

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

BACKGROUND

- In the last half of this century, there have been three White House Conferences on Aging and each one has served as a catalyst for important new initiatives that address the needs of America's elderly -- their work contributed to the passage of Medicare and Medicaid, the Older Americans Act and Social Security Reform.
- The 1995 White House Conference on Aging is the first conference since 1981 and the last in the 20th Century. The Conference will be held in Washington on May 2-5. Its theme is: America Now and Into the 21st Century -- Generations aging together with independence, opportunity and dignity.
- More than 2000 delegates, appointed by governors, members of Congress, aging organizations, international organizations, veterans groups, the White House, the Department of Health and Human Services and the White House Conference on Aging will attend. Senior volunteers and caregivers are invited as delegates for the first time.
- The purpose of the 1995 Conference is to produce resolutions that shape national aging policy over the next ten years -- and to work together to see these resolutions implemented.

A GRASS ROOTS PROCESS

For the first time ever, the planning process for the Conference involved grass-roots participation from every corner of our country.

- Over 700 events and conferences have been held in all 50 states and territories, involving more than 25,000 people.
- The public has had an opportunity to shape the Conference's agenda, ensuring that the issues covered are the issues seniors care most about: promoting economic security; assuring comprehensive health care and long-term care; maximizing housing and support service options; maximizing options for a quality life.

THE ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO SENIORS (see Seniors talking points)

CHALLENGES AHEAD

- This Conference comes at a time of both fiscal and demographic change in our country -- diminishing resources on the federal/state/local levels; an entire population living longer, and staying healthier; changing family structures.

- This Conference is about meeting new challenges with new and creative solutions and forging new partnerships.
- It is about energizing society across all age groups to make aging an issue of personal concern.
- It is about building new intergenerational partnerships and expanding existing ones.
- It is about younger Americans that they must plan for their older years by working hard, saving money and making smart decisions about their health.
- And it is about educating Americans about the extraordinary abilities and potential of our older Americans.

Prepared by: Lynn Margherio, X65561
March 9, 1995



Washington, D.C. 20201

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carol Rasco

cc: Harold Ickes
George Stephanopolous

FROM: Robert B. Blancato, Executive Director ³³³
White House Conference on Aging

Fernando M. Torres-Gil ^{FB}
Assistant Secretary for Aging

SUBJECT: The President's Remarks at the
1995 White House Conference on Aging

BACKGROUND

The 1995 White House Conference on Aging is the last of this century, and the first to be convened by a Democratic President. With approximately 2300 delegates from across the nation, this Conference will be the most cost-effective, focused, and results oriented forum since the first official White House Conference on Aging in 1961.

President Clinton's remarks to the delegates at the opening plenary session on May 3, 1995, can be likened to a State of the Union address on aging issues. The Conference can be used as the President's defining moment on the concerns and priorities of older Americans, and as such, his speech should have an air of urgency, opportunity, excitement and hope.

There are two principles that have served as the foundation of this Conference, and guided the overall tone and message of the hundreds of preliminary activities that were held across the nation in the past 18 months: (1) older Americans are not a monolithic bloc--a great deal of diversity exists among this population, and those differences should be recognized and celebrated; and, (2) the importance of intergenerational linkages---the natural bridge between the old and young. These twin pillars reflect provisions mandated by the legislation that authorized the White House Conference on Aging---the Older Americans Act Amendments of 1992.

This memo outlines several messages we feel it is important for the President to convey to the assembled Conference delegates.

The President will be offering a charge to the delegates, establishing the tone that will frame the discussions over the next several days---reminding the Conference participants of the essential nature of the task before them. We suggest that in the President's challenge to the delegates, he should clearly assert his commitment to the issues that impact on older Americans, including a strong declaration of support for the Medicare and Social Security programs. While seniors make their views known on a host of social and fiscal issues, the future of Medicare and the solvency of Social Security are the predominant concerns.

A focus on intergenerational linkages provides a fresh approach to the discussion of Medicare and Social Security. Rather than merely highlighting these programs as important to today's seniors, an effective argument can be made for the importance of these services for future generations of retirees as well. If the debate is recast in those terms, the polarizing effect that often surrounds these issues can be effectively neutralized.

SPECIFIC ELEMENTS

1. History of White House Conferences

Historically, White House Conferences have been an important tool to demonstrate an Administration's commitment and resolve on a host of topics, including children and families, and the special concerns of the small business community. These forums, with the imprimatur of the President, have served to highlight specific priorities, and advance the Administration's views.

While President Truman held the first national forum on aging, each of the succeeding formal White House Conferences on Aging (1961, 1971, and 1981) were convened by Republican Administrations. This year's forum is the first to be assembled under a Democratic President. Each of the earlier conferences had a significant impact on public policy, including initial conceptualizations of the Medicare program and the Older Americans Act.

The 1995 White House Conference on Aging can also influence public debate---not only in terms of the needs of today's seniors, but also as a means for shaping aging policy for the 21st century, as the nation prepares for a doubling of the aging population.

