

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Revised Final 04/11/00 9am
Josh Gottheimer

Chris -
and Bill -
Stevens

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS FOR MARYLAND BILL SIGNING
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND
April 11, 2000

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Ack: Gov. Glendening; Lt. Gov. Kennedy-Townsend [her deep personal commitment to common sense gun reform have made a difference in Maryland]; Secretary of State John Willis; House Speaker Casper Taylor; Senate President Mike Miller; members of Congress; members of the state legislature; students from Young Kids Against Violence and Students Together Against Guns.

It is fitting that we are gathered here today, in our nation's oldest functioning state house, where progress has been the standard since our forebears walked these halls more than 200 years ago.

This State House was the site of the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, which officially put an end to the Revolutionary War, and marked the birth of our new nation. We are here today to announce a victory in our effort to end another war -- our ongoing struggle to reduce the staggering toll of gun violence in America. The Maryland legislature made history again last week when you became the first state in the nation to require built-in safety locks for all new handguns – and enacted other common sense gun safety measures.

The people of Maryland demanded this landmark gun safety legislation. And their government answered the call. That is why I am here today.

And why I applaud the work of Governor Glendening, the members of the state legislature, and all of you. You have set an example for our nation by your efforts to keep guns off our streets and our children safe from violence.

Maryland is not a newcomer to this movement. This State has already banned assault weapons and handguns known as Saturday Night Specials. You have already limited handgun sales to one per month. With this new law, you join a growing number of states across the country that are taking decisive action to make guns safer and to save lives.

Last year, California passed important legislation limiting handgun sales to one per month, and banning junk guns and new generations of assault weapons. Just last week, Massachusetts began enforcing tough consumer product safety rules for guns, banning junk guns and requiring trigger locks and other devices to prevent children from firing guns. And tomorrow, I am traveling to Colorado to support a citizen ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole and require background checks on all gun sales.

I am encouraged by the steps these states are taking. They underscore the fact that outside the beltway, common sense gun reform is not a partisan issue.

But every child in America deserves that same level of protection. And only Congress can pass legislation that protects every child in every corner of our country.

That's why I've asked Congress to enact common sense gun safety legislation before the one-year anniversary of the Columbine tragedy on April 20th. Legislation that requires child safety locks, bans the importation of large ammunition clips, and closes the loophole that allows criminals to buy firearms at gun shows. But for nine months now, Congress has been stalling. Today, Congress, once again, will vote on a measure simply calling for the House and Senate to meet and work out their differences on this legislation.

Every day Congress waits to send me that bill, we lose 12 children – and nearly 90 people overall -- to gun violence in America. That is why we can not – and we must not -- wait for every state to pass responsible gun legislation. Congress must follow the lead of states like Maryland ... listen to the people ... stand up to the gun lobby ... and pass national gun safety legislation without further delay.

Of course, no law can prevent every death. But sensible gun laws do make a difference. The Brady Law is a perfect example of that. When we passed the Brady Bill, people argued that it wouldn't work because criminals don't buy guns at gun stores.

It turned out that many of them did. All told, since the Brady Bill took effect, we have stopped more than a half a million guns from falling into the hands of fugitives, felons, or stalkers – and gun crime is down more than 35 percent.

At the same time, we have stepped up our enforcement of gun crimes. Since 1992, we have increased federal gun prosecutions by 16 percent. And my new budget calls for the largest firearms enforcement initiative in history, including 500 new ATF agents and inspectors and more than 1,000 new federal, state, and local gun prosecutors.

And last month, we announced a landmark agreement with Smith and Wesson to reform the way guns are manufactured, marketed and sold. That agreement helped make this day possible by demonstrating that responsible gun manufacturers could join with us to make progress.

The Smith and Wesson agreement did not come easily. Nor did the Brady Law. Nor did the bill we're here to sign today. But as Frederick Douglass, one of the great citizens of Maryland, once said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress." We succeeded in each case because courageous citizens and responsible leaders like you dared to put the interests of the American people above the special interests.

