Message on the Observance of National Arts and Humanities Month
October 14, 1994

The arts have long been an integral part of America's cultural heritage, encouraging us to gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and of our society. In a world too often beset by hatred and incivility, the arts and humanities empower us to celebrate our individual identities, while reminding us of the values and commitments that unite us as a country.

Although the rich diversity of our nation would seem to preclude an official American culture, we have a powerful tradition of artistic expression and intellectual inquiry that honors every one of us equally. Through art, music, literature, history, and philosophy, we preserve and pass along, from generation to generation, our most cherished images, ideas, and beliefs.

For more than two centuries, the arts and humanities have helped Americans transcend political, religious, racial, and ethnic divisions by engaging us in the common task of interpreting and expressing the meaning of human experience. When we read each other's stores, discuss each other's ideas, and feel each other's emotions through dance, painting, and song, we come to understand the complexity and texture of each other's lives. In so doing, we gain a greater appreciation and understanding of the breadth of human thought and emotion. And we gain a more profound sense of our common purpose as Americans.

But if the arts and humanities are essential to appreciating and preserving our culture, they are also essential to our growth and renewal as a people. For it is only by deepening our understanding, unleashing our imaginations, and enlarging our capacities to see and to feel that we can envision a better future for ourselves, our communities, and our nation.

In the new and complicated century that awaits us, we will depend even more on our artists and humanists to help us discover the roots of our deepest beliefs and gain a vision of our most promising possibilities.

The month of October has been designated National Arts and Humanities Month, and I urge all Americans to celebrate the artistic and intellectual freedoms we enjoy and to reflect on the crucial role they play in reinvigorating and renewing our great nation every day.

BILL CLINTON

NOTE: This message was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14 but was not issued as a White House press release.

Statement on Federal Funding for the Homeless
October 14, 1994

I am pleased to announce the release of these much-needed funds to help feed, shelter, and give a hand up to America's homeless. By involving local community organizations as we decide where to best allocate these resources, we will ensure that the most urgent needs in our communities are met.

NOTE: This statement was included in a White House statement announcing the release of $130 million in funding to feed and shelter the homeless.

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