2. How does this White House Conference on Aging differ from previous national forums?

The 1995 White House Conference is not merely an opportunity for seniors to travel to Washington and voice their demands, rather, this forum is goal directed and results oriented--with a

challenge to the delegates to not only identify problems and concerns, but also to seek methods to effectively address those issues, with particular emphasis on individual, local, and State responsibility, as well as what role, if any, the Federal Government can perform. While previous Conferences have focused on the Federal obligation to this population, the 1995 Conference has a focus on personal responsibility.

This Conference has been preceded by approximately 800 local, State, and regional events, with a focus on which issues and solutions should be brought to the national arena. Older Americans themselves have also participated in pre-Conference reports, and the formulation of the Conference agenda through the open comment period following the publication of the proposed agenda in the Federal Register. This grassroots approach is another clear departure from Conferences of the past, and has resulted in the involvement of literally tens of thousands of seniors across the country.

Yet another distinction of the 1995 event is the series of post-Conference activities that will take place in the months following the national forum. Sessions will be held at the State and local level to focus on practical responses to, and a plan of implementation for, the issues raised at the Conference. Further, the final report of the Conference, which will be issued in December of this year, will not merely reflect matters raised at the Conference, but also the solutions advanced to address those concerns, as well as strategies to realize those solutions.

3. Who are the Elderly?

An important thread to weave throughout the President's remarks is the reminder that older Americans in this country are our parents, grandparents, teachers, and mentors---the people we love, respect, and admire. Older persons are not shrouded in a cloak of mystery, nor are their concerns so far removed from those of any citizen. These are individuals who have built this nation, defended the principles upon which this country was founded, nurtured children and grandchildren, and continue to give of themselves in a host of volunteer activities, including the National Service Corps. Further, no matter the race or gender, religious or political affiliation, each one of us will grow older, and that fact provides a universal bond and frame of reference.

4. Recognizing the Diversity of the Older Population while Responding to Common Concerns

It is important to keep in mind that while older persons are clearly an important political force, they are not a homogenous group. Differences based on gender, socio-economic status, minority and ethnic allegiance, family lifestyles, and geographic

dispersion, make Older Americans an increasingly diverse population. By the year 2030, there will be a doubling of the minority aging population, including an increase of 500 percent within the Hispanic aging community, and a 600 percent increase among Asian elders.

Despite this diversity, seniors respond as a political bloc on several key issues: preserving Social Security benefits; protecting and expanding Medicare coverage; promoting increased long term care services; stemming the rising tide of crime against the elderly; preserving social services such as nutrition programs; and planning for and safeguarding their families.

5. An Appeal to the Baby Boom Generation

As the country's first baby boom generation Chief Executive, the President has a natural forum to speak from that perspective. One-third of the nation's population are baby boomers, and the first wave of this group will be 65 by the year 2010. These individuals comprise a cohort of informed, well-educated, and politically active citizens, many of whom will continue to stay employed well past the traditional retirement years, and who will be influential in reshaping perceptions of aging. It is not too early for this group to begin to plan for their later years, whether they are still going strong at 70, or decide to retire at 55.

This generation is searching for reassurances that they will be able to count on Medicare and Social Security when it is time for them to seek assistance from those federal programs.

6. Celebrating the World War II Generation

The White House Conference on Aging provides a wonderful opportunity to pay tribute to the sacrifices of older veterans, particularly those who served in World War II. These Americans were the greatest achievers in the history of our country, whose successes range from eliminating dictatorships in Europe, ending legal segregation in America, and sending man to the moon. This generation created a wave of prosperity unprecedented in human history. Through the efforts of this cohort, a host of technological discoveries were advanced, and the World War II generation has lived to reap the benefits of those achievements.

These citizens represent the values of patriotism, community, selflessness, and self-reliance---values the Clinton Administration has sought to embrace once again---as well as a belief in government. References to the 50th Anniversary of the end of World War II will resonate well with the Conference delegates.

7. The Clinton Administration's Accomplishments for Older Americans

The President also has a unique opportunity to highlight his accomplishments on behalf of older Americans, including:

- o Establishment of an independent Social Security Administration;
- o Unwavering support for Social Security and Medicare;
- o Championing the importance of long-term care, as evidenced by the long-term care provisions in the Health Security Act;
- o Commitment to increases in research dollars for Alzheimer's Disease;
- o Support for the involvement of seniors in Americorps;
- o Elevation of the Commissioner on Aging position to Assistant Secretary status.

8. A Call for Compassion

Sorely lacking in the approach of the new Congress and their Contract With America, is a sense of compassion and understanding of individuals who will be impacted by changes in federal services. The most vulnerable persons (women, children and the elderly) in our society, of all ages, will be forced to cope with the consequences of the mean-spirited, slash and burn tactics of the Majority Party.

The legacy of the Democratic Party stands in direct contrast to the philosophy being advanced on the Hill. The fundamental principle of a Federal Government that **works for the greater good** of its citizens, runs counter to the notion of a Federal Government that **knows what is best** for its citizens. The President has consistently demonstrated a more empathetic approach.

