

President Clinton's State of the Union Agenda January 26, 2000

On Thursday evening, January 27th, President Clinton will deliver his annual State of the Union Address to the Congress and the American people. The President will outline an aggressive agenda based on three enduring American principles – creating opportunity, demanding responsibility and building community. The President's agenda will build on the prosperity created over the past seven years and make progress on issues important to the American people. And the President's plan will maintain fiscal discipline and put the nation on a path to eliminate the national debt by 2013.

A STRONG UNION PREPARED FOR NEW CHALLENGES:

After seven years of hard work by the American people, our economy and spirit are strong.

✓ A Strong American Economy:

- Over 20 million new jobs.
- The lowest unemployment rate in 30 years.
- The lowest poverty rate in 20 years.
- The lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates in history.
- The highest homeownership rate ever.

✓ A Strong American Spirit:

- Overall crime rates are down 25 percent.
- Teen births have declined seven years in a row.
- Adoptions are up by 30 percent.
- Welfare rolls have been cut in half and are down by over 7 million people to the lowest levels in 32 years.

COMPLETING UNFINISHED BUSINESS ON IMPORTANT ISSUES:

The President will call on Congress to take action on priority issues facing the nation, including:

- ✓ Setting aside the surplus to pay down the debt
- ✓ Strengthening Social Security
- ✓ Modernizing Medicare, including a voluntary prescription drug benefit
- ✓ Enacting a Real Patients' Bill of Rights
- ✓ Passing Common Sense Gun Safety Legislation
- ✓ Passing Legislation to Fight Hate Crimes
- ✓ Raising the Minimum Wage

OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN EDUCATION:

Over the last seven years, the President and Vice President have worked hard to improve standards and provide the resources needed to give our kids the best elementary and secondary education in the world and to make college education and lifetime learning more affordable. Among the proposals the President will make to build on this record in the coming year are the following:

- ✓ Investing \$25 billion to repair, renovate and renew our children's schools
- ✓ Improve early childhood education by investing \$30 million to train high-quality teachers
- ✓ Create smaller, safer and better high schools by investing \$120 million in a Smaller Schools Initiative
- ✓ Help communities across the country improve school safety through a comprehensive \$247 million investment
- ✓ Making College more affordable for families with a \$30 billion College Opportunity Tax Cut which provides up to \$2,800 annually in tax relief per family per year

- ✓ Helping students afford and be able to stay in school through nearly \$1 billion in College Completion Challenge Grants, Pell Grants and other initiatives
- *The President will announce several other new initiatives to strengthen education by improving accountability, teacher quality and training and expanding Head Start as well as pre-school and after-school opportunities.*

REWARDING WORK AND STRENGTHENING FAMILIES:

The President and Vice President have worked hard to help families balance the demands of work and family through policies like the Family and Medical Leave Act, targeted tax cuts and raising the minimum wage. The President's State of the Union will seek to build on this record by:

- ✓ Providing tax relief for working families by expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit by \$21 billion over ten years
- ✓ Making housing affordable for hard-pressed working families by investing \$690 million in new housing vouchers
- ✓ Expanding health insurance coverage to 5 million uninsured Americans and expanding access to health insurance to millions more by investing \$110 billion over ten years
- ✓ Helping make long-term health care more affordable for families by tripling to \$3,000 the tax credit available to people requiring long-term care. The credit is also available to caregivers who are most often family members.
- ✓ Combating unfair pay practices against women by investing \$27 million in an Equal Pay Initiative
- *The President will make additional new proposals to reward work and strengthen families on child care and other issues.*

RESPONSIBILITY AND CRIME:

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have pursued a tough, smart agenda to reduce crime in America including signing the Brady Bill into law, putting 100,000 new police officers on the street and banning assault weapons. As a result, overall crime rates have dropped for seven years in a row and are lower today than they have been in twenty-five years. To build on that record, the President will urge Congress to pass the common sense, bipartisan legislation passed by the Senate last year -- to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. And the President will make additional proposals, including:

- ✓ A new \$280 million initiative to crack down and prosecute gun criminals through, among other things, hiring 500 new ATF agents, 1,000 new federal, state and local gun prosecutors
- ✓ An investment of \$10 million to fund innovative "smart" gun technologies, which could limit a gun's use to its owner, thereby preventing accidental shootings, deterring gun theft and protecting police officers
- ✓ A new \$10 million anti-drug initiative to investigate and prosecute illegal drug sales on the Internet
- *The President will have a number of additional common sense measures to prevent gun violence and make our communities safer.*

EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY TO EVERY CORNER OF AMERICA:

The three-part strategy President Clinton and Vice President Gore have pursued for seven years – fiscal discipline, investing in the American people and opening new markets for American goods – has resulted in the strongest American economy in a generation. Last year, President Clinton announced the New Markets Initiative and toured communities that have not yet felt the benefits of our strong economy. This year, the President's New Markets agenda, which enjoys bipartisan support, includes:

- ✓ Doubling proposed New Markets Tax Credit to spur \$15 billion in private investment in untapped markets
- ✓ Expanding Empowerment Zone tax incentives to bring economic opportunity to under-served communities
- ✓ Providing access to financial services for low and moderate income Americans through First Accounts
- *The President will announce other proposals to expand economic opportunity to rural areas and close the digital divide so that all Americans have access to the opportunities available through today's technologies.*

EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND PROTECTING AMERICAN INTERESTS

AROUND THE WORLD: Over the past seven years, the Clinton Administration has aggressively pursued American interests abroad, including opening foreign markets to American goods and expanding peace, democracy and human rights. The President's agenda for the this year seeks to build on these gains through:

- ✓ Winning approval for China's entry into the rules-based trading system through WTO membership
- ✓ Continuing to work for peace in the Middle East, Northern Ireland and Kosovo
- ✓ Investing over \$150 million to combat the spread of AIDS and other diseases in Africa and other developing nations

RESPONSIBILITY, OPPORTUNITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT:

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have demonstrated that you can both grow the economy and protect the environment. This Administration has cleaned up over 500 Superfund toxic waste sites – nearly three times as many in six years as previous administrations had cleaned in twelve. The Administration has improved air quality by setting the toughest soot standards ever and has protected over 60 million acres of public lands, more than any administration since Franklin Roosevelt. ***This year, the President will build on this record through important new initiatives to meet the challenge of climate change, make our communities more livable, and preserve our nation's historic and valuable lands for future generations.***

OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:

Investment in science and technology has increased dramatically under President Clinton and Vice President Gore. The President will continue this trend in his State of the Union agenda.

