NOTE: H.R. 2807, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105–312. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998

October 30, 1998

Today I signed into law H.R. 4151, the ''Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998.'' This legislation will make identity theft a Federal crime, with penalties generally of up to 3 years imprisonment and a maximum fine of $250,000.

Specifically, the legislation would penalize the theft of personal information with the intent to commit an unlawful act, such as obtaining fraudulent loans or credit cards, drug trafficking, or other illegal purposes. It would also direct the Federal Trade Commission to help victims deal with the consequences of this crime.

Tens of thousands of Americans have been victims of identity theft. Impostors often run up huge debts, file for bankruptcy, and commit serious crimes. It can take years for victims of identity theft to restore their credit ratings and their reputations. This legislation will enable the United States Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other law enforcement agencies to combat this type of crime, which can financially devastate its victims.

I want to thank the Vice President for his leadership on this and other privacy issues. As we enter the Information Age, it is critical that our newest technologies support our oldest values.

William J. Clinton

The White House,

October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4151, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105–318. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998

October 30, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4309, the ''Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998.'' This Act authorizes continued and expanded U.S. contributions to treatment centers, both in the United States and around the world, for persons who suffer from the mental and physical anguish of having been tortured.

The United States has contributed to these centers for many years—directly to domestic centers through the Department of Health and Human Services and to overseas centers through the Agency for International Development, and indirectly, through Department of State contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture. Contributions of this nature are a concrete and practical step that the U.S. Government takes to mitigate the effects of this serious, and far too pervasive, human rights violation.

I want to stress, however, that assisting torture victims does not end the curse of torture. The United States will continue its efforts to shine a spotlight on this horrible practice wherever it occurs, and we will do all we can to bring it to an end.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the successful passage of this legislation. I also salute those nongovernmental organizations active in the cause of human rights, who encouraged congressional passage of this Act and who work tirelessly to keep alive the spirit of human rights, in our hearts and in our domestic and foreign policy.

William J. Clinton

The White House,

October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4309, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105–320. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on the Council on Environmental Quality Chair Transition

October 30, 1998

Today, with regret, I accept the resignation of Kathleen McGinty as Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality.

As my principal environmental policy adviser for nearly 6 years, Katie has led this administration's efforts to protect and restore our environment. From the forests of the Pacific Northwest to Florida's Everglades and the red-rock canyons of Utah, she has helped preserve America's natural legacy for all time. And from our air to our water to our climate, she has worked tirelessly to ensure our children and grandchildren an environment both healthy and safe.

In all these endeavors, Katie has been guided by the firm belief that the environment truly is a common ground. She has strived to promote collaboration over conflict and to demonstrate that a healthy economy and a healthy environment not only are compatible but are inextricably linked. Indeed, today we enjoy the strongest economy and cleanest environment in a generation. I am deeply grateful for Katie's vision, dedication, and hard work.

I am pleased to announce that beginning November 7, upon Katie's departure, George T. Frampton, Jr., will become acting Chair of CEQ. I will formally announce my intent to nominate Mr. Frampton as Chair, and will submit nomination papers to the Senate, at the appropriate time.

Mr. Frampton comes to his position at CEQ with a wealth of experience in environmental matters. He served as Assistant Secretary of Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks from 1993 to 1997, and prior to that was president of the Wilderness Society. In addition, he has served as a law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun, Deputy Director of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's inquiry into the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, and a visiting lecturer in constitutional law at Duke University Law School.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

October 31, 1998

Good morning. I'm speaking to you today from the Glen Forest Elementary School in Falls Church, Virginia, where I'm joined by students, parents, and teachers to talk about a problem they understand all too well: the urgent need in America for school construction. In fact, I'm speaking to you from one of nine trailer classrooms that sit outside the schoolhouse on what used to be a playground, because there's simply not enough room inside for all the students. And the 10th trailer goes up in a matter of days.

Falls Church is not the only place with this problem. Rundown schools and rising enrollments have made these trailers an increasingly common sight all over our country. Too many children are going to school every day in trailers like this one. In other schools, class is held in gymnasiums and cafeterias. I've even heard some stories of classes being held in closets. Crumbling walls and ceilings have forced still other schools to bus their students to neighboring facilities.

With a record number of school buildings in disrepair, especially in our larger cities, and school enrollments all over America at record highs and rising by the millions, the need to renew our Nation's public schools has never been more pressing. I've said many times that in this increasingly global world where what you earn depends upon what you learn, improving education must be our Nation's top priority for all our children.

For nearly 6 years now, I've done everything I could to meet that challenge. I'm especially proud of the victories for America's children our administration fought for and won in the balanced budget Congress passed just last week. We fought for and won new investments, from child literacy to college mentoring, from after-school programs to summer school programs, to opening the doors of college even wider by helping more people with financial aid. All these things will help all our children reach their highest potential no matter where they start out in life and where they go to school.

Perhaps even more important, we fought for and won an unprecedented commitment to put 100,000 new well-trained teachers in