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sideration to these amendments and give its advice and consent to their acceptance.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 1, 1996.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery

October 1, 1996

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby submit the Second Report to the Congress on the Operation of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act. This report is prepared pursuant to the requirements of section 214 of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Expansion Act of 1990 (19 U.S.C. 2702(f)).

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 1, 1996.

Statement on Signing the "Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act"

October 1, 1996

Today, I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2428, a bill that will facilitate the donation of food and grocery products to needy individuals. The bill, known as the "Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act," exempts those who recover or donate apparently fit food and groceries from criminal or civil liability arising from those activities.

Through food recovery and donation, Americans can share with the hungry a portion of our country's immense food resources that would otherwise be wasted. The Department of Agriculture has supported the recovery and donation of packaged food for years. Moreover, during this Administration, the Department has undertaken a national initiative to help Americans "rescue" food of a highly perishable, but nutritious nature. Most of this food is prepared in restaurants, hotels, cafeterias, and other institutional settings and would otherwise have been thrown away. Through this important effort, thousands of hungry people have been fed at no cost to the Federal taxpayer.

In working with various private sector donors and food banks, however, it has come to light that liability concerns are often an impediment to food recovery and donation efforts. Although many States have enacted their own "Good Samaritan" laws to support food recovery and donation efforts, many businesses have advised that these varying State statutes hinder food donations.

This legislation will end the confusion regarding liability for food recovery and donation operations through uniform definitions in one national law. This will encourage the charitable and well-intentioned donation of food to the needy, while preserving governmental authority to protect health and food safety. For these reasons, I am pleased to sign this bill into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 1, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 2428, approved October 1, was assigned Public Law No. 104–210. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 2.

The President's News Conference With Middle Eastern Leaders

October 2, 1996

The President. Good afternoon. Please be seated. The four of us have agreed that I will speak about our 2 days of meetings, and then do my best to faithfully answer questions that you have about it. And of course, the other three leaders will have a chance to be heard after the press conference.

I'd like to begin by thanking King Hussein, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and Chairman Arafat for coming here to Washington at this critical and very difficult moment for the Middle East peace process. Their journey reflects a true commitment to peace and an understanding that there is no alternative to the path of peace their people have traveled so far along in the last few years.

I invited them here with three urgent goals in mind: first, to seek to curb the terrible violence and death that we saw last week;