- ✓ \$2.8 billion increase in the "21st Century Research Fund," including a \$1 billion increase in biomedical research at NIH and double the largest dollar increase the National Science Foundation has ever received
 - ***The President will have additional proposals dealing with investments in science, technology and biomedical research.***

BUILDING ONE AMERICAN COMMUNITY:

The President and Vice President have worked hard to bring all Americans together around the principles of opportunity, community, and responsibility. The President created Americorps to give Americans to earn money for college by serving in their communities. And through his Presidential Initiative on Race, the President has lead a nationwide effort to Build One America in the 21st Century. The President's State of the Union agenda will have a number of proposals to further this goal, including:

- ✓ Increasing our ability to enforce our civil rights laws by investing \$695 million in civil rights enforcement agencies, a 13 percent increase over last years request
- ✓ Standing up against intolerance and hate by calling for quick Congressional action to pass legislation to fight hate crimes
 - ***The President will announce other proposals to strengthen our communities and build One America which will create new opportunities through national service, fight discrimination in the work place and provide new tax incentives to support community building efforts.***

achievement gap as indicated by performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

A NEW TEACHER QUALITY PLAN TO RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND REWARD GOOD

TEACHERS. The President will propose a new \$1 billion initiative to improve teacher quality. The Teaching to High Standards Initiative will give grants to states and districts to fund high quality, standards-based professional development for teachers. It also includes several new proposals:

- **Higher Standards-Higher Pay for Teachers** – This \$50 million initiative will award grants to high-poverty school districts to help them attract and retain high-quality teachers through better pay and higher standards. Participating teachers would receive immediate pay increases and additional raises based on their demonstration of high-quality teaching through rigorous peer review.
- **Teacher Quality Rewards** – This \$50 million program will reward school districts that have made exceptional progress in reducing the number of uncertified teachers and teachers teaching out of their subject area. The President has proposed requiring states to ensure that 95 percent of teachers are certified and 95 percent of secondary teachers are teaching within field by 2004.
- **Hometown Teacher Recruitment** – This \$75 million program would empower high-poverty school districts to develop programs to recruit their own teachers to address the shortage of qualified teachers. Programs supported by this grant would make students aware, as early as middle school, of the opportunities available in the teaching profession; provide mentoring and teaching experiences as they progress through school; and provide financial assistance for students who enter college and pursue academic degrees with the goal of teaching in high-need communities after graduation.
- **Transition to Teaching** – This \$25 million initiative will build on the success of the Department of Defense's Troops to Teachers program by recruiting and preparing talented mid-career professionals from diverse fields to become teachers in high-need subject areas and high-need schools.
- **School Leaders Initiative** – This \$40 million program will fund non-profit partnerships designed to recruit, prepare and provide professional development for superintendents and principals, and other school leaders.

MORE HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS FOR SMALLER CLASS SIZES IN THE EARLY

GRADES. The President will call on Congress to continue its commitment to reduce class size in the early grades by staying on a path to hiring 100,000 high quality teachers. The President will propose boosting class size funding to \$1.75 billion, an increase of \$450 million over current levels – enough to fund about 49,000 teachers, nearly half way to our long-term goal. Smaller classes allow teachers to spend more time on instruction and less time on discipline, and provide more individualized attention. Research shows that students attending small classes in the early grades make more rapid educational progress than students in larger classes. New teachers hired under this program must be qualified and know the subjects they are teaching.



Anna Richter

01/26/2000 03:54:02 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Andy Rotherham/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Education calls for tomorrow's paper

I will send press paper as soon as Bruce gives me okay -- any minute

----- Forwarded by Anna Richter/OPD/EOP on 01/26/2000 03:53 PM -----

DORINDA A. SALCIDO

01/26/2000 03:51:46 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Anna Richter/OPD/EOP@EOP, Eric P. Liu/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

Subject: Education calls for tomorrow's paper

**We would like Eric to call the following reporters for the education leak for tomorrow's papers:
(may have a few more names for Eric later)**

Lynn Sweet, Chicago Sun Times, call after 4 p.m.

Jon Sawyer, St. Louis Post Dispatch, 298-6880, call after 3:30 p.m.

Roger Lowe, Columbus Dispatch, 347-3144 **call soon**

Greg McDonald, Houston Chronicle, 393-6880

Jim Landers, Dallas Morning News, 661-8407

Joetta Sacks, Education Week, 301-280-3157 - on conf. call this afternoon

Michael Cardman, Education Daily, 703-739-6414 - on conf. call this afternoon

The following are the calls that Jake asked Bruce to make (Jake sent email earlier):

Bruce -- please call Post (Harris 334-7401 or Babington 334-4455), LA Times (Pine 862-9246??), Journal (Glen Burkins 862-6614), NY Times (Lacey 862-0377), USA Today (McQuillan 703/907-7101) embargoed until 9:00 p.m. AP (Galvin 776-9494), Reuters (Holland 898-8392) and UPI (Kukis 898-8100.)

I hope this is helpful.

Message Copied To:

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AL GORE: A VISION FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

"There is nothing more important to the success and prosperity of Americans and of our country than providing all of our people with a high-quality education. We must take dramatic steps to improve our schools and ensure that education is no longer just a period in our lives, but a way of life in the 21st Century."

- Vice President Al Gore, May 16, 1999

Al Gore is continuing to fight for an excellent education for all by advancing an ambitious, fiscally responsible plan for revolutionary progress in American education. In the 21st century education will be the foundation of opportunity and the key to success in the New Economy. Realizing America's potential in the next century will require investing in education and learning for all Americans throughout their lifetimes. While yesterday we could not afford high school dropouts, tomorrow we cannot afford learning dropouts at any time in an individual's life. Citing increased demand for higher skills in today's information-driven economy, growing challenges in schools across the country, and changes to the American family, Al Gore has called for making the next decade the education decade.