9. The Success of Federal Programs for Older Americans

1995 marks significant milestones for federal programs providing services to the elderly, including the 60th anniversary of Social Security, as well as the 30th anniversaries of both Medicare and Older Americans Act programs. The triumph of these federal approaches reinforces the notion of a proactive government working for the greater good. The mission of the Older Americans Act, in particular, promotes health and independence for seniors, which parallels the goals of the Administration.

Ironically, many seniors are not always aware that these essential programs are a part of the federal government. As one example, the nutrition programs of the Older Americans Act ("Meals on Wheels" and congregate nutrition sites) are so embedded in the fabric of many local and State communities, that the beneficiaries of these services are often surprised to learn of the federal underpinning for these programs.

10. The President's vision for the 21st Century--Hope for the Future/Call to Arms

This Conference can be viewed as the first citizen's referendum on Aging issues---indeed, in some measure a citizen's referendum on the Contract With America---with the potential to direct the future of aging services for the balance of the 20th century, and the opportunity to provide the vision for such services for the 21st century. The resolutions that will emerge will be a result of deliberations from pre-Conference events, and final determinations by the delegates themselves. Older Americans feel a personal responsibility to leave a legacy of hope for their children and grandchildren, and that sense of obligation will be reflected in the outcomes of the Conference.

Seniors in this country are anxious to share the benefit of their years of experience with younger generations. There is much we can learn from the accomplishments of our nation's elderly, and their achievements should be honored and celebrated. This is the generation that turned back the threat of fascism and communism, and whose patriotic fervor bolstered the nation during complex and demanding times.

The 21st century will usher in new perspectives on aging, fresh opportunities for older Americans to share their expertise and wisdom, and innovative approaches to the role of government. The White House Conference on Aging can be a conduit to advance these goals.

CONCLUSION

It is our hope that the elements outlined in this memo will be helpful as the President's remarks to the Conference delegates are shaped. We stand ready to provide any additional assistance as is warranted, and are prepared to work with the President's speechwriters if that would be helpful.

Remarks
by
Vice President Al Gore
to

American Association of Retired Persons Legislative Council
Washington, DC
February 2, 1995

I was looking through the AARP application the other day... you know, the President and I are pretty close to that age.

Now, I don't have to tell you, that over 1/3 of the members of the American Association of Retired Persons STILL work.

It occurred to me, adding up on the calendar, the President will turn 50 next year -- August 19, 1996. And I know that he'll not only be working, but he'll win election to the same job he has now.

As I was looking through this pamphlet, I couldn't help but notice the "14 Special Reasons" for becoming a member. And they are special. Things like discounts on auto and homeowner insurance... Savings on vacations and a subscription to "Modern Maturity" -- which I understand, is one of the nation's most widely circulated magazines... And access to free information for better day-to-day living, news publications, and on-line services, like SeniorNet. I know that AARP went on-line in October, and I heard a great story the other day... a woman who loved being on-line because she could use words that "young" people use, like "download" and "boot up."

But of all of the 14 reasons that are listed, two stuck out -- numbers ten and eleven. Number ten states that older Americans, "have a strong friend in Washington, DC."

That's right. AARP is a strong friend of this nation's seniors.

Since AARP was founded in 1958 by Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, it has become the dominant voice for older Americans. Today, with over 33 million members, it is the largest organization of older Americans... and it remains unmatched in bringing independence and purpose to the lives of older Americans.

Older Americans have another friend in Washington... and that's the Clinton Administration.

Lately, there's been a lot of talk about bipartisanship... about how these days, there are a lot of things that Republicans and Democrats agree on.

There are some.

And when we agree, we can look forward to working together to bring the changes that will move our country forward.

And we can work together. In the State of the Union address, President Clinton applauded the 104th Congress for its very first piece of legislation... a law which applies to Congress all the laws which apply to the private sector. We supported that last year, incidentally, where it passed the Democratic House of Representatives before being filibustered in the Senate. This year, the President was proud to sign it with bipartisan support.

But Republicans are also saying a lot of things with which we disagree.

That's because when it comes to Social Security, Medicare, and the approach balanced budget agreement, the Republicans are talking a lot... without saying very much.

They tell you, for example, they're going to balance the budget without cutting Social Security. But they don't tell you how they're going to do it.

If they take Social Security off the table, then implement proposed tax cuts for the very wealthy and then balance budget... it'll mean cutting Medicare about 30 percent.

We don't agree with that.

I've always been very proud of the fact that my father helped author the very first Medicare Bill to pass the Senate. I've heard about the need for Medicare, and the pros and cons of it, for a very long time.

30 percent cuts in Medicare... and that's with defense spending being held constant. But their so-called Contract increases Defense spending, meaning even more cuts to the programs that AARP has fought hard for.

In a study that you have done, it shows that if they do not exempt Social Security from their budget, it will cost each recipient \$9,295 over seven years.

A balanced budget sounds nice... but only if you know how it's going to be done.

