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Fortunately, we know how to avert these dangers. We know we can make great progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through innovative technological, market-related solutions all around the world. We have made an unprecedented commitment here of more than $6 billion for research and development and tax incentives to promote new green technologies that will dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emission. I hope you will all support that. And I hope you will tell your elected representatives it is a great investment in our children's future.

You know, the Vice President mentioned Teddy Roosevelt, who is a particular favorite of mine among our past Presidents. Ever since Teddy Roosevelt started talking about conserving our natural resources, for 100 years now, every time someone has said it, someone else says, "If you do that, it will ruin the economy." And we now have 100 years of experience. They have uniformly been wrong every time they have said it for 100 years.

And since 1970 and Earth Day and the Clean Air Act, we have heard it with repeated intensity. It has always been wrong. Every time we have taken a sensible, reasoned, but strong step to protect the environment, we have actually increased the diversity of our economy, the breadth and width of it, and increased jobs and strengthened the long-term economic prospects of our country.

That is a lesson the whole world has to embrace now. We can only sustain economic growth if we can improve the environment, if we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, if we can build a balanced future together.

So I hope that all of you, as you leave here on this Earth Day, will honor the great gifts God has given us, will honor our National Park employees and others who preserve our treasured resources with their careers, will honor these volunteers, but most of all, will promise yourselves to be the best possible citizen stewards of our resources.

That is the ethic that inspired Americans to preserve Harpers Ferry, the landscape that President Jefferson said was worth a voyage across the Atlantic. That is the ethic that will enable us to honor our responsibilities as Americans well into the 21st century.

Thank you, and happy Earth Day.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:12 p.m. at the Point in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. In his remarks, he referred to Robert G. Stanton, Director, National Park Service; Mayor Walton (Kip) Stowell of Harpers Ferry; Pamela Underhill, Park Manager, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and volunteer Sandi Marra, member, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. The National Volunteer Week proclamation of April 21 and the National Park Week proclamation of April 22 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the House of Representatives Release of Tobacco Industry Documents

April 22, 1998

The House Commerce Committee today released thousands of tobacco industry documents. I commend Chairman Bliley, Congressman Waxman, and the members of the Committee for helping to bring these documents to light.

The release of these documents underscores the urgency of enacting comprehensive, bipartisan tobacco legislation this year, which can stop 3 million children from smoking over the next 5 years and save 1 million lives. I am committed to working with legislative leaders on both sides of the aisle, in both the House and the Senate, to enact a comprehensive bill to stop young Americans from smoking before they start—a bill that raises the price of cigarettes, puts into place tough restrictions on advertising and access, imposes penalties on the industry if it continues to sell cigarettes to children, and ensures that the FDA has authority to regulate tobacco products. Our Nation's children are counting on us to put politics aside and work together in a bipartisan manner to get this job done.