- Making High-Quality Preschool Available to Every Child, in Every Community in America
- Improving Teacher Quality and Elevating the Teaching Profession
- A Renewed Focus on Character, Discipline, Safety and Parental Involvement
- Smaller Schools and Smaller Classes
- Raising Standards for All Students
- An Aggressive Plan to Turn Around Failing Schools
- Tapping the Power and Potential of Technology to Improve Education in America
- Meeting the Needs of Children With Disabilities in a Way That Works for All Our Children
- Finding New Ways to Help Families Pay for Higher Education

MAKING HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL AVAILABLE TO EVERY CHILD, IN EVERY COMMUNITY IN AMERICA

Al Gore has proposed enabling every state in America to develop and strengthen voluntary preschool programs to ensure that high-quality preschool is available to every child in America. Research shows that quality preschool gives children a solid basis for learning that can benefit them throughout their lifetimes. Al Gore's pre-school initiative places a strong emphasis on flexibility for states and offers choice for parents. His program would offer states matching funds to create and support pre-schools in a variety of community-based settings, such as schools, recreation centers, child care providers, and Head Start centers among others. States may also determine the variety of curricula offered by pre-schools. States would be required to ensure that participating pre-schools meet appropriate educational, safety, and quality standards. Some monies would be dedicated for a "Pre-School Quality Fund" to offer professional development, aid recruitment and to support other strategies to ensure high quality pre-school.

IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY AND ELEVATING THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Al Gore believes we should treat teachers like professionals, pay them like professionals, and hold them to high professional.

- Gore has proposed putting more of America's brightest and most dedicated people to work changing the lives of the children who need it most by creating a new 21st Century Teachers Corps that would give young people who spend four years teaching in high-need schools up to \$10,000 to pay for college, or a \$10,000 bonus to talented professionals willing to switch from other careers into teaching.
- He has called on all new teachers to pass a rigorous test on the subjects they will teach. We will hire 2.2 million new teachers in the next decade. If we set a national goal that every one of those teachers will be well-prepared, tested in the subject they will teach and skilled in the newest technology before they set foot in the classroom, we will dramatically improve our schools.
- Finally, Al Gore has proposed an ambitious program to award competitive grants to high-poverty urban and rural school districts to help them attract and retain high-quality teachers and principals through better pay and higher standards. In order to receive funding, partnerships involving school districts, local businesses, parents and

teacher's unions, would take aggressive steps to raise teacher standards and provide professional development and intensive support to help all teachers and principals succeed. Participating partnerships would agree on steps to reward good teaching, provide mentors for new teachers and principals, recruit talented new teachers, and adopt faster, but fair ways to identify, improve, and when necessary remove low performing teachers. School districts would require rigorous peer evaluations to provide advice and extra help to all teachers, and identify those few who should be placed into a fast but fair system to improve or remove low-performing teachers. Under this proposal, all teachers in participating school districts would receive up to a \$5,000 salary increase. Master teachers, reaching an advanced professional standard, would receive an additional \$5,000 salary increase – for example, given to those who get advanced certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification. Al Gore believes that teachers should be treated and paid like professionals, and held to high professional standards. No teaching contract or license should provide a lifetime job guarantee, but we must provide all our teachers the intensive support and training needed to succeed.

A RENEWED FOCUS ON CHARACTER, DISCIPLINE, SAFETY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

While the overwhelming majority of our schools remain safe, the tragic events of the past few years have made it clear that we must do more to protect and nurture our children. Al Gore believes:

- All schools should be gun-free, drug-free, safe and secure. He supports a policy of zero tolerance for guns or drugs in schools, and the creation of second-chance schools, where young people who bring a gun to school or who are headed for trouble can get the strict discipline and intensive services they need to succeed.
- We must provide more students and working families with high-quality after school options, that keep kids safe and learning in the afternoon hours when most juvenile crime, and drug and alcohol abuse take place.
- Schools should add civic and character education courses -- to teach students that the same values they learn in good homes apply in our schools and in our society.
- We should extend the Family Leave law, so parents can take time off work to attend parent-teacher conferences without fear of losing their jobs. Moreover, parents, teachers, and students should meet together at the beginning of the school year and sign a strict discipline code and begin to plan for their year.

SMALLER SCHOOLS AND SMALLER CLASSES

Al Gore envisions a new American high school – with smaller classes, smaller schools, and principals with the power to lead. Under the Gore plan, grants would be made to schools or districts that have a strategy to build new, small high schools, or break up existing schools in innovative ways, including autonomous schools-within-schools, career academies, charter schools, or smaller classes. Funding would be provided to states who will make competitive grants to local school districts, targeted to high need communities. School districts receiving funding will also develop strategies to hold all students to high standards, including providing qualified students in every high school with the opportunity to take Advanced Placement courses. He is also fighting to reduce class size to a national average of eighteen students in the early grades, and has set a national goal to reduce the average class size to twenty students in all grades. Finally, Vice President Gore believes in giving principals, advised by teams of teachers, the power to hire staff and manage their own budget.

RAISING STANDARDS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Al Gore will fight to raise standards for all our students. As part of this effort, he will offer rewards and incentives to all states that institute a high school exit exam and to all states that improve student achievement as measured by NAEP. These exams would be developed by the state, and tied to state standards and accountability systems. Twenty six states now have high school exit exams.

AN AGGRESSIVE PLAN TO TURN AROUND FAILING SCHOOLS

We need to work to improve all our public schools, turning around failing schools and make our best schools even better. Most schools provide students with a high-quality education, and a strong basis for success and lifelong learning, but there are too many school districts in America where less than half the students graduate, and those who do graduate are not ready for college or good jobs. Al Gore believes that should be recognized for what it is: a national emergency. His plan would:

- Require every state and school district to identify failing schools, and work to turn them around. If these failing schools don't improve quickly, they should be shut down fairly and fast, and reopened under a new principal with a full peer evaluation of every teacher, intensive training for those who need it, and fair ways to improve or remove

low-performing teachers. States and school districts that turn around failing schools should receive performance bonuses recognizing their achievements and rewarding their hard work.

- Make extended learning time, including summer school and after school programs, available to every kid in a failing school to make sure they are not left behind academically while their school is being turned around.
- Expand public school choice through charter schools, magnet schools and schools-within-schools, so that every parent can choose the public school that best fits their child's needs. Al Gore will invest to triple the number of high quality and accountable public charter schools by 2010. As a complement to his smaller schools and classes proposal, this initiative would help create schools that are not only smaller, but have a common mission; teacher, parent and student buy-in; and increased autonomy.
- Challenge every state and school district to eliminate the achievement gap between rich and poor, and between racial and ethnic groups in the next decade, and aggressively push to reduce the Hispanic dropout rate.