Say: "Here's what we're proposing. Here's what we have in mind. Evaluate it. Let's contemplate what's out there."

But the Republicans are refusing to say what their plan is.

When they are asked about it, the leaders of the majority party said something to the effect that it would be ridiculous to tell the American people how the budget would be balanced. Bob Dole said something like that on Tuesday.

Congressman Arney has said, and I quote, "the fact of the matter is that once members of Congress know exactly, chapter and verse, the pain that the government must live with... their knees will buckle."

What's he referring to? I believe we should get some specifics. Are we afraid to trust the intellect of the American people? I don't think so.

We think it's ridiculous not to tell the American people how the cuts they're proposing are going to affect them. As citizens and taxpayers, Americans have the right to know.

And Mr. Arney, I would say you're probably right. More often than not, when someone conceals information, it's because they know people won't like that information.

That's why today's AARP poll showed 75 percent of all Americans favor full disclosure when it comes to a balanced budget.

And that's why Democrats are working so hard on Capitol Hill to have a "Right to Know" provision added to the balanced budget.

Because if the Republican leaders plan to raise military spending, you have a right to know what that means for Medicare... not to find out after the fact.

And if Congressman Arney wants to offer a capital gains tax cut, designed to funnel money to the very wealthy, you have the right to know what that means for Social Security and the future you have worked your entire life to secure.

Because if they simultaneously push their balanced budget with concealing what they plan to cut, and at the same time offer tax cuts to the wealthy and increase military spending... this is not the right approach. This does not take into consideration the American people and the values they hold. We need to take a pencil and paper and say, "this doesn't add up."

The fact of the matter is, President Clinton has done more to balance the budget and save money than anyone in a very long time.

Under President Clinton's leadership the deficit is on its way to being cut by \$700 billion... going down three years in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was president. We've already cut spending by a quarter of a trillion dollars... over 250 billion dollars. We've created almost 6 million new jobs with an average wage higher than the national average. We've given a tax break to 90 percent of our small businesses. And we've given 15 million families a tax break through the Earned Income Tax Credit... \$1,000 a year for those families with income of about \$23,000 a year. A family of four doesn't even begin to pay income tax until they reach \$23,000. We've concentrated on those who need it. And it's working. The economy is booming.

And please let me add one more accomplishment. Thanks to the help of AARP and bipartisan support, President Clinton was able to sign the Retirement Protection Act earlier this month. Now, employers can no longer escape their pension obligations, and workers and retirees will be better informed about the pension they have earned.

Should we continue to look for areas where we can cut more? Yes, of course. And we will. The President's budget for the upcoming year does cut more... but it does not jeopardize Social Security, or Medicare, or education, or this country's veterans.

In fact, we'll make these programs work better.

Part of why we've been able to cut spending and lower the deficit comes from the President's initiative, that he asked me to lead, to "reinvent government" -- an initiative that has already led to cutting the federal bureaucracy by 100,000 positions. And there's another 170,000 reductions locked in under the current plan, leading to the creation of the smallest federal workforce since President Kennedy's Administration. We're making government work better and cost less.

Making government accountable means putting people first... treating them like customers.

And the federal agency that directly touches the lives of more customers than any other is the Social Security Administration. Each year, Social Security employees handle payments going to nearly 50 million clients.

So, our job is not only to protect these benefits, but also to make the system that distributes them as efficient and friendly as possible. Thanks to the work of Commissioner Shirley Chater, we have already begun to look at ways to make our Social Security system work better and reduce administrative costs. Our job is to cut red tape and bureaucracy... not your benefits. And we will continue to look to AARP, as well, for even more ideas on how to make our system work better.

I've concentrated on Medicare and Social Security, but I know there are an awful lot of other issues which you care deeply about, and have been active and persuasive in fighting for. Like how safe the streets are that you and your families live on... and what kind of education your children and grandchildren are getting, and how they're going to be able to pay for it.

Again, you have a friend in the Clinton Administration.

Thanks to President Clinton, we passed the smartest, toughest, and most comprehensive Anti-Crime Bill in this country's history... a bill that provides police, prisons, punishment and prevention.

Also, when it comes to education, I remember how Bill Clinton's predecessor wanted to be the "Education President."

But it was Bill Clinton who earned that title by signing the Student Loan Reform Act ... signed Goals 2000 ... School-to-work... and expanded Head Start.

And it's Bill Clinton who has proposed a "Middle Class Bill of Rights" which calls for tax cuts for parents trying to put their kids through school... and a \$500 tax cut for families with children under 13.

And there's something else that the President's "Middle Class Bill of Rights" does. It fosters responsibility by allowing people to set up an Individual Retirement Account and withdraw it tax free for the cost of education... or first-time home-buying... or the care of a parent... or health care.

You know, we did not succeed in fixing the health care system last year. But health care reform is still the right thing to do. And we're committed to it.

We are looking forward to discussing these issues and others at the White House Conference on Aging in May. And let me thank E.D. Horace Deets who has been an active member of the policy committee for the planning of the conference. And let me thank all of you for your contributions to the dialogue already under way.

