

[*The question-and-answer session concluded.*]

*The President.* I agree with that. Let me say to all of you, one of the things in our budget this year, in addition to our efforts to connect all the schools and libraries, is funds to set up 1,000 community centers in poor rural communities, Native American reservations, and relatively isolated urban neighborhoods, so that it will, by definition, build social capital if you have community centers where people can come and access the net, with people there who are trained to help people use it who otherwise

would never use it. I think it can make a big difference.

Well, we stayed an hour late, but it was certainly interesting. I think you did a great job, and I thank you all for your patience.

Thank you for being here today. It was great.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Putnam, Stanfield Professor of International Peace in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the participants.

## Statement on Signing the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century

*April 5, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1000, the “Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century.” This legislation contains important measures to improve aviation safety, increase airline competition, protect air travelers with disabilities, and boost assistance for the families of victims of aviation disasters. The bill also takes an additional step toward our long-term objectives for modernizing and reforming the FAA’s provision of critical air traffic control services.

I call on Congress to join me in moving forward to further system-wide reform of air traffic

control. While this legislation seeks to provide substantial funding guarantees for airport construction and other capital investment, I remain concerned about the possible effect of the bill’s procedural requirements on future appropriations for air traffic control and other crucial safety functions funded by the FAA’s Operations account. My administration will work with the Congress to achieve more balanced funding of aviation programs in fiscal year 2001.

NOTE: H.R. 1000, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 106–181.

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*April 5, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1000, the “Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century.” Several of the broad, fundamental improvements in aviation safety supported by Senator Ford are contained in this legislation. It is particularly satisfying to see the Congress bestow this recognition on such an outstanding advocate of U.S. aviation.

Since the last major aviation law was enacted in 1996, both my Administration and the Congress have committed significant time and resources to bring about a new era for aviation. I remember well my trip to the Boeing plant in Washington State in 1993 to signal our concern for the renewal of an industry then facing very difficult economic times. The subsequent