

on it; we want to be responsive. We know that it's not the best of times for a lot of our farmers, and we want to be there for you. America is doing very well as a whole, and we think you should be part of that.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:12 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Environmental Legislation

July 23, 1998

I am pleased that the House of Representatives, in a bipartisan fashion, today rