

I commend the United States-Canada Second Supplementary Social Security Agreement and related documents.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 3, 1997.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 7, 1997, the Secretary of the Senate, on February 28, 1997, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 668. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reinstate the Airport and Airway Trust Fund excise taxes, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was signed subsequently on February 28, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-1249. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Ohio Regulatory Program" received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1250. A communication from the Executive Director of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistant Authority, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Metropolitan Police Department; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-1251. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report entitled "Review and Analysis of the Fiscal Year 1997 Budget for the Office of Banking and Financial Institutions", to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-1252. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Automatic Data Processing Equipment Leasing Costs" received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1253. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report concerning the Foreign Comparative Testing Program for fiscal year 1996; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1254. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, six rules including a rule entitled "National Primary Drinking Water Regulations" (FRL-5689-9, 5591-5, 5699-5, 5698-4, 5692-3, 5696-2); to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1255. A communication from the Chief of the Regulations Unit, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Notice 97-21 received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1256. A communication from the Chief of the Regulations Unit of the Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report relative to Revenue Ruling 97-10 received on February 26, 1997; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1257. A communication from the Chief Counsel of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Narcotics Trafficking Sanctions Regulations" received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1258. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Membership of State Banking Institutions in the Federal Reserve System" received on February 28, 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1259. A communication from the Managing Director of the Federal Housing Finance Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of salary rates for 1997; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1260. A communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to directed fishing for pollock, received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1261. A communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to Atlantic Mackerel, (RIN0648-AJ06) received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1262. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to directed fishing for pollock, received on February 26, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1263. A communication from the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to directed fishing for flatfish, received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1264. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to king mackerel, received on March 3, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1265. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to scallop fishery, received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1266. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the report of a rule relative to the Western Pacific bottomfish fishery, received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1267. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to other flatfish, received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1268. A communication from the Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan, received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1269. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan, (RIN0648-AJ34) received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1270. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to Fishery Management Plans, (RIN0648-XX80) received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1271. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska, (RIN0648-AJ05) received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1272. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report sixteen rules including one rule relative to Class E Airspace, (RIN2120-AF93, AA64, AA66, ZZ04) received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1273. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule relative to seafarers, (RIN2115-AF26) received on March 3, 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1274. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report relative to the Regular Trade Adjustment Assistant Program; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1275. A communication from the Executive Director of the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of additions to the Procurement List received on March 3, 1997; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

EC-1276. A communication from the Administrator of the Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Poultry Inspection" (RIN0583-AB91) received on March 3, 1997; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1277. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulations Management,

Department of Veterans' Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Rule-making Procedures" (RIN2900-AI33) received on March 3, 1997; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-1278. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Direct Grant Programs" (RIN1880-AA74) received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

EC-1279. A communication from the Director of Regulations Policy, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, two rules including a rule entitled "Lowfat and Skim Milk Products" received on February 27, 1997; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. KERREY, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. INOUE):

S. 385. A bill to provide reimbursement under the medicare program for telehealth services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 386. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect and improve the medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. GORTON, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 387. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide equity to exporters of software; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 388. A bill to amend the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to assist States in implementing a program to prevent prisoners from receiving food stamps; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. ABRAHAM (for himself, Mr. BOND, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. HELMS, and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 389. A bill to improve congressional deliberation on proposed Federal private sector mandates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Governmental Affairs, jointly, pursuant to the order of August 4, 1977, as modified by the order of April 11, 1986, with instructions that if one Committee reports, the other Committee have thirty days to report or be discharged.

By Mr. COVERDELL (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. HELMS):

S.J. Res. 19. Joint resolution to disapprove the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997; read the first time.

S.J. Res. 20. Joint resolution to disapprove the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

S.J. Res. 21. Joint resolution to disapprove the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1997, and to provide for the termination of the withholding of and opposition

to assistance that results from the disapproval; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. KERREY, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. COCHRAN and Mr. INOUE):

S. 385. A bill to provide reimbursement under the Medicare Program for telehealth services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

THE COMPREHENSIVE TELEHEALTH ACT OF 1997

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, today, I am pleased to be joined by Senator KERREY, Senator HARKIN, Senator WELLSTONE, Senator BAUCUS, Senator COCHRAN, and Senator INOUE to introduce legislation to help improve health care delivery in rural and underserved communities throughout America through the use of telecommunications and telehealth technology.

Telehealth encompasses a wide variety of technologies, ranging from the telephone to high-technology equipment that enables a surgeon to perform surgery from thousands of miles away. It includes interactive video equipment, fax machines and computers along with satellites and fiber optics. These technologies can be used to diagnose patients, deliver care, transfer health data, read x-rays, provide consultation, and educate health professionals. Telehealth also includes the electronic storage and transmission of personally identifiable health information, such as medical records, test results, and insurance claims.

The promise of telehealth is becoming increasingly apparent. Throughout the country, providers are experimenting with a variety of telehealth approaches in an effort to improve access to quality medical and other health-related services. Those programs are demonstrating that telecommunications technology can alleviate the constraints of time and distance, as well as the cost and inconvenience of transporting patients to medical providers. Many approaches show promising results in reducing health care costs and bringing adequate care to all Americans. For the first time, technological advances and the development of a national information infrastructure give telehealth the potential to overcome barriers to health care services for rural Americans and afford them the access that most Americans take for granted. But it is clear that our Nation must do more to integrate telehealth into our overall health care delivery infrastructure.

Because I believe telehealth holds incredible promise for rural America, I formed the Ad Hoc Steering Committee on Telemedicine and Health Care Informatics to explore telehealth and related issues in 1994. The purpose of the steering committee, which includes telehealth experts from government, private industry, and the health care

professions, is to evaluate Federal policies on telehealth and how to use telecommunications technology more effectively to increase access to health care throughout America.

Throughout the last few years, as the steering committee held meetings and policy forums, it became increasingly apparent that there is enormous energy and financial effort being devoted to telehealth today, both by government and private industry.

Because so many rural and underserved communities lack the ability to attract and support a wide variety of health care professionals and services, it is important to find a way to bring the most important medical services into those communities. Telehealth provides an important part of the answer. It helps bring services to remote areas in a quick, cost-effective manner, and can enable patients to avoid traveling long distances in order to receive health care treatment.

Telehealth is already making a difference in my State. The University of North Dakota has a fiber optic two-way audio and video interactive network that has been used to train students in areas like social work and medical technology. Recently, I had the opportunity to spend some time with two of the premier telehealth systems in the State of North Dakota. I was amazed at the capabilities of these systems. They currently supply specialty care to rural North Dakota clinics, manage chronic disease, lower administrative costs, and reduce the isolation felt by rural and frontier practitioners.

Because telehealth is in many respects an emerging health care application, it is particularly important to constructively capitalize on efforts like these. My proposal attempts to facilitate this in a number of ways.

The first element of my proposal builds on current demonstration projects to require the Health Care Financing Administration to put in place a reimbursement system for telehealth activities under Medicare. Medicare reimbursement policy is an essential component of helping to integrate telehealth into the health care infrastructure, and must be explored. It is particularly important in rural areas, where many hospitals do as much as 80 percent of their business with Medicare patients. While rural areas are the most in need of telehealth services, I also realize there are other groups that would greatly benefit from an expansion of this service. That is why I am also asking the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit a report that will examine the impact of expanding telehealth reimbursement for nonrural Medicare beneficiaries who are home-bound or nursing home-bound and for whom being transferred for health care services imposes a serious hardship.

The second element of this proposal asks the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit a report to