

Nov. 11 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

former Senator Bob Dole, national chairman, National World War II Memorial Campaign; Senator Dole's wife, Elizabeth; and Comdr. Kirk Lippold, USN, captain of the U.S.S. *Cole*.

Statement on the Death of Leah Rabin *November 12, 2000*

Hillary and I were deeply saddened this morning to learn of the death of Leah Rabin. We have lost a dear friend, and the Middle East has lost a friend of peace. But the work

to which she and Yitzhak dedicated their lives must and will continue.

Our prayers are with the Rabin family and with the people of Israel.

Statement on Signing the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 *November 13, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 782, the "Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000." The Older Americans Act of 1965, last reauthorized by the Congress in 1992, provides essential home and community-based services, such as congregate and home-delivered meals, transportation, legal assistance, employment and volunteer opportunities, health promotion activities, pension counseling programs, and protection from abuse in institutions and in the community for millions of older persons across the United States.

I am very pleased that this bipartisan legislation includes, for the first time, an important new program designed to assist families. It provides the authorization for the National Family Caregiver Support Program, which I first proposed in 1999 as part of my long-term care initiative. This program will help hundreds of thousands of family members—spouses, adult children, and others—who are struggling to care for their frail older loved ones who are ill or disabled. Studies have shown that caregiving can take a huge emotional, physical, and financial toll on families. The support provided through this new program includes critical information, training, and counseling, as well as much needed quality respite care for those caregivers who are juggling jobs and other family responsibilities while meeting the special needs of loved ones in their care. This legislation also recognizes the challenges that grandparents and other relatives caring for children face, as well as those of

older individuals who are caring for children who have disabilities. When funded, this program will provide valuable assistance to the families who need it most.

Beyond providing this important support to families, the bill I am signing today will strengthen and improve the delivery of important daily services to our most vulnerable aging citizens through our national network of State and area agencies on aging, tribal organizations, and other members of our community, including volunteers, many of whom are older persons themselves. The new legislation gives our States, area agencies, and Tribes more flexibility in serving elders in their own communities and regions, and enhances the coordination of Federal, State, and local programs to maximize the effectiveness of program activities.

This legislation does much to position our rapidly growing aging population for the decades ahead when the number of older persons in need of help will be much larger and more diverse. The Act continues to focus attention on the needs of those in greatest social and economic need, with particular attention to low-income minority elders, and it recognizes the needs of those older persons who live in rural areas of our country. It acknowledges the cultural differences among our tribal populations, and provides them with caregiver support and disaster relief assistance as well as promoting better coordination of services between State and tribal grantees. It promotes innovation and