

It is also regrettable that in order to pay for the emergency funding for victims of natural disasters, this legislation demands unnecessary and unwarranted cuts in existing housing programs for low-income Americans. In response to my Administration's strong objections, the Congress pledged to restore this funding fully in the next fiscal year. I call upon the Congress to honor that promise, and to do so without draining resources from any of the housing programs contained in my budget for FY 1999. Instead of cutting housing assistance to low-income Americans, the Congress should provide funding for the 100,000 new housing vouchers proposed in my FY 1999 Budget.

It is imperative that the Congress act quickly so that we may meet our commitment to the IMF and the U.N. Delay or failure to meet the full IMF requests could undermine our capacity to deal with threats to world economic

stability and could leave us unable to protect American workers, farmers, and businesses in the event of an escalation or spread of the Asian financial crisis or a new crisis. In addition, failure to provide the full request for U.N. arrears could jeopardize our chance to affect negotiations on lowering U.S. dues and would undermine U.S. leadership in the international community. I call on the Congress to pass new legislation quickly, with workable terms, so that the United States is able to maintain its position as a world leader and to meet its obligations to the IMF and the U.N.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 1, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 3579, approved May 1, was assigned Public Law No. 105-174.

Memorandum on Agency Use of Alternate Means of Dispute Resolution and Negotiated Rulemaking

May 1, 1998

Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Designation of Interagency Committees to Facilitate and Encourage Agency Use of Alternate Means of Dispute Resolution and Negotiated Rulemaking

As part of an effort to make the Federal Government operate in a more efficient and effective manner, and to encourage, where possible, consensual resolution of disputes and issues in controversy involving the United States, including the prevention and avoidance of disputes, I have determined that each Federal agency must take steps to: (1) promote greater use of mediation, arbitration, early neutral evaluation, agency ombuds, and other alternative dispute resolution techniques, and (2) promote greater use of negotiated rulemaking.

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States including sections 569(a) and 573(c) of title 5, United States Code, as amended by the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996

(Public Law 104-320), I hereby direct as follows:

An Alternative Dispute Resolution Working Group, comprised of the Cabinet Departments and, as determined by the Attorney General, such other agencies with a significant interest in dispute resolution, shall be convened and is designated under 5 U.S.C. 573(c) as the inter-agency committee to facilitate and encourage agency use of alternative means of dispute resolution. The Working Group shall consist of representatives of the heads of all participating agencies, and may meet as a whole or in subgroups of agencies with an interest in particular issues or subject areas, such as disputes involving personnel, procurement, and claims. The Working Group shall be convened by the Attorney General, who may designate a representative to convene and facilitate meetings of the subgroups. The Working Group shall facilitate, encourage, and provide coordination for agencies in such areas as: (1) development of programs that employ alternative means of dispute resolution, (2) training of agency personnel to recognize when and how to use alternative means

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of dispute resolution, (3) development of procedures that permit agencies to obtain the services of neutrals on an expedited basis, and (4) recordkeeping to ascertain the benefits of alternative means of dispute resolution. The Working Group shall also periodically advise the President, through the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, on its activities.

The Regulatory Working Group established under section 4(d) of Executive Order 12866

is designated under 5 U.S.C. 569(a) as the inter-agency committee to facilitate and encourage agency use of negotiated rulemaking.

This directive is for the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions

May 1, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (the "Convention"), adopted at Paris on November 21, 1997, by a conference held under the auspices of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Convention was signed in Paris on December 17, 1997, by the United States and 32 other nations.

I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, interpretive Commentaries on the Convention, adopted by the negotiating conference in conjunction with the Convention, that are relevant to the Senate's consideration of the Convention. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention.

Since the enactment in 1977 of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), the United States has been alone in specifically criminalizing the business-related bribery of foreign public officials. United States corporations have contended that this has put them at a significant disadvantage in competing for international contracts with respect to foreign competitors who are not

subject to such laws. Consistent with the sense of the Congress, as expressed in the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988, encouraging negotiation of an agreement within the OECD governing the type of behavior that is prohibited under the FCPA, the United States has worked assiduously within the OECD to persuade other countries to adopt similar legislation. Those efforts have resulted in this Convention that once in force, will require that the Parties enact laws to criminalize the bribery of foreign public officials to obtain or retain business or other improper advantage in the conduct of international business.

While the Convention is largely consistent with existing U.S. law, my Administration will propose certain amendments to the FCPA to bring it into conformity with and to implement the Convention. Legislation will be submitted separately to the Congress.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention, and that it give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
May 1, 1998.