TAPPING THE POWER AND POTENTIAL OF TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE EDUCATION IN AMERICA

The technological revolution makes possible an instructional revolution -- where we can replace standardized textbook learning with individualized learning matched to every child's pace, potential, and learning style. To do this we must finish wiring every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway, expand teacher training in the newest educational software, and ensure that high-quality educational software is available in all our schools.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN A WAY THAT WORKS FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN

Al Gore believes we must fulfill the promise of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and give every child in America the education necessary to succeed in the 21st century. We should never have to pit the needs of some students against the needs of other students, and parents against parents in a battle of limited resources. Gore has outlined a number of steps that will give all of our children a world-class education.

- The federal government should do more to help states and school districts provide special education. Al Gore embraces the 40 percent goal that Congress set nearly 25 years ago, and believes that we should work more aggressively to meet it. As President, he will start by making a substantial down payment in his first budget -- the largest-ever increase in education for those with disabilities.
- We have a responsibility to educate all of our children with disabilities -- including the relatively few children who require particularly costly services. Since these costs can stretch the resources of rural and other small school districts, Al Gore would work with interested states to establish pools of funding to help schools pay these costs without fear of sacrificing general education.
- We can do more to help children early on and reduce the costs of special education by reducing the number of children unnecessarily referred to special education services in the first place. That means more early intervention, including high-quality preschool, smaller class sizes and a strong commitment to Title I, and adopting proven strategies to identify learning disabilities early on. Moreover, special education teachers and regular classroom teachers need more training in how to deal effectively with the needs of students with disabilities.

FINDING NEW WAYS TO HELP FAMILIES PAY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

To ensure that every American has the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century economy, we must ensure that learning doesn't end with high school graduation. Over the last six years we have dramatically expanded access to college and training, but we must do more if we are going to truly provide continued access to the American dream for all. Al Gore has proposed:

- The creation of a National Tuition Savings Program to help families invest their money in special trusts which help pay for their children's tuition at colleges and universities nationwide.
- The creation of new 401-J accounts, to let parents save for their children's college as well as their own post-secondary education and training, and enable those savings to be matched by interested employers and grow tax free.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 6, 2000

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S COMMITMENT
TO REPAIR, RENOVATE, AND RENEW AMERICAS SCHOOLS
January 5, 2000

"Today too many of our schools are so old they're falling apart, or so over-crowded students are learning in trailers. Last fall, Congress missed the opportunity to change that. This year, with 53 million children in our schools, Congress must not miss that opportunity again."
--President Clinton, State of the Union

Address, 1999

President Clinton's FY2001 Budget demonstrates a strong commitment to investing in school construction and modernization. The FY2001 Budget:

- Renews the President's strong commitment to his school modernization tax credit bond proposal.

The President's School Modernization Bond proposal provides \$24.8 billion in tax credit bonds over two years to modernize up to 6,000 schools. This proposal costs \$3.7 billion over five years; expands the Qualified Zone Academy Bonds, a proven success; and is fully paid for in the budget.

- Includes a new \$1.3 billion school urgent/emergency renovation loan and grant proposal

This \$1.3 billion initiative leverages nearly \$7 billion of (approximately 8,300) renovation projects in high-poverty, high-need school districts with little or no capacity to fund urgent repairs. If continued over five years, the program would leverage \$34.5 billion, enough to pay for approximately 41,500 renovation projects. Both loans and grants would be made available, with the smaller grant program directed toward the neediest districts.

Nationally, there is an urgent need for school modernization

- One-Third of All Schools Need Extensive Repairs. One third of all public schools -- about 25,000 schools -- need extensive repair or replacement. School Facilities: The Condition of America's Schools, GAO Report Number HEHS-95-61, 1995-6.
- Average School is 42 Years Old. The average public school in America is 42 years old, and school buildings begin rapid deterioration after 40 years. How Old are America's Schools, NCES, 1999.
- \$112 Billion Needed Just for Repairs. \$112 billion is needed just to repair the existing schools across the nation. School Facilities: The Condition of America's Schools, GAO Report Number HEHS-95-61, 1995-6.
- School Enrollment Higher than Ever. A record 52.7 million children are enrolled in elementary and secondary school today, and this number will climb to 54.3 million by 2008. 2,400 new public schools will be needed by 2003 to accommodate rising enrollments. The Baby Boom Echo: No End in Sight, Department of Education, 1999.

School Modernization Tax Credit Bond Proposal

This new type of bond -- a tax credit bond -- would provide interest-free financing to help state and local governments pay for school construction and renovation to help address issues of aging facilities and overcrowding. Instead of paying the interest and

principal on school construction bonds, the issuer would only be responsible for repaying the principal. The federal government would provide tax credits to the bondholders in lieu of interest payments.

The Administration's proposal would support nearly \$25 billion in bonds over the next two years to help states and districts build and modernize up to 6,000 public schools. President Clinton's proposal has an estimated cost of \$3.7 billion over five years, and is fully paid for in his budget.

School Renovation Loan and Grant Program

The School Renovation program would provide interest free federal loans and grants to needy school districts to fund urgent renovations. If continued over five years, the program would leverage \$34.5 billion, enough to pay for approximately 41,500 renovation projects. The loan program would be targeted to those districts unable to finance the interest cost associated with facilities renovation.

The smaller direct grant program would provide direct funding to the needy school districts unable to finance the capital expenditures associated with school renovation. Renovations funded through loans and grants could include repairs to roofs, climate control systems, or plumbing. Loans and grants could also fund school modernization to improve technology capability, if no other source of funds is available.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 5, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
SENATOR TOM DASCHLE AND REPRESENTATIVE DICK GEPHARDT
ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES IN 2000

Outside the Oval Office

3:40 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. I just had a very good meeting with Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt about our legislative priorities for the coming year, and the unparalleled opportunity we now have to take actions that could benefit America for the rest of the new century.

This is truly a remarkable moment. Who would have thought seven years ago, when we had record budget deficits and high unemployment, that we would begin the new century with record surpluses, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, and next month the longest economic expansion in the history of the United States?

Never before have we enjoyed at once so much prosperity, social progress, and national self-confidence with so little internal crisis or external threat. Never have we had such an opportunity and, therefore, such a responsibility to address our long-term challenges, keeping our prosperity going by maintaining fiscal discipline and making America debt-free for the first time since 1835; the challenge of spreading our prosperity to people in places still left behind, helping parents to succeed at home and at work, preparing for the retirement of the baby boom generation, and most of all, meeting the challenge of giving all our children a world-class education.