I purposefully left out one thing the President has done for education -- something that had been a dream of his for long before he became president. It was his dream of National Service -- of putting America's young people to work serving others as a way of putting themselves through school. It's a combination of the Peace Corps, only at home, and the G.I. Bill for the middle class.

Which brings me to the second of the 14 reasons to join AARP which I found particularly meaningful. Number eleven in your pamphlet states that AARP offers "Volunteer Opportunities."

Today we have 20,000 young people in Americorps volunteering their time to community service, as a way to pay for school. Some of these volunteers are helping seniors. But the young people whose applications flooded our National Service offices are not motivated only by their concern for the future. They want to serve their communities now.

Where did this commitment to service come from?

Well, I think a lot of it came from the people this group represents. They learned it from you.

In 1958, Ethel Percy Andrus looked around and decided that there were interesting -- and interested -- older Americans across this country who would welcome joining one another in fruitful ways. AARP and your motto -- "To serve, not to be served" -- was born.

But it was long before 1958 that older Americans were making lasting contributions to society... like teaching the worth of public service.

Today, to compliment Americorps, Senior Corps programs like Foster Grandparent and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), boast 526,000 participants. What a resource for our nation!

People like Foster Grandparent Billy Williams, and RSVP volunteer Birdie Goodwin. Billy Williams works here in the District teaching young people how to write resumes and teaching them interview skills.

Birdie wakes up at 3:00 AM to begin cooking meals for hungry people in her small community in Kentucky. From 10 AM until two, she cares for fellow seniors. And then she returns to church to oversee the evening meal.

Birdie and Billy are only two of over so many older Americans who serve not for a pay check, but simply to make this a better country.

Of course, when I think about the contribution made by senior citizens, I think mostly of two other people: my own parents.

I mentioned earlier the role my father played in the Medicare legislation and the public part of his life is well-known. But what isn't so well known is how active and involved both of them have been since my father retired from the Senate in 1970, which he likes to say was due to a marginal error on the part of people in Tennessee.

They are now both in their eighties. There's nothing sedate about what they've been doing. In the past couple of years, they've started a new business from the ground-up -- the Gore Antique Mall. My father works there every day. And he is still getting up at 7:00 AM to work the family farm. My mother is on the Tennessee Commission on Aging and is an advisor for the local Smith County Seniors Center.

I've always been fond of the quotation from Mark Twain... he is supposed to have said, "When I was a boy of 14 my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years."

There are those who think your parents influence you only when you're very young. The fact is, as you grow older -- even older than 21 -- you see them through a different lens.

Now, as a parent myself, I am astonished at how they combined their public and private lives in the days when my parents were raising me and my sister. And as I see them these days I wish for myself nothing more than that I can match their energy and involvement.

Each day they remind me that what matters in the phrase "Senior Citizen" is the word "Citizen."

And so, in that spirit, that I would like to thank all of you here, today. For by your involvement you show America that citizenship does not end with retirement. You help Seniors. You help all Americans. Your continued activity is in the very best tradition of our democracy. For while the methods this organization uses day-in-day-out may be as current as SeniorNet, the values you uphold are as old as the United States of America. I salute you.

SENIORS

"Our senior citizens have made us what we are."

- President Clinton
State of the Union, 1995

"My position is, I haven't and don't support cuts in Social Security, and I would support savings in the Medicare program only if they're used to advance the cause of health care."

- President Clinton
October 23, 1994

PROMOTING ECONOMIC SECURITY *People who work hard and play by the rules should be rewarded.*

- The Clinton Administration is committed to promoting economic security and opportunity across generations.
- The Administration is committed to preserving Social Security benefits and ensuring the long-term integrity of the Trust Fund. Social Security benefits should not be used to balance the budget or to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy.
- **By strengthening and streamlining the program, we're working to bolster public confidence in Social Security.** We worked with the Congress to make SSA an independent agency. 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) to Americans to let them know the amount of retirement benefits they can expect.
- **People deserve a pension system that they can rely on.** 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 President's Middle Class Bill of Rights allows people to set up an Individual Retirement Account and withdraw it tax-free for the cost of education... or first time home buying... or the care of a parent... or health care.
- President Clinton proclaimed the week of March 12 through March 18, 1995 "National Older Workers Employment Week." Together, we need to work to bring out the unique combination of knowledge, skills, insight and experience older workers offer.

