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Statement on the Senate Resolution Establishing National Erase the Hate and Eliminate Racism Day

April 30, 1997

I applaud the leadership of Senator Baucus, along with Senator Burns and all Members of the United States Senate who have joined together to designate today as a national day to erase the hate and eliminate racism. America is the world's most diverse democracy and the world looks to us for leadership in building on that diversity and showing that it is our greatest strength. Today's resolution shows that the Senate is determined to reach across party lines to help achieve that promise.

We must do all we can to fight bigotry and intolerance, in ugly words and awful violence, in burned churches and bombed buildings—including efforts such as today's resolution. The only way we can meet our challenges is by meeting them together—as one America—and giving all of our citizens, whatever their background, an opportunity to achieve their own greatness.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Alexis Herman as Secretary of Labor

April 30, 1997

I want to thank the Senate for its strong show of support for Alexis Herman. There was never any question that she was highly qualified to be Secretary of Labor. She understands the needs of workers and understands the challenges they face as we approach the 21st century.

This is an important time for the Labor Department. The Department must reform and manage programs that will help prepare America's working men and women for the challenges of our changing economy. Alexis Herman is fully prepared to lead the Department in this effort. She will be an outstanding Secretary of Labor.

Statement on the House of Representatives Passage of the "Adoption Promotion Act of 1997"

April 30, 1997

I congratulate the House of Representatives on the passage of H.R. 867, the Adoption Promotion Act of 1997. This bipartisan legislation will further our efforts to give the children waiting in the foster care system what ever child in America deserves—loving parents and a healthy, stable home.

The First Lady and I have had a continuing commitment to uniting these waiting children with families to teach, guide, and care for them. In December, I directed the Department of Health and Human Services to come up with a strategy to simplify the adoption process and move more children more quickly from foster care into permanent homes. In response to this directive, HHS submitted Adoption 2002, a report which takes its name from one of its central goals—to double by the year 2002 the number of children adopted or permanently placed each year.

The Adoption Promotion Act of 1997 incorporates many of the recommendations made in the administration's report. I urge Congress to keep this important legislation moving forward.

Statement on Signing the Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act of 1997

April 30, 1997

Today I am signing into law H.R. 1003, the ''Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act of 1997,'' which reaffirms current Federal policy banning the use of Federal funds to pay for assisted suicide, euthanasia, or mercy killing.

This is appropriate legislation. Over the years, I have clearly expressed my personal opposition to assisted suicide, and I continue to believe that assisted suicide is wrong. While I have deep sympathy for those who suffer greatly from incurable illness, I believe