President Kennedy once said, the time to fix the roof is when the sun is shining. Well, today, the sun is shining on America, and the roofs that need most fixing in America are the roofs of our nation's schools. Anyone who visits schools regularly as I have will not be surprised to learn that a third of all our schools need extensive repairs or replacement. I've been to schools not only with leaky roofs, but with window frames so old that if you try to power-wash the windows the glass would pop out; with electrical service so inadequate that if you plug a new computer into the wall, the circuit-breaker cuts out.

We can't expect our students to meet high academic standards if their schools don't even meet high building standards. We know that antiquated classrooms do get in the way of learning. One study found that students in high-quality school buildings did better on achievement tests than those in low-quality school buildings, even when both sets of students were from similar economic and social backgrounds.

That's why I'm pleased to announce today that in the budget my administration is preparing, I will call for a new initiative to repair, renovate and renew our nation's school buildings. First, my budget will offer a new program, funded at \$1.3 billion in the first year, of grants and interest-free loans to help the nation's neediest school districts make urgent repairs on their schools. If we continue this over five years, we could renovate 41,000 schools.

Second, the budget will include, as it has in the past, a tax credit to help build or modernize 6,000 schools nationwide so we can take our children out of trailers and put them in modern classrooms.

Senator Daschle, Congressman Gephardt and I agree on the need to repair older classrooms and build new ones. We know it should be a top priority this year, and we intend to make it so. We also agree on other priorities as well -- a strong, enforceable patients' bill of rights, sensible gun safety legislation, the hate crimes prevention act, strengthening Social Security, modernizing Medicare with a voluntary prescription drug benefit and strengthening it, and raising the minimum wage.

We've seen bipartisan support for all these programs in Congress. We know that outside Washington, none of these are partisan issues. In the first days of the new millennium, there is a new sense of hope and renewal across our country. We can build on that spirit not just to make this a changing of the calendar, but to make it a changing of the times. Our New Year's resolution is to reach across party lines to help our children reach for the sky.

Now, I'd like to ask Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt to say a few words.

SENATOR DASCHLE: Thank you, Mr. President. This was a very good meeting. We are tremendously excited about the opportunities that exist right now to meet America's long-term challenges and about our plans to seize those opportunities. I'm particularly excited about the President's new proposal to help local communities fund urgent school renovations.

In communities all across America, students are trying to learn, and teachers are trying to teach, in old, rundown buildings. I visited one school in South Dakota where they have to move desks away from the windows every time the wind blows hard, in case the wind shatters the glass. I visited another school where they actually have to evacuate the building whenever the wind reaches 40 miles an hour. They have to send everyone home because the building could collapse.

And we're not alone. These kinds of things are happening all over America. Sixty percent of our nation's schools need at least one major repair -- 60 percent. I read an article recently in which a Republican governor said he visited schools in his state which were in worse conditions than schools he had visited as a Peace Corps volunteer in East Africa 30 years ago.

Experts tell us that a school building begins to deteriorate rapidly after 40 years -- kind of like people, I guess. The average school building in this country is now 42 years old. We need to start repairing America's schools now. The longer we put this problem off, the bigger it is going to get.

We won't tell communities what renovations to make to their schools, or how to make them; that's for them to decide. All we will do is provide them with interest-free loans and grants to do things like repair leaky roofs, reenforce crumbling walls, and make other emergency renovations.

In addition, as the President said, we will also continue to push this year for passage of our school modernization tax credit bond proposal. Fifty years ago, when the baby boomers were just starting school, our parents and grandparents undertook the greatest school construction program in our nation's history.

Surely, today, during the greatest economic expansion in our

history, we can see to it that our children don't have to go to school in buildings that are over-crowded and are crumbling. Together our emergency school renovation program and our school modernization bond proposal will go a long way toward helping communities address the most critical facilities' needs.

We're also committed to working with each other and with our Republican colleagues on a broad array of other educational needs, including making our schools safer, helping communities create more and better school programs that deal with children after the hours that they learn, where children can get responsible adult supervision.

Finally, we need to address America's serious and growing teacher shortage. Over the last two years, under the President's 100,000 teacher initiative, we've helped put 30,000 new teachers in American classrooms. That's a good deal, but, frankly, it's just not enough.

All over the country, communities are struggling to fill teaching jobs. The way some school districts are doing that is by lowering requirements for teachers. This year there is an estimated 25,000 teachers working without proper training, some without even college degrees. Other districts are seeking special visa waivers to recruit teachers from foreign countries. At least one big district in the Southwest has asked parents to volunteer as substitute teachers. Can you imagine that? Parents used to get asked to bake cupcakes and coach softball. Now they're asked to teach.

Over the next 10 years, we're going to need more than 2 million more new teachers just to keep up with increasing student enrollments -- good, effective teacher training as an essential accountability measure. We need to know the people we're hiring to teach our children are qualified to teach.

That is why we have fought for and will continue to fight to help communities recruit and train qualified new teachers and support the good teachers who are already in the classroom.

One of the lessons I think this New Year brought home for many of us is that the future comes faster than we think. When I was in school, I couldn't imagine the year 2000; now, it's here. We know that the future is going to come even faster for today's children. That means we don't have any time to waste. We need to work together this year to make sure they get the education and skills they need in this new century.

Now, it is my pleasure to introduce my partner in Congress, Dick Gephardt.

CONGRESSMAN GEPHARDT: Thanks, Tom, and thank you, Mr. President, for having this meeting with us here today.

With the recent celebration of the New Year, it's worth reflecting on the blessings that we, as Americans, are enjoying. Americans are now experiencing more economic security than we've had in a generation, thanks to a strong economy that the American people have built, supported by the President's policies to balance the budget and pay down the national debt. But Americans still feel vulnerable in many areas of their lives. The President understands that we have to build on our achievements to make America even greater in the next century.

I applaud the President's proposal to repair America's school buildings. His initiative builds on the efforts that we made in the House last year to provide needed assistance to local governments to build new schools local districts need to educate our children for the

challenges of the future.

As we begin to work on new approaches, we're still aware of how much of our agenda from last year is undone. This unfinished agenda was a casualty of last year's raw partisan politics. It is the agenda that advances the interest of every American family, that addresses their needs now and in the future. It includes a patients' bill of rights, strengthening the fiscal security of Social Security and Medicare, providing targeted tax relief for the middle class, an increase in the minimum wage, prescription drug coverage for senior citizens, gun safety legislation to protect our children, and new hate crimes legislation.

Last year, a bipartisan coalition of Democrats and Republicans ran into strong resistance when we tried to address these issues. We hope and pray that this year can be different. Medical decision-making needs to lie in the hands of HMO bureaucrats, but we need to fix the system. We need to once again pass the bipartisan patients' bill of rights and insist that it reaches the President's desk early this year so it can be signed. We will not allow Republican leaders to once again bury this critical reform in the committees.