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO FIGHT FOR REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM *We remain firmly committed to guaranteeing health security to all Americans and to containing health care costs for families, businesses and federal, state and local governments.*

- In his December letter to the Congressional leadership, the President stated that this year, we can take the first steps. The Congress can, and should, reform the insurance market, make coverage affordable for, and available to, children; help workers who lose their jobs keep their health insurance; level the playing field for the self-employed; and **help families provide long-term care** for a sick parent or a disabled child.
- We know that long-term care is of critical importance to the elderly. That's why we're proposing tax clarifications for private long-term care insurance and consumer standards for long-term care so that insurance policies are worth the paper they're written on.
- **We're fighting to protect health care for mothers, children, the disabled and aged Americans.** Republicans want to cut Medicare by about \$300 billion and federal Medicaid spending by at least \$180 billion to \$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 mothers and children on Medicaid; and significant cuts in payments to hospitals, physicians and other providers.
- The Administration is working to make Medicare and Medicaid more responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and and more efficient for taxpayers who support the program. We're proposing more managed care options to increase the choices beneficiaries have; not as a smokescreen for deep and arbitrary cuts. And, we're streamlining regulations and cutting paperwork.
- The President has consistently said that we cannot get a hold of the deficit without passing meaningful health reform. Over the next five years alone, almost 40 percent of the growth in total federal spending will come from rising costs in federal health care programs. We must contain costs in these programs. But we must do it as we reform our health care system as a whole -- not by arbitrarily cutting programs that serve the most vulnerable Americans.

A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE *The Administration is committed to fighting for a better quality of life -- safe streets, high-quality and affordable education for everyone, and making services available where they're needed most -- at the community level.*

- The 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 families live on are safer.
- President Clinton has signed the Student Loan Reform Act, Goals 2000, School-to-Work and expanded Head Start. His "Middle Class Bill of Rights" calls for tax cuts for parents trying to put their kids through school... and a \$500 tax cut for families with children under 13.

- **Promoting community service** 20,000 young people are volunteering their time to community service through the Administration's Americorps; some work with seniors in their community. And, Senior Corps programs like Foster Grandparent and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program boast 526,000 participants.
- **Making Government Smaller and Cutting Red Tape** The Administration has eliminated 102,000 jobs and continues to cut obsolete regulations; reward results, not red tape; take power away from federal bureaucracies and give it back to communities.

March 9, 1995

Prepared by: Lynn Margherio X65561

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

BACKGROUND

- In the last half of this century, there have been three White House Conferences on Aging and each one has served as a catalyst for important new initiatives that address the needs of America's elderly -- their work contributed to the passage of Medicare and Medicaid, the Older Americans Act and Social Security Reform.
- The 1995 White House Conference on Aging is the first conference since 1981 and the last in the 20th Century. The Conference will be held in Washington on May 2-5. Its theme is: America Now and Into the 21st Century -- Generations aging together with independence, opportunity and dignity.
- More than 2000 delegates, appointed by governors, members of Congress, aging organizations, international organizations, veterans groups, the White House, the Department of Health and Human Services and the White House Conference on Aging will attend. Senior volunteers and caregivers are invited as delegates for the first time.
- The purpose of the 1995 Conference is to produce resolutions that shape national aging policy over the next ten years -- and to work together to see these resolutions implemented.

A GRASS ROOTS PROCESS

For the first time ever, the planning process for the Conference involved grass-roots participation from every corner of our country.

- Over 700 events and conferences have been held in all 50 states and territories, involving more than 25,000 people.
- The public has had an opportunity to shape the Conference's agenda, ensuring that the issues covered are the issues seniors care most about: promoting economic security; assuring comprehensive health care and long-term care; maximizing housing and support service options; maximizing options for a quality life.

THE ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO SENIORS (see Seniors talking points)

CHALLENGES AHEAD

- This Conference comes at a time of both fiscal and demographic change in our country -- diminishing resources on the federal/state/local levels; an entire population living longer, and staying healthier; changing family structures.

- This Conference is about meeting new challenges with new and creative solutions and forging new partnerships.
- It is about energizing society across all age groups to make aging an issue of personal concern.
- It is about building new intergenerational partnerships and expanding existing ones.
- It is about younger Americans that they must plan for their older years by working hard, saving money and making smart decisions about their health.
- And it is about educating Americans about the extraordinary abilities and potential of our older Americans.

Prepared by: Lynn Margherio, X65561
March 9, 1995



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary
Administration on Aging

Washington, D.C. 20201

AoA Salutes 1995 as the Year of the Grandparent

Date: 2-6To: Lynn

Fax Number: _____

FROM:

Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Aging

Phone: (202) 401-4634 or (202) 401-4541
FAX: (202)401-7741

___ Fernando M. Torres-Gil, Assistant Secretary for Aging
___ Portia Porter Mittelman, Principal Deputy

___ Christina Cabral
___ Betty Mason
___ Alice Reed
☒ Moya Benoit Thompson

___ Anna Kindermann
___ Michele Puccinelli
___ Valerie Soroka
___ Michael Zawadski

Comments: _____

Number of Pages (including cover sheet): _____

REMARKS**DONNA E. SHALALA**

**SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
THE MINI-WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING
WASHINGTON, D.C.
FEBRUARY 7, 1995**

- ♦ **Introduction: Karen Davis, President, Commonwealth Fund**
- ♦ **Mention a few inspiring older Americans.**
- **Evelyn Nef of Washington, D.C.**
 - **A former secretary, at age 60, Ms. Nef decided to become a psychotherapist. Earned her degree at age 65 -- just about the time she began collecting Social Security.**
 - **Now she's 81 years old. Just retired from psychotherapy -- and working on her autobiography.**
- **Milton Snyder, 82, of Arlington, Virginia, who delivers meals to fellow seniors in the Meal-On-Wheels program, and takes mail to terminally ill people living in hospices.**

- Liz Carpenter.