The nation's capitol may no longer be located here in Annapolis, but you have shown national leadership today.

It is time to press ahead until common sense gun legislation is the law of the land. Thank you for inviting me to this signing. But for the sake of America's children, we must not stop at the State House. We have to take this progress all the way to the people's house, the White House. It's time to give all Americans the same protections that the citizens of Maryland received today.

Congratulations again, thank you, and God bless you.

PRESIDENT CLINTON TO PARTICIPATE IN LAUNCHING MARYLAND'S LANDMARK NEW GUN SAFETY LAW

April 11, 2000

Today President Clinton will visit Annapolis, Maryland, where Governor Parris Glendening will sign common-sense gun safety legislation that will require built-in child safety locks on handguns, ballistics testing for newly manufactured handguns to help solve more gun crimes, and safety training for gun purchasers. The visit will call attention to the growing number of states that are enacting new laws to prevent gun violence. The President will also underscore the importance of strong national gun laws, and urge Congress to follow the lead of states such as Maryland by putting the interests of American families above those of the gun lobby and passing the common sense gun safety legislation that has been stalled for over nine months.

HIGHLIGHTING STATE PROGRESS TOWARD COMMON SENSE GUN LAWS.

Maryland joins a growing number of States that are making guns safer and keeping guns out of the wrong hands. In Massachusetts, regulations requiring that all handguns sold in the state meet quality and safety standards including child-proofing features, tamper-proof serial numbers and consumer safety warnings have taken effect. In Colorado, citizens are working to push a ballot initiative to close the gun show loophole that has the support of 83 percent of the voters. Meanwhile, 68 cities and local governments across the country are taking efforts to support manufacturers that adopt safe gun and dealers responsibility standards.

UNDERSCORING THE NEED FOR STRONG NATIONAL GUN SAFETY LAWS.

While states are making important progress to reduce gun violence, national gun safety legislation is still needed. A patchwork of inconsistent state gun laws allows criminals to obtain guns by exploiting loopholes in states with weaker laws to commit crimes in states with stronger laws. And, Congress can pass lifesaving new gun laws far more quickly than all 50 states. That is why the President today will again call on Congress to pass common sense gun legislation requiring background checks at gun shows, mandating child safety locks for handguns, banning the importation of large capacity ammunition clips, and barring violent juveniles from owning guns for life. Last year, the Senate passed strong gun safety measures, with Vice President Gore's critical tie-breaking vote, on an amendment to close the gun show loophole. However, the Republican leadership has allowed this life-saving legislation to languish for over 9 months – despite bipartisan House and Senate votes in the last few weeks in favor of taking prompt action to move forward on gun legislation and the underlying juvenile justice bill. The President will call on Congress to follow the lead of States like Maryland and pass common-sense legislation by April 20, the one-year anniversary of the Columbine tragedy.

PAVING THE WAY FOR LIFESAVING GUN LEGISLATION. Below is a sample of common-sense gun measures proposed or already in force in states and communities across the country:

Child Safety Lock Laws. Last year, the Senate passed legislation to require child safety locks to be sold with every new handgun. Six states have laws requiring child safety locks or trigger locks: Connecticut, Massachusetts, California, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Maryland is the first state to pass a law requiring "integrated" locks onto handguns.

Ballot Initiatives. In addition to legislation, some states will consider gun proposals through statewide referenda this year. Utah will consider a ballot initiative to ban concealed weapons from churches and schools. Colorado and Oregon will consider ballot to close the gun show loophole and require background checks on all sales at gun shows.

Local Gun Buybacks. Communities across the country have engaged in local gun buybacks to take guns out of circulation and prevent gun violence, including New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. Thanks to a \$15 million gun buyback program launched by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) last year, nearly 80 public housing authorities across the country have committed to conducting buybacks with local law enforcement.