Seniors on a fixed income today have to choose between medicine and food. Their generation gave us a strong economy and a free world; the least we owe them is to ensure that they can live their lives with a small measure of security by passing a prescription drug plan for all seniors.

And we have recommitted ourselves today in our meeting to shore up the fiscal foundation of Social Security and Medicare, to make sure that the bedrock of retirement security is there for this and future generations.

Despite this robust economy, millions of working families are struggling to make ends meet. We need to give them targeted tax cuts to put more money back into the hands of middle class Americans, and in an economy as strong as this, it's unforgivable that the minimum wage doesn't come close to providing a living wage for hardworking families.

Our children are also vulnerable to the epidemic of gun violence. We've seen too much senseless violence. Congress finally, in a bipartisan way, must stand up to the gun lobby and pass sensible gun safety legislation.

This meeting today reminded me that this year can be a year of action -- not a year of stalemate, not a year of standing still, not a year of waiting for the election to come. We've got to get started early, but we still have time to get the important bills passed before we get bogged down in the appropriations process and the election process.

We are ready to get down to business. This meeting, I think, makes clear that Tom Daschle, as leader in the Senate of the Democrats, myself as leader of the Democrats in the House, and this President -- we are, all three, committed to all of these issues, to getting them done as quickly as possible, and to reaching out a hand of bipartisan cooperation with our Republican friends to get these things done for America and to get them done in the year 2000.

Q Mr. President -- on that point, Mr. President, how convinced are you --

Q Can I ask you about the decision of the INS to return Elian Gonzalez to his father in Cuba?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the INS followed the law and the procedures and made the decision that they made after an exhaustive review of the facts. And I told you when we started this that I would do my best to keep this decision out of politics; we have done that. We have not been involved in it. And they, I'm convinced, followed the laws and the facts, did the best they could with the decision.

Q Mr. President, are you concerned that there may not be as much support within the Democratic Caucus as you'd like for your program? Since every issue that is passed is one less issue that can be used in an election to retake Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the short answer to your question is, no, because I think if you look at the progress we have made in the last three or four years, it has not weakened the Democrats. The people hire us to come to work here every day. We all draw a paycheck paid for by the taxpayers. And we came to Washington because we wanted to do things for America. I think that it does not hurt the cause of the Democratic Party to pass these reforms.

I think there will always be things that we disagree on that we won't be able to resolve; there will always be differences of opinion that will shape the coming election, and that is in the very nature of democracy. So I don't believe that it in any ways weakens the position of my party in the coming elections to do things that are good for America now.

Q With Social Security and Medicare, are you prepared in either your State of the Union or your budget to propose structural reforms, or, as you've indicated in the past, because of the political realities, the political danger of these issues, do you have to wait, get behind closed doors and walk out with Trent Lott and Hastert to announce it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I think there is a process that has been established that will start in the Senate for dealing with Medicare next year. And I am very hopeful that it will produce an agreement there.

On Social Security, as I have repeatedly pointed out, there is one thing we could do that would take Social Security beyond the life of the baby boom generation, which is simply to dedicate the interest savings in the national debt from the Social Security surplus to the Social Security trust fund. If we just did that, a simple bill, we could take Social Security out beyond the life of the baby boom generation.

If we want to go to 75 years instead of 50, then the best way to do that is to continue the work I've tried to do last year -- you know, we had a big Social Security meeting, we had over 40 members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans, over here at Blair House to talk about this, and I am prepared to meet with them and to work with them to try to work through this. And if there is a willingness to do it, I am certainly more than willing to do my part and to meet them halfway on it.

Q How often are you going to visit your new house?

Q Any advice for commuter couples? You are the most famous commuter couple now. (Laughter.) It's a fair question.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we've had enough experience to offer advice. But we're about to go up there and start moving stuff into our house. That's what we're going to do when we leave here.

Thank you very much.

END

4:00 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

For Immediate Release

January 6, 2000

VICE PRESIDENT GORE ANNOUNCES
ADMINISTRATION WILL SEEK \$30 MILLION
FOR HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Washington, DC -- Vice President Gore announced today that the Administration will seek \$30 million in the FY 2001 budget to ensure that our young children are being taught by well-trained professionals.

"Although parents are the first and best teachers, it is essential that we provide high-quality teachers to support children's learning at this critical juncture" Vice President Gore said. "This funding will dramatically increase the number of highly-qualified teachers who are preparing our young children for success in school."

Research shows that quality pre-school can lead to higher IQ's, higher reading and achievement levels, higher graduation rates and greater success in the workplace. Well-prepared teachers are essential to creating the kind of high-quality preschool programs that enhance children's school-readiness and can have a lifelong positive impact on a child's learning.

The Early Childhood Educator Professional Development initiative outlined in the Administration's Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization proposal would create professional development opportunities for early childhood educators who serve high concentrations of children living in poverty. The funding would provide competitive grants to local partnerships of entities that provide professional development for teachers such as universities, and early childhood education programs (such as local school districts or Head Start agencies). The initiative would focus on equipping early childhood educators with the tools they need to help children develop the language and literacy skills that are the foundations for academic success.

Currently, 40 percent of preschool teachers have only a high school diploma and another 10 percent have a two-year degree from a community or junior college. About half of all assistant teachers and aides have no more than a high school diploma. One of the most important factors behind a child's educational success is having a caring, competent, and committed educator. With more preparation, early childhood teachers would be better able to contribute to the language and literacy development of the children in the care.

Foundations of school success are laid in the early years and well-trained educators are crucial to improving the quality of early childhood education programs. This \$30 million dollar investment will establish a program that will reach half of the early childhood educators serving high-poverty areas in the next five years. The program will help early childhood educators to obtain high-quality professional development and improve their knowledge of, and skills at, working with young children and their families, particularly in developing language and literacy skills.