- In her book, Unplanned Parenthood, Liz talks about turning 70, adopting her brother's three children, and why she did it.

- "Why me?" she asks of the responsibility.

- "Because there is no one else. And because I would rather do it than fail to do it."

- Finally, Edna Shalala.

- ♦ These people don't consider themselves supermen or superwomen. But they are all American heroes -- the backbone of society.

- ♦ Millions of older Americans work.

- ♦ Some work out of necessity, some for enjoyment, and some volunteer to give something back to their communities.

- We must continue to find ways to tap the rich resources of seniors to work in paid and volunteer jobs.

- ♦ Older Americans want to feel productive, and to keep contributing to society, as they have throughout their careers and their lives.
- Mention great work of organizations like the Executive Service Corps of Chicago.
- The Corps refers more than 700 retirees with expertise in finance, advertising, and other business skills to help struggling non-profits in the area.
- ♦ We need more opportunities for seniors to engage in productive, fulfilling work.
- ♦ And therein lies our challenge for the future. As America grays, how can we help older Americans retain jobs, retrain for other posts, and work the hours that are best for them -
- and their employers?
- ♦ We need to make progress on a number of fronts:
 1. Job flexibility.
 2. Job training and retraining -- especially in computer skills.

3. Incentives for companies to hire more seniors -- in paid or volunteer capacity.

4. More intergenerational opportunities.

5. Age discrimination -- which I know is particularly important to you.

♦ Age discrimination is nothing new.

• We must renew our commitment to end it. Zero tolerance for discrimination against older Americans.

- Here, the media could be a partner in creating more positive images of older Americans in popular culture.

- We must dispel the myths -- too often America's seniors are depicted as candidates for the nursing home.

- In fact, more than 95 percent of older Americans live independent lives.

♦ I think we have some work to do to reshape the national consciousness about the vitality of seniors.

- For two years, the Clinton Administration has been hard at work to implement sound policies for seniors.
- We're the ones who have maintained a bedrock commitment to Social Security.
- We're the ones who worked with the U.S. Congress to make the Social Security Administration into an independent agency.
- We're the ones who are committed to protecting the great Medicare program -- preserving what's right about it rather than destroy the whole program in the name of reform.
- We're the ones who fought hard for a health reform plan that would provide long-term care and prescription drugs for seniors.
- And we're the ones who elevated the position of Commissioner of Aging to the level of Assistant Secretary -- and bought you Fernando Torres-Gil, a man of many talents who has begun four major initiatives at the Administration on Aging --

-- women's health, long-term care, nutrition, and lastly, an initiative to help all of us prepare for an aging society.

- ◆ One measure of our commitment is the President's decision to hold the 1995 White House Conference on Aging.
- ◆ I came here to share my vision of the Conference -- and to ask for your support in educating the public.
- This is the first conference in 14 years -- the last one to be held this century -- and we are proud to host it this May.
- ◆ This conference comes at a critical time of both fiscal and demographic change in our country -- and we have a unique set of challenges to confront.
- Diminishing resources on the federal/state/local levels.
- An entire population living longer, and staying healthier -- and providing more opportunities for these years.
- Changing family structures.

- Dispersed families mean that older Americans often must depend on friends, neighbors, or strangers to help out;
 - And with a dramatic increase in single-parent households, millions of grandparents are helping to raise another generation of children.
-
- ◆ Throughout our history, we as Americans, have always risen to meet our challenges with new and creative solutions.
 - ◆ The White House Conference on Aging is about meeting new challenges and forging new partnerships.
 - ◆ Bob Blancato, David Pryor, Fernando, and many others, have done an extraordinary job preparing for May.
 - ◆ This conference will be completely different from the previous ones in a number of ways.
 - ◆ I think it is very important that we educate the media, and opinion leaders, about these differences.
-
1. First of all, for the first time ever, the planning process for the White House Conference on Aging involved grass-roots participation from every corner of our country.

8

- Inclusion: the agenda was developed through more than 700 pre-Conference events -- and more than 900 comments from citizens.
- The people, not government, decided what would be said -- the American people did. And this alone sets this Conference apart from its predecessors.

2. The second difference is that we are in an era when government alone cannot provide all the resources -- nor all the answers to our challenges.

- We are not coming together to create new bureaucracies.
- Instead, we must reevaluate and recommend improvements to the way government does business.
 - Tough performance measures.
 - New initiatives in rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse.
 - More public-private partnerships.
- Our role is to bring all the major players together -- not to be the only player.

- And communities, religious institutions, schools, businesses, and Americans of all ages and talents, must link arms to shape new policies, and new ways of thinking about the future.
- All sectors of society must take responsibility to create aging policy. After all, God willing, all of us are going to grow old.

