experts in the field of aging.

OLDER VETERANS AND RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL

The Clinton Administration has been responsive to the needs and concerns of the veterans community, establishing an Interagency Veterans Policy Group to aggressively pursue action. The Administration's Department of Veterans Affairs is a leader in addressing the health care needs of older Americans.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has the largest and most extensive program and services in geriatrics and long-term care of any health care delivery system in the United States:

- The VA trains more health care professionals in geriatrics, gerontology and long-term care than any other academic institution or organization in the United States. In FY 1993, VA funded 84 physician traineeship positions and 501 associate health traineeship positions in geriatric related fields.

- Through its commitment and contribution to aging research as well as training and education, the VA is credited with pioneering the field of Academic Geriatrics. In FY 1994, the VA budget included $35 million for aging research.

President Clinton, recognizing VA's roles as a direct care giver to elderly veterans and as an early innovator in the field of geriatric medicine, nominated VA Secretary Jesse Brown to the White House Conference on Aging Policy Committee.

Approximately 40 delegates representing veterans service organizations, and 20 other delegates appointed by Secretary Brown, will attend the 1995 White House Conference on Aging. The VA hosted town forums across the country as part of the grassroots development of the WHCoA, and veterans issues are included in the WHCoA agenda.

The Department of Defense continues efforts to bring eldercare resources and assistance to the increasing numbers of military personnel and families who have eldercare responsibilities.

With the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the VA sponsors the annual National Veterans Golden Age Games, a multi-event recreational sports meet designed to enhance the mental, social, physical, and emotional well being of senior veterans. The 1995 Golden Age Games will be held from July 9-15 on the campus of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

GOVERNMENT RESEARCH AND OLDER AMERICANS

Researchers throughout a wide variety of Administration agencies -- from the National Institutes on Health, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to the Department of Commerce -- address issues of particular concern to older Americans.

In his FY 96 budget, President Clinton requested $11.8 billion for the National Institutes of Health, and proposed **increasing funding to the National Institute on Aging from $432.3 million to $445.8 million**.

The Clinton Administration has **consistently supported increases in funding for research on Alzheimer's disease**. The President's FY 96 budget includes $672.1 million for the National Institute on Neurological Disorders and Stroke (which funds Alzheimer's research), an increase from 1995 funding level of $652.2 million.

The Clinton Administration's Health Security Act would have significantly increased funding to the National Institutes on Health, and required specific attention to diseases affecting older Americans such as Alzheimer's.

Through its commitment and contribution to aging research as well as training and education, the VA is credited with pioneering the field of Academic Geriatrics. In FY 1994, **the VA budget included $35 million for aging research**.

The Department of Agriculture's Agriculture Research Service funds research examining: the nutrient requirements to ensure optimal function and well-being for a maturing population, and the role of nutrition in chronic, degenerative conditions associated with aging.

This summer, the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement will release a report, "Literacy of Older Adults in America," to document the literacy capacities of adults at least 60 years of age. And the Department of Education's National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) conducts research and training on aging and disabilities at three different research centers across the country.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), housed in the Administration's Department of Commerce, conducts several research projects that benefit senior citizens.

- NIST received an Emmy Award in 1980 for the development of closed captioned television.
- Most of the adhesives and materials used by dentists today are the result of NIST research.
- NIST research has enabled the orthopedic implant industry to develop more reliable implants so that people with damaged or deteriorating joints need not become "disabled."

- Today, NIST conducts computer technology research that enables architects, engineers and building owners to examine in a computer how the placement of alarms and emergency exit locations will affect people of differing abilities -- such as the elderly or disabled -- escape a building in an emergency.

- At the request of FEMA, NIST developed a manual that will facilitate the development of emergency evacuation plans for the evacuation of people with varying ability levels during an emergency.

- NIST sponsors the Information Infrastructure for Health Care Program, directed at improving the quality and reducing the cost of health care for all Americans. A microbiology project under the program has the potential to be used in the treatment of diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and Alzheimer's disease.

- NIST research is investigating better methods for restoring teeth and improving adhesion, and improving the orthopedic industry. NIST has been working with the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop better methods for testing and evaluating hearing aids. NIST is working on computer technology that will enable seniors with disabilities to use computers at the same level as those without disabilities.

In 1994, the Department of Energy initiated research to further an understanding of the human health effects of radiation, including studies on life span and aging.