

I signed and the pen with which I signed it. And perhaps he'd like to say a word to you tonight.

Billy.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:08 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Renaissance Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to radio commentator Paul Harvey. H.R. 2657, to award a congressional gold medal to Ruth and Billy Graham, approved February 13, was assigned Public Law No. 104-111.

Statement on Signing Legislation Making Technical Corrections to the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996

May 2, 1996

Today I have signed into law Senate Joint Resolution 53 ("Resolution"). This Resolution makes technical corrections to Public Law 104-134, the "Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996" ("Act"), which I signed into law on April 26, 1996.

Two of the corrections merit comment.

The Resolution repeals two paragraphs relating to the Tongass National Forest, which were mistakenly not deleted when the operative language was moved to another section.

The Resolution also includes the repeal of section 21104 of the Act, which relates to international population assistance programs and which was inadvertently included in the Act. Nevertheless, I believe that the level of funding that the Congress has provided for FY 1996 for these programs remains inadequate, given the critical importance of these services to pro-

tecting the health of women, strengthening families, and preventing unwanted pregnancies and abortions. I regret that the House and Senate were unable to come to an agreement to lift the severe limitations placed on U.S. programs by the FY 1996 Foreign Operations appropriations act. It is my hope that the Congress will remove these limitations and provide full funding for these programs in the FY 1997 appropriations process.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 2, 1996.

NOTE: S.J. Res. 53, approved May 2, was assigned Public Law No. 104-140. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 3.

The President's Radio Address

May 4, 1996

Good morning. This week was another good week for America. We learned that growth is up and unemployment is down. That's good for American jobs and good for America's families. We also had more good news on America's families today involving the Family and Medical Leave Act, which I was proud to sign in 1993. This week the bipartisan panel Congress created to study it reported that the law has helped more than one in six American employees take time off because of a serious family health problem, without any danger of losing their jobs. And almost 90 percent of the businesses found

that complying with family and medical leave cost them little or nothing. This is making America's families stronger, promoting work and family.

That's what we have to do with welfare reform, too. Our job is to fix a welfare system that too often pulls families apart and turns it into one that helps families pull together, to fix a system that traps too many people in a cycle of dependency that ends up snaring their children as well, and instead, to create one that promotes jobs and independence.

For the last 3 years, we have been working hard to turn the welfare system around. All across America the welfare rolls are down, food stamp rolls are down, teen pregnancy rates are down compared to 4 years ago. And compared to 4 years ago, more and more people on welfare today are working as a condition of receiving welfare.

A lot of this has happened because our administration has worked very hard to free States from Federal rules and regulations which have built up over the years and which contribute to the flaws in the present system. We have slashed this redtape to 37 States, covering 75 percent of all the people on welfare in America, so that they can take steps to fix the broken system. State by State, we are building a welfare system that demands work, requires responsibility, and protects our children.

But more needs to be done. The American people need a welfare system that honors American values: work, family, and personal responsibility. In 1994, and again this year, I sent Congress a sweeping welfare reform plan that would impose strict time limits on how long people can stay on welfare and strict work requirements for people when they are on welfare. My plan would also provide more funding for child care, so single parents can go to work. And it would crack down on parents who skip out on their responsibility to pay child support.

If Congress sends me a welfare reform bill that is tough on work instead of tough on children and weak on work, I will gladly and proudly sign it. Meanwhile, I am going to keep moving ahead to fix the welfare system by promoting work and looking out for our children.

Today I'm acting to help teen mothers break free from the cycle of dependency for good. The only way for teen mothers to escape the welfare trap is to live at home, stay in school, and get the education they need to get a good job. We must make sure the welfare system demands that teen mothers follow the responsible path to independence.

Ohio has used freedom from Federal rules to implement a terrific program they call LEAP—Learning, Education, and Parenting. LEAP cuts welfare checks when teen mothers don't go to school, and rewards them when they do. And it works. A report released just this week by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation shows that for an important group

of teens LEAP significantly increased the number of teen mothers who finished school, got jobs, and got off welfare. Every State should follow this example.

That's why today I'm announcing that every State must put in place a plan to keep teen mothers on welfare in school. We are going to audit the progress of every State and make the results public. Second, we are going to make teen mothers who drop out of school go back to school and sign contracts that spell out exactly how they are going to take responsibility for their own lives. And third, we are giving States immediate authority to provide bonuses to teen mothers who go to school and graduate, and to cut back the checks of those who don't.

Finally, I'm challenging every State in the country to use its power to keep children who have children at home where they belong. There should be no incentive to leave home for a bigger welfare check. Unfortunately, even though they can, most States don't require teen mothers to live at home. That's wrong. Of course, if there is an abusive situation at home, children should be living in another safe, responsible setting. But we have to make it clear that a baby doesn't give you a right, and won't give you the money, to leave home and drop out of school. Today we are moving to make responsibility a way of life, not an option.

These commonsense steps have bipartisan support. They will help teen parents escape the cycle of dependency and start down the path to a successful future for themselves and their children. Now Congress needs to do its job and pass welfare reform. I'm glad that a group of bipartisan lawmakers is working on welfare reform. If Congress sends me a clean welfare reform plan that demands work, demands responsibility, protects children, and helps families stay together, I will sign it. Until then, I'll keep working to do everything in my power to reform welfare, step by step and State by State.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Map Room at the White House. He signed a memorandum on the welfare initiative regarding teen parents on May 10.