3. The third difference is focus -- I'm pleased that we have structured this conference to concentrate on the four major topics -- with which all of you are familiar.

1. Comprehensive health care, and long-term care.
2. Promoting economic security.
3. Maximizing housing and support service options.
4. Maximizing options for a quality life.

♦ I have two challenges for you as we forge ahead toward May:

- * First, action -- this conference is about making resolutions that will shape national aging policy over the next ten years;

* And second, we must set out a blueprint for implementation of these resolutions so they don't just collect dust on a shelf.

◆ I challenge you to continue working with us to make sure that the public, the media, and the opinion leaders understand that this conference is different.

◆ This White House Conference is about forging a new direction. It is about fostering responsibility and accountability throughout our society.

- It is about energizing everybody in our society to make aging an issue of personal concern.

- It is about building new intergenerational partnerships and expanding existing ones.

- It is about educating younger Americans that they must plan for their older years by working hard, saving money, and making smart decisions about their health.

- And it is about educating Americans about the extraordinary abilities and potential of our older Americans.

11

- ♦ Thank you for your leadership, your hard work, and your passion about America's seniors.

FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

TO: Lynn Margherio FROM: Elaine DalpiazFAX: 456 - 7028# OF PAGES 3 + COVER

1995 WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

501 School Street, SW, 8th Floor

Washington, DC 20024

Phone # (202) 245-7116 • Fax # (202) 245-7857

COMMENTS:

Please disregard earlier version
This is the correct version.

Thanks!

**TALKING POINTS FOR
WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING EVENTS**

March 3, 1995

Political Talking Points

This is the first WHCoA to be conducted by a Democratic President.

The WHCoA has "trickled up" from grassroots to Washington -- over 700 pre-WHCoA events in all 50 States and territories, involving more than 25,000 persons (the majority are senior citizens).

The first time a WHCoA has offered the public an opportunity to shape its agenda by submitting it in advance for public comment.

The first WHCoA conceived and conducted with an intergenerational policy focus. Presided over by the first "baby boomer" President in history.

The first WHCoA which aims to be focused in its scope and products -- limiting issues and seeking a specific number of resolutions as compared to an unlimited "wish list" of recommendations.

This Conference will help define the major distinction between the President's health care (especially Medicare) agenda vs. those provisions advanced by the Contract with America.

This Conference will serve to affirm the President's position that Social Security benefits should not be tampered with.

The 1995 WHCoA has provided bi-partisan access. Several Policy Committee members are Republican. Delegate appointments were increased in January 1995 to allow each new member of 104th congress and all new Governors to name delegates (elected officials who are mostly Republican).

A WHCoA which recognizes that new Federal programs will not be the answer for the future of aging policy -- rather, a new look at Federal programs may improve aging services and programs.

This WHCoA will reaffirm that government has an ongoing responsibility to help people of all ages-- and the White House Conference on Aging can send that message for the benefit of all generations.

This WHCoA will seek to influence more than public laws. It recognizes the need to influence public attitudes -- and improve public education and information.

General Talking Points

The 1995 WHCoA is the 4th in history -- and the 1st since 1981 -- last of 20th century.

The purpose of the Conference is to produce resolutions to impact national aging policy over the next ten years -- and to work to have them implemented over the same time span.

The Conference dates are May 2-5, followed by a final report due 6-9 months later.

The theme of the WHCoA is: AMERICA NOW AND INTO THE 21ST CENTURY--GENERATIONS AGING TOGETHER WITH INDEPENDENCE OPPORTUNITY AND DIGNITY. This was created from grass roots input.

More than 2000 delegates will come appointed by Governors, Members of Congress, aging organizations, international organizations, veterans groups, HHS, the White House and the White House Conference on Aging.

Youth delegates are included, as are those from business and industry. Senior volunteers and caregivers are invited as delegates for the first time.

The four main topics of the 1995 WHCoA:

- * comprehensive health care including long-term care;
- * assuring economic security;
- * maximizing housing and support service options;
- * maximizing options for a quality life.

Cross-cutting issues to be addressed within each topic:

Interdependence of generations (including extended families), special needs of special populations including veterans, caregivers, women, minority, rural elderly and persons with disabilities

Previous conferences are associated with the passage of Medicare and Medicaid, the Older Americans Act and Social Security Reform.

Policy Issues

Health care is clearly the dominant issue. Within health care the most common issues are Medicare (present and future), long-term care and prescription drug reform.

Income security -- especially Social Security and pensions.

Elder abuse and neglect (prevention).

Changing role of grandparents -- 3 million grandchildren being cared for primarily by grandparents -- little or no help from state or federal laws.

Housing.

The diversity of the U.S. aging population -- doubling of minority aging populations by 2030.

Governing Bodies of the WHCoA

The Conference is governed by a Policy Committee chaired by Senator Pryor. 13 of the 25 members were chosen by the President.

An Advisory Committee of 29 all named by the President.