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The question we must all face now is, what happens tomorrow? We all know that there is no real requirement of a constitutional amendment to reduce unnecessary Government spending and to reduce the deficit. For 12 years before I took office, Washington allowed the deficit to explode. Organized interests did well, but the public interest and the future suffered. Washington, during this entire period, spent too much time on rhetoric and gimmicks and too little time making hard, smart, specific budgetary decisions.

Then, just 2 years ago, Democrats acting alone had the courage to pass the largest deficit reduction package in the history of the United States, now over $600 billion. Our annual deficit at that time was about 5 percent of our income. It has now dropped to just over half that and is scheduled to go down much lower.

A month ago, we added to that historic deficit reduction with a budget that cuts spending, cuts the deficit even more, and provides for modest tax cuts to the middle class for education and child-rearing. I am as ready as ever to work with the Congress to make further reductions in the deficit. As I have said repeatedly, it must come in the context of responsible health care reform because it is only the health care costs of the country that are going up in our budget. All other costs are flat or declining.

Now the process of reducing the deficit while investing in our future must go forward. There is a legal process for doing just that. In 1993, though I had never before been a part of Government in Washington, we presented our budget plan only 27 days into our administration. It has now been 57 days since the Republicans took control of the Congress. And even though their leadership has been here many, many more years, they have still not presented their budget. We passed the budget resolution for our plan before the legal deadline of April 15th. Now they must follow that process as well, telling the American people how they are going to keep the promises of their contract on balancing the budget and paying for their tax cuts by the legal deadline of April 15th.

When the Republicans do present their budget plan, we will carefully consider it. We owe them that, and we must. I have shown my commitment to reducing the deficit and to investing in our future. And I will continue to do that. I believe we can reduce the deficit without compromising our commitment to education and to our children and without undermining our commitment to our seniors in Social Security and basic Medicare needs. I believe we can do that. I believe we can do it while continuing our commitment to provide 100,000 police officers for this country, a program that is already fully paid for by spending cuts. We do not need to allow any of those things to be used as a bank to cut taxes for upper income Americans.

There are other things we can do right now, things that I agree with the Republican leadership on, and let me just close with this one. Let us now immediately take up in the Senate the line-item veto, and let's pass it. We can cut millions, tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars in spending with the line-item veto. So I urge the Senate to proceed immediately to take that up. And I will work as hard as I can to persuade members of both parties to support it and to continue the important work of reducing the deficit.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:17 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

Proclamation 6774—Save Your Vision Week, 1995

March 2, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Sight is a precious gift—one that we cannot afford to take for granted. To ensure that we enjoy a healthy view of the world for many years to come, all of us must make certain our eyes receive good care and attention throughout our lives.

Americans can take steps to guard their vision on a daily basis, while at home and on the job. Using face masks, goggles, or safety glasses can protect our eyes from the dangers of potentially harmful chemicals or machinery, and the appropriate protective eyewear is critical while playing sports. But

perhaps the easiest and most effective way that we can protect our sight is with comprehensive eye examinations. Early eye tests can help secure good vision for our children from the start. And with regular eye exams, the threat of vision loss does not have to be a normal part of aging.

For Americans at special risk, preventive care takes on added importance. The 14 million individuals nationwide who have diabetes face the possibility of developing diabetic eye diseases, the leading cause of blindness among working-aged Americans. This condition may show no symptoms—even in advanced stages—and it must be detected as soon as possible to prevent vision loss.

Glaucoma, another potentially blinding eye disease, can be controlled when detected early. Approximately 3 million Americans suffer from this disease, which strikes silently often without pain or noticeable symptoms. Especially at risk are African Americans age 40 and older and all people age 60 and older.

To remind Americans of how they can protect their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning March 5, 1995, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives. I invite eye care professionals, the media, and all public and private organizations committed to the goals of sight preservation, to join in activities that will make Americans more aware of the steps they can take to preserve their vision.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., March 6, 1995]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 7.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Child Support Enforcement

March 2, 1995

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to reiterate my firm belief that Congress must pass tough child support enforcement measures as part of welfare reform. When absent parents don't provide support, the inevitable result is more welfare, more poverty, and more difficult times for our children. It is essential that all Americans understand that if they parent a child, they will be held responsible for nurturing and providing for that child.

I am doing everything in my power to crack down on child support enforcement. In 1993, we collected a record $9 billion in child support—a 12 percent increase over the previous year. Last week, I signed an Executive Order to ensure that federal employees who owe child support live up to their responsibilities as parents, and that the federal government will do its utmost to help find parents with delinquent child support claims. Our welfare reform plan included the toughest child support measures ever proposed. If absent parents aren't paying child support, we will garnish their wages, suspend their licenses, track them across state lines, and if necessary, make them work off what they owe.

Parental responsibility should not become a partisan issue. At the bipartisan national Working Session on Welfare Reform that I hosted at Blair House, Republican and Democratic leaders from around the country and every level of government agreed that we should enact the toughest child support enforcement measures possible.

I hope the committee will not shy away from its responsibilities on this issue. A number of bills similar to our plan could serve as the foundation for any effort to reform child support—including the one offered by Representatives Barbara Kennelly, Nancy Johnson, and others. Critical elements include denying welfare benefits to any unwed mother who does not cooperate fully in identifying the father, powerful measures for