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and play by the rules. Many more financial institutions will discover new, profitable lines of business. And it doesn't cost taxpayers a dime. It can create miracles in small towns and big cities from coast to coast, miracles like mortgage or business loans for people who never thought they could own a house or business, multifamily housing loans, and commercial development loans in low to moderate income communities.

To maximize the benefits that can accrue to both banks and consumers, the final regulation issued today by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Office of Thrift Supervision, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation will place emphasis on performance, not paperwork. The new regulations will make the act easier for banks to implement and will result in more consistent evaluation of their performance. With these improved regulations in place, the statute can reach its full potential to help our communities help themselves. Now is the time to end uncertainty and get on with business, not to tinker with the statute.

Producing this final regulation has taken a lot of effort on the part of the regulators and has involved excellent input from financial institutions and community groups throughout the country. I want to congratulate and thank everybody who participated in this process.

Letter to Governor Frank Keating on Disaster Assistance to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

April 19, 1995

Dear Governor Keating:

I have declared an emergency under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act) for the city of Oklahoma City in the State of Oklahoma due to the explosion at the Federal courthouse in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995 in the State of Oklahoma. I have authorized Federal relief and emergency assistance in the affected area.

Emergency assistance under Title V of the Stafford Act will be provided. Assistance under this emergency declaration will be provided at 100 percent Federal funding.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will coordinate Federal assistance efforts and designate specific areas eligible for such assistance. The Federal Coordinating Officer will be Mr. Dell Greer of FEMA. He will consult with you and assist in the execution of the FEMA-State Agreement governing the expenditure of Federal funds.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: This letter was attached to a statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry announcing disaster assistance to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Letter to Federal Emergency Management Agency Director James Lee Witt on Disaster Assistance to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

April 19, 1995

Dear Mr. Witt:

I have determined that the explosion at the Federal courthouse in Oklahoma City, on April 19, 1995, in the State of Oklahoma is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant an emergency declaration under subsection 501(b) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act). My decision to make this declaration pursuant to subsection 501(b) of the Stafford Act is based upon the fact that the explosion occurred at a Federally-owned courthouse. I, therefore, declare that such an emergency exists in the city of Oklahoma City in the State of Oklahoma.

In order to provide Federal assistance, you are hereby authorized to coordinate and direct other Federal agencies and fund activities not authorized under other Federal statutes and allocate from funds available for these purposes, such amounts as you find necessary for Federal emergency assistance and administrative expenses.

Pursuant to this emergency declaration, you are authorized to provide emergency assistance as you deem appropriate under Title V of the Stafford Act at 100 percent Federal funding.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: This letter was attached to a statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry announcing disaster assistance to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Remarks Welcoming President Fernando Cardoso of Brazil

April 20, 1995

President Cardoso and Mrs. Cardoso, distinguished guests. I am pleased to welcome to Washington a good friend of the United States and one of our hemisphere's most dynamic leaders.

Mr. President, let me begin by expressing my appreciation and the appreciation of the American people for the call and the message you sent to us yesterday in the wake of the terrible incident in Oklahoma City. Let me say again, those responsible will be brought to justice. They will be tried, convicted, and punished. We will never let the forces of inhumanity prevail in the United States.

At this moment, the rescue efforts in Oklahoma City continue. And we hold out hope that more survivors will be found. To all those carrying on this dangerous work, to the families and loved ones of those still missing, our prayers are with you. And to all those here watching and those who are watching us through the airwaves, I have ordered all our flags today throughout the United States to be flown at half-mast. And I ask you now to join with me in a moment of silence for the victims.

[*At this point, a moment of silence was observed.*]

May God's grace be with them.

Mr. President, as the largest democracies in the Americas, our countries have a special responsibility to work together, to support the extraordinary trend toward democracies and open markets throughout our region. Today we will pursue that joint action. We both know it is needed to manage our common problems and to seize our shared opportunities.

Mr. President, your own life embodies the resilience of the democratic spirit of the Americas. Thirty years ago, you were forced into exile by the enemies of democracy. But instead of giving in to bitterness, you carried on the struggle for freedom with reason and reconciliation as your only weapons. And you prevailed.

Now you lead a nation that has remained at peace with its neighbors for more than a century. That strong tradition of peaceful relations and your personal commitment to democracy give Brazil a vital role to play in strengthening cooperation among the nations and deepening the roots of civil society throughout our hemispheres. The United States welcomes the opportunity to work with you in this noble cause.

We must also work to further the goal we set at the Summit of the Americas, to create a free trade area of the Americas by the year 2005. The building blocks of free trade, the North American Free-Trade Agreement, and MERCOSUR, are in place. Now let us move forward to transform our vision of a commercially integrated hemisphere into concrete reality.

The emerging partnership between our two countries extends beyond supporting democracy in emerging markets. We are also joining forces to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to protect the environment, to fight against drug smuggling, and to keep peace in countries that are threatened by ethnic conflict and civil war. The United States is counting on Brazil's continued leadership in meeting these major challenges of our time.

Mr. President, you represent a vibrant people whose pride in the past is matched only by their hope for the future. Your own efforts to bring economic stability and social justice to Brazil are responsible for much of that promise of tomorrow. On this solid foundation and under your leadership, Brazil is poised to take its rightful place as a shining example for all the Americas and all the world.

Mr. President, we are honored to have you here. Welcome to the White House. Welcome to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:42 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.