Local Procurement Power to Promote Responsible Industry Practices. A total of 68 cities, counties, and State Attorneys General have agreed, in their law enforcement gun purchases, to support gun manufacturers that adopt safe gun and dealer responsibility standards. Communities that have made this pledge include San Francisco; Los Angeles; Bridgeport, CT; District of Columbia; Atlanta; Gary, IN; New Orleans; Boston; Detroit and Flint, MI; St. Louis; Albany and Buffalo, NY; Philadelphia; and Richmond, VA.

California

In 1999 California enacted a comprehensive set of new gun safety laws. These include new safety standards banning the sale of "junk guns," and a new law requiring that all guns be sold with child safety locks. Last year the state also enacted new laws limiting handgun purchases to 1 per person per month and passed the most expansive assault weapon laws in the country. California also requires a waiting period of 10 days for any firearm, registers assault weapons and maintains records of handgun transfers. California child access prevention laws make it a crime to leave a loaded weapon within reach or easy access of a child under 16. This year, the State Assembly also approved legislation requiring gun buyers to demonstrate they can safely operate the weapons.

Since 1992, violent crime in California has dropped by 25 percent and firearm-related deaths are down by 26 percent.

Connecticut

Connecticut requires gun purchasers to complete a safety-training course and receive a permit to purchase a handgun. Dealers must offer trigger locks for sale at the time of purchase. The state registers firearms, including information about both the buyer and seller. The minimum age for possession of a handgun is 21. Connecticut has child access prevention laws making it a felony to leave a loaded firearm within easy access of a child under 16. Connecticut recently barred issuing handgun permits to persons convicted of serious juvenile offenses.

Since 1992, violent crime rates have fallen by 21 percent in Connecticut and the number of firearm-related deaths is down by nearly 31 percent.

Florida

Florida places a 3-day waiting period for the purchase of handguns. In 1998, Florida voters passed a constitutional revision allowing counties to require background checks and waiting periods for gun show sales. In 1989, Florida was the first state in the country to pass a child access prevention law making it a crime to leave a loaded firearm within the reach or easy access of a child under 16 years old.

Since 1992, the violent crime rate in Florida has dropped by 8 percent and the number of firearm-related deaths is down by over 10 percent.

Hawaii

Hawaii requires gun purchasers to complete a safety-training course and receive a permit to purchase any firearm. Handguns are required to meet certain safety and performance standards in order to be sold. Hawaii law sets the minimum age for possession of a handgun at 21. Hawaii also has the broadest child access prevention laws in the nation that make it illegal to leave a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, within the reach or easy access of a child under 16 years old. All firearms in Hawaii must be registered. This year, the Hawaii Senate also passed a bill that would include a gun owner's ID card system and require the re-registration of all firearms. The House would require all registered firearm owners to provide their local chief of police with a list of all firearms currently in their possession.

The firearms-related death rate in Hawaii is more than seven points below the national rate. The number of firearms-related deaths has dropped by 37 percent since 1994.

Maryland

Maryland has a seven-day waiting period for handgun purchases and limits handgun purchases to one per month. The state police maintain permanent transaction records of all sales. The minimum age for possession of a handgun is 21 and it is a misdemeanor to leave a loaded gun within reach or easy access of a child under 16 years old. Handguns sold in Maryland are required to meet safety and performance standards that ban the sales of "junk guns." This year, the Maryland Legislature has passed and Governor Glendening will sign a bill that requires built-in child safety locks on handguns, ballistics testing for newly manufactured handguns to help solve more gun crimes, and safety training for gun purchasers.

Since 1992, the violent crime rate in Maryland has dropped by 12 percent and the number of firearm-related deaths is down by 6 percent.

Massachusetts

New Massachusetts regulations require all handguns sold in the state to meet quality and safety standards including child-proof features, tamper-proof serial numbers and consumer safety warnings. In addition, in 1998 the state passed quality standards that ban the sale of "junk guns" and access prevention laws that make it illegal to leave a firearm unless it is equipped with a

tamper-resistant safety device or is stored in a securely locked container. Massachusetts also increased the minimum age for purchase of a handgun to 21. In order to purchase any firearm, a buyer must first get a Firearm Identification Card (FID) and all rifles, shotguns and firearms purchased in the state must be registered. New residents must also register firearms.