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FY2001 Budget/State of the Union Announcements
As of January 24, 2000

- **Curbing Illegal Internet Drug Sales:** A \$10 million new initiative that invests new funds in the investigation and prosecution of entities selling drugs illegally over the Internet. (announced on December 28, 1999)
- **Investing in Smart Gun Technology:** A \$10 million investment to fund smart gun and other personalized gun technology development at DOJ/National Institute for Justice. (announced on December 19, 1999)
- **Providing Working Americans with Affordable Housing:** A \$690 million investment to fund 120,000 new housing vouchers to help America's hard-pressed working families. These housing vouchers subsidize the rents of low-income Americans, enabling them to move closer to job opportunities. (announced on December 29, 1999)
- **Investing in New and Modernized Schools:** A \$24.8 billion tax credit to modernize up to 6,000 schools; and \$1.3 billion in new funding to support nearly approximately 8,300 renovation projects in high-poverty, high-need school districts with little or no capacity to fund urgent repairs over the next 5 years. (announced on January 5, 2000)
- **Investing in Early Childhood Education:** A \$30 million investment in the Early Childhood Education Professional Development Initiative to ensure that our young children are being taught by well-trained professionals. This initiative would create professional development opportunities for early childhood educators who serve high concentrations of children living in poverty. (announced on January 6, 2000)
- **Conserving our Natural Resources:** A nearly \$1.3 billion investment in conservation programs that help family farmers take steps to protect water quality and the environment and to preserve farmland. This conservation package is part of a larger Administration budget proposal to strengthen the farm safety net. (announced on January 7, 2000)
- **Increasing Family Planning Efforts Nationwide:** A \$35 million investment to fund family planning clinics providing reproductive health services and clinical care to over 5 million low income women. (announced on January 8, 2000)
- **Protecting the Great Lakes:** A new \$50 million initiative to help restore the beauty and livability of our nation's Great Lakes. Under the proposal, Great Lake communities would be eligible for matching grants to help them restore and protect their waterways for drinking, fishing, swimming, boating, and urban redevelopment. (announced on January 10, 2000)
- **Fighting the War On Emerging Infectious Diseases:** A new \$20 million initiative to further the development of a national electronic disease surveillance network to track newly emerging infectious diseases and provide essential information to public health clinics, hospitals, and health care providers. (announced on January 10, 2000)

- **Preventing Infectious Diseases Around the World:** A \$50 million investment to purchase vaccines to fight against diseases that ravage poor nations, including hepatitis B, certain forms of meningitis and yellow fever, helping to save millions of children. (announced on January 10, 2000)
- **Combating the Global Spread of Aids:** A \$100 million investment to assist efforts to combat the international AIDS pandemic in Africa, Asia, and other regions of the world – double last year's increase. (announced on January 10, 2000)
- **Promoting National Service:** An increased investment of over \$850 million to support community service and to empower more Americans to participate in civic life. This funding keeps AmeriCorps on track for the goal of 100,000 members each year by the year 2004 and also includes a new "AmeriCorps Reserves" program, modeled after the military reserves, and designed to engage former Corps members in times of need. (announced on January 11, 2000)
- **Providing our Children with Health Insurance:** Along with an HHS report documenting that 2 million children have now been enrolled in the new State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) (doubling the program's enrollment in less than a year), the White House unveiled a new \$2.7 billion multi-faceted proposal that will be included in the President's FY 2001 budget to accelerate enrollment of uninsured children in Medicaid and SCHIP. (announced on January 11, 2000)
- **Expanding EITC for America's Working Families:** A new \$21 billion plan to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit – a key part of the President's "New Opportunity Agenda." (announced on January 12, 2000)
- **Creating Smaller Schools:** A \$120 million initiative to create smaller, safer and better high schools. The program offers competitive grants to local school districts to create smaller schools or break up larger schools by funding innovative strategies such as autonomous schools-within-schools, career academies, restructured school days, and other innovations that allow schools to ensure that every student receives personal attention and academic support. (announced on January 12, 2000)
- **Developing Bio-based technologies:** A new investment of more than \$240 million to accelerate the development and use of bio-based technologies, which convert crops, trees, and other "biomass" into a vast array of fuels and products. This initiative will increase the viability of alternative energy sources, help meet environmental challenges like global warming, support farm incomes, and diversify and strengthen the rural economy. (announced on January 13, 2000)
- **Investing in New Markets:** The President's New Markets Agenda more than doubles the proposed New Markets Tax Credit to spur \$15 billion in new private investment, expands Empowerment Zone Tax Incentives, and provides access to financial services to low and moderate income Americans through First Accounts. The President also issued an invitation to corporate leaders to participate in a roundtable at the White House to discuss how the business community can build upon the success of the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA). (announced on January 13, 2000)
- **Determining the Environmental Causes of Diseases, Including Breast And Prostate Cancer:** A \$7.5 million investment to evaluate the exposure of men, women, and children to toxic substances that cause cancer. It also provides an additional \$5 million for breast cancer screening programs at CDC. (announced on January 13, 2000)

- **Improving Nursing Home Quality:** A \$16.8 million initiative provides new funds to help states strengthen nursing home enforcement tools and increase Federal oversight of nursing home quality and safety standards. (announced on January 14, 2000)
- **Enforcing Civil Rights:** A \$695 million for civil rights enforcement agencies, which represents a 13 percent increase over last year's funding levels, a significant increase for civil rights enforcement to help ensure equal opportunity for all Americans. (announced on January 15, 2000)
- **Investing in Biomedical Research:** Includes almost \$19 billion for biomedical research at the National Institute of Health (NIH), an increase of \$1 billion over last year's funding level. In addition, the President will eliminate the delays in releasing \$4 billion in research funds as required in last year's appropriations bill. (announced on January 16, 2000)
- **Reducing Gun Violence:** A \$280 million expansion of fire-arms enforcement programs to crack down on gun criminals, which includes the largest increase ever for the ATF. The plan would add 500 new ATF agents and inspectors, and more than 1,000 new local and federal gun prosecutors to combat violent gun criminals and illegal gun traffickers. The budget will also expand the Administration's gun tracing efforts; increase the number of cities participating in the Administration's Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative to 50 cities; and triple funding for ballistics testing to help law enforcement solve more crimes with bullets and shell casings left at crime scenes. (announced on January 18, 2000)
- **Preventing the Spread of AIDS:** A \$50 million new investment to encourage individuals at risk to avoid behaviors that can result in the transmission of HIV. An additional \$125 million investment in the Ryan White Program, an increase of almost 8 percent over last year's funding level, to provide primary medical care, pharmaceuticals critical to treatment, and other critical support services for people living with HIV and AIDS. (announced on January 18, 2000)
- **Expanding Health Insurance to More Americans:** A \$110 billion initiative, over 10 years, which would dramatically improve the affordability of and access to health insurance, by expanding coverage to at least 5 million uninsured Americans and expanding access to millions more. The initiative will: (1) provide a new, affordable health insurance option for families; (2) accelerate enrollment of uninsured children eligible for Medicaid and S-CHIP; (3) expand health insurance options for Americans facing unique barriers to coverage; and (4) strengthen programs that provide health care directly to the uninsured. (announced on January 19, 2000)
- **Protecting and Restoring our Wetlands:** A \$30 million investment, double last year's funding, to protect and restore wetlands through voluntary partnerships with state and local governments, farmers and other private landowners, Indian tribes and non-profit conservation groups. (announced on January 19, 2000)
- **Helping American's with Long Term Health Care:** A \$3,000 tax credit for people with long-term care needs or their caregivers -- tripling the credit over last year's proposal and increasing the total investment in long-term care to \$28 billion over 10 years. This credit is the centerpiece of the President's historic long-term care initiative that has won praise from senior groups and health policy experts. (announced on January 19, 2000)
- **Promoting Safe Schools and Healthy Students:** A \$247 million investment to help communities throughout the country promote a coordinated, comprehensive response to school safety. This

