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NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 p.m. at Billboard Live. In his remarks, he referred to actor Kevin Spacey; comedian Paul Rodriguez; Bennett Kelley, national cochair, Saxophone Club; and Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Federal Advisory Committees

June 23, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

As provided by the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (Public Law 92–463; 5 U.S.C., App. 2, 6(c)), I am submitting my third *Annual Report on Federal Advisory Committees*, covering fiscal year 1995.

Consistent with my commitment to create a more responsive government, the executive branch continues to implement my policy of maintaining the number of advisory committees within the ceiling of 534 required by Executive Order 12838 of February 10, 1993. As a result, my Administration held the number of discretionary advisory committees (established under general congressional authorizations) to 512, or 36 percent fewer than the 801 committees in existence at the time I took office.

During fiscal year 1995, executive departments and agencies expanded their efforts to coordinate the implementation of Federal programs with State, local, and tribal governments. To facilitate these important efforts, my Administration worked with the Congress to pass the "Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995" (Public Law 104–4), which I signed into law on March 22, 1995. The Act provides for an exclusion from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) for interactions between Federal officials and their intergovernmental partners while acting in their official capacities. This action will directly support our joint efforts to strengthen accountability for program results at the local level.

Through the advisory committee planning process required by Executive Order 12838, departments and agencies have worked to minimize the number of advisory committees specifically mandated by statute. There were 407 such groups in existence at the end of fiscal year 1995, representing a 7 percent decrease over the 439 at the beginning of my Administration. However, we can do more to assure that the total costs to fund these groups, $46 million, are dedicated to support high-priority public involvement efforts.

My Administration will continue to work with the Congress to assure that all advisory committees that are required by statute are regularly reviewed through the congressional reauthorization process and that remaining groups are instrumental in achieving national interests. The results that can be realized by working together to achieve our mutual objective of a better, more accessible government will increase the public's confidence in the effectiveness of our democratic system.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 23, 1997.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 24.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Most-Favored-Nation Status for China

June 24, 1997

This past weekend, I was proud to host the leaders of the major industrial democracies at the Summit of the Eight in Denver. We discussed ways to make the 21st century safer, more secure, and more prosperous for all our people, and how we need to reach out to the world to ensure our well-being at home.

Today's vote in the House of Representatives to continue our normal trading relations with China enhances our ability to do just that—and to deepen our cooperation with the largest country in the world. I'm especially pleased to see this vote had strong bipartisan support. It sends a clear signal to our friends and foes alike that when it comes to America's security and prosperity, our Nation speaks with one voice.

Today's vote was a vote for America's interests. It makes clear that the right way to encourage further progress in China is not to cut China off but to draw China in.

China is home to nearly one-fourth the world's population and is one of the fastest growing markets in the world. Our steady engagement has expanded areas of cooperation, from stopping nuclear testing to promoting stability on the Korean Peninsula; from combating terrorism, drug trafficking, and pollution to protecting American intellectual property rights. And already, we sell $12 billion worth of exports to China every year—supporting tens of thousands of good American jobs.

Preserving normal trade relations does not mean endorsement of all of China's policies. When we disagree with China, such as on human rights and religious freedom, we will continue to speak out candidly and clearly. While we've felt all along that revoking normal trade relations would only exacerbate our differences, we are committed to work closely with Congress and others to defend and advance our interests with China as we strengthen our cooperation.

The way China evolves in the years ahead will have an enormous bearing on the shape of the 21st century. A stable, secure, open, and prosperous China that respects international norms and works with us as a partner is profoundly in America's interest. Ultimately, China will decide its own destiny. But by maintaining our steady engagement, we can play a useful role—helping China choose the path of integration that will benefit our people and the world.

Today's House vote reinforces that strategy and strengthens our ability to encourage positive change. Again, I want to thank the House of Representatives for its strong bipartisan support. I look forward to working with Members of both parties to deepen our policy consensus toward China and to advance our security and prosperity in the future.

Statement on Consumer Confidence

June 24, 1997

Today's Conference Board release, along with the University of Michigan's release earlier this month, indicate more good news on the economy.

Today's report shows that Americans are more confident about economic conditions than they have been in 28 years. With consumer confidence, unemployment, and inflation the best they've been in decades, America's economy is the strongest in the world and the best in a generation.

Unemployment is at its lowest level in 24 years, economic growth is the highest it has been in a decade, and inflation is the lowest for any administration since John F. Kennedy was President. We have already cut the deficit 77 percent since 1992, helping spark this remarkable period of strong growth and low inflation.