Since 1992, the violent crime rate in Massachusetts has declined by 16 percent and the number of firearm-related deaths is down by 24 percent.

New Jersey

New Jersey requires gun buyers to obtain a permit and requires that child safety locks be sold with all guns. Handguns must also be registered at the point of purchase. New Jersey law prevents storing a loaded firearm within reach or easy access of a child under 16 years old.

Since 1992, the violent crime rate in New Jersey is down 19 percent and the number of firearm-related deaths is down by 3 percent.

[Sources: FBI 1992 and 1997 Uniform Crime Index; Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 7/99; Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, 3/2000]

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 10, 2000

MARYLAND RESPONSIBLE GUN SAFETY ACT OF 2000
BILL SIGNING CEREMONY

DATE: April 11, 2000
LOCATION: State Assembly Lobby
Maryland State Capitol
Annapolis, MD
EVENT TIME: 11:30am – 12:30pm
FROM: Bruce Reed, Mickey Ibarra

I. PURPOSE

You are participating in the signing ceremony for Maryland's landmark gun safety legislation, to highlight both this promising state initiative and the lack of progress in Congress on common sense gun legislation.

II. BACKGROUND

On April 3, the Maryland State Legislature passed Governor Glendening's Responsible Gun Safety Act, which includes a series of new safety requirements for guns sold in Maryland. You are participating today in the signing ceremony for the new state law.

In its original form, the Governor's bill would have required a number of gun safety measures, including mechanical safety devices and "smart gun" technology. In order to get the bill through the more conservative State Senate, the sponsors removed the smart gun requirements.

The Act as passed requires external safety locks (this year) and integrated mechanical safety devices (by 2003). The Act also mandates "ballistic fingerprinting" of all new handguns and requires new firearms purchasers to take a gun safety course. The Act imposes a five-year minimum sentence for illegal possession of a firearm by a felon and prohibits juveniles convicted of a violent act or certain other crimes from possessing a handgun until age 30.

On March 15, you sent a letter to the Governor applauding his hard work and leadership (and the efforts of many in the state legislature) on this issue. Your letter was widely distributed, and the Governor believes it was helpful in moving to final passage.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Bruce Reed/Eric Liu

Mickey Ibarra

Joe Lockhart

Loretta Ucelli

Terry Edmonds

Matt Bennett

Josh Gottheimer

Greeters:

Governor Parris Glendening and Mrs. Francis Glendening

Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend

Secretary of State John Willis

Speaker Casper Taylor and Mrs. Polly Taylor

Senate President Mike Miller

Program Participants:

YOU

Governor Parris Glendening

Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend

Speaker Casper Taylor

Senate President Mike Miller

***NOTE:** Approximately 70 students, some of whom are members of anti-gun violence organizations, will be seated on the stairs behind the stage.*

Other State and Local Officials Seated in Front Rows:

Sen. Barbara Mikulski

Rep. Ben Cardin

Rep. Elijah Cummings

Rep. Steny Hoyer

Rep. Connie Morella

Rep. Albert Wynn

Maryland Attorney General Joseph Curran

Maryland Secretary of State John Willis

20 Maryland State Legislators

Mayor Martin O'Malley, Baltimore, MD

Colonel David Mitchell, Superintendent, Maryland State Police

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- **YOU** will arrive and be greeted by Maryland State elected officials.
- President Mike Miller and Speaker Casper Taylor will be announced onto the stage.
- **YOU** will be announced onto the stage, accompanied by Governor Parris Glendening and Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend.
- President Mike Miller will make remarks and introduce Speaker Casper Taylor.
- Speaker Casper Taylor will make remarks and introduce Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend.
- Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend will make remarks and introduce Governor Parris Glendening.
- Governor Parris Glendening will make remarks and introduce **YOU**.
- **YOU** will make remarks and proceed to the signing table.
- **YOU** will observe the bill signing, work a ropeline, and depart.
- Upon departure you will take photos with police, drivers, and nine (9) Maryland State Legislature staff.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by Speechwriting.