investment includes a \$100 million increase over last year's funding. (announced on January 12, 2000)

- **Making College More Affordable:** A \$30 Billion College Opportunity Tax Cut to provide tax relief for millions of families struggling to make college more affordable; nearly \$1 Billion for College Completion Challenge Grants, Pell Grants, and other initiatives to help students afford and be able to stay in school; over \$400 Million in increases in initiatives to keep young people on the track to success. (announced on January 20, 2000)
- **Investing in Science and Technology for a Stronger America:** A \$2.8 billion increase in the "Twenty-First Century Research Fund," including a \$1 billion increase in biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health and double the largest dollar increase for the National Science Foundation in its 50 year history to ensure that science and technology will continue to fuel economic growth and allow Americans to lead longer, healthier lives. (announced on January 21, 2000)
- **Combating Medicare Fraud:** A new \$48 million investment to ensure a swift and coordinated response to suspected fraud, waste or abuse by Medicare contractors, following on the success of the Administration's current anti-fraud efforts. (announced on January 22, 2000)
- **Providing Equal Pay for Women:** A \$27 million Equal Pay Initiative to combat unfair pay practices against women. The Initiative includes \$10 million to 1) bolster the ability of the EEOC to identify and respond to wage discrimination; 2) teach businesses how to meet legal requirements; and 3) launch an equal pay public service announcement campaign. The Initiative also dedicates \$10 million for the Labor Department to train women in nontraditional jobs and \$7 million to help employers improve their pay policies, provide non-traditional apprenticeships, and implement industry partnerships. (announced on January 24, 2000)
- **Promoting Responsible Fatherhood:** An initiative to promote work, child support, and responsible fatherhood, including measures to 1) collect child support from parents who can afford to pay; 2) ensure that more child support goes directly to families, and 3) provide funds to help more "deadbroke" fathers who owe child support go to work. These proposals, which build upon the President's efforts to help low-income families succeed in the workforce, will collect nearly \$2 billion more over five years in support for children who need and deserve the support of both parents. (announced on January 26, 2000)

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE: 1993-2000

*Progress and Prosperity at Home, Peace Abroad
January 20, 2000*

- ◆ **Leading the Longest Economic Expansion in U.S. History**
Sustained the longest peacetime economic expansion in history creating over 20 million jobs and producing the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, and the highest homeownership rate on record.
- ◆ **Restoring Fiscal Discipline, Replacing Decades of Budget Deficits with Surpluses**
Eliminated the \$290 billion budget deficit, produced back to back surpluses and paid off over \$140 billion of the national debt. This resulted in lower interest rates on mortgages and car loans – an effective tax cut of \$2,000 for a family with a \$100,000 mortgage.
- ◆ **Leading Global Efforts to Promote Peace, Democracy and Human Rights**
Reversed ethnic cleansing in Kosovo by leading NATO alliance to victory and returning nearly 1 million refugees to their homes. The President also worked to broker peace in the Middle East, bring peace to Bosnia, restore democracy to Haiti, and end hostilities in Northern Ireland.
- ◆ **Moving Millions of Americans from Welfare to Work**
President Clinton kept his promise to reform the welfare system by supporting work and responsibility, moving millions to work--1.3 million in 1998 alone, reducing the welfare rolls by more than half to the lowest level in 30 years, and nearly doubling child support collections.
- ◆ **Reducing Crime Rates to the Lowest Level in a Generation**
Passed the Brady Law to stop nearly half a million felons, fugitives, and domestic abusers from getting guns. Enacted a tough crime bill that funded 100,000 community police officers and banned assault weapons--helping to reduce the overall crime rate for the seventh year in a row, the longest consecutive decline ever recorded.
- ◆ **Enacting the Largest Expansion of College Opportunity Since the GI Bill**
Created new options to pay for college, such as HOPE Scholarships and AmeriCorps, opening the doors of college to all Americans.
- ◆ **Setting High Standards and Providing Historic New Investment In Our Schools**
The President enacted an initiative to hire 100,000 quality teachers to reduce class size; slots for 200,000 new Head Start students; after school and summer school programs; GEAR-UP college preparation opportunities; Internet connections for America's classrooms; and strong leadership that resulted in higher standards for practically every American student and school.
- ◆ **Improving Our Nation's Health**
Strengthened Medicare by adding preventive benefits, cracking down on fraud and waste and extending the life of the Trust Fund from 1999 to 2015. Enacted reforms to prevent people from losing their health insurance when changing jobs or being denied coverage due to pre-existing conditions, and to allow people with disabilities to work without losing their health coverage. Raised childhood immunization rates to all time high and provided health coverage to millions of uninsured children.
- ◆ **Proving You Can Grow the Economy and Protect Our Environment**
Cleaned over 500 toxic waste dumps, improved air quality by setting the toughest smog and soot standards ever and protected over 60 million acres of public lands -- more than any administration since FDR.
- ◆ **Helping Americans Balance Work and Family**
Won important victories for children and families like passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act, targeted middle class tax cuts, an increase in the minimum wage and expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- ◆ **Expanding Trade to Create Jobs and Strengthen Our Economy**

Concluded more than 270 market opening agreements. Opening foreign markets has contributed to the 62 percent increase in American exports since 1992.

◆ **Doing All of This With a Smaller Government that Works Better for Less**

Under the leadership of Vice President Gore's National Performance Review, this Administration has reduced the federal workforce to the lowest level since the Kennedy Administration and eliminated over 16,000 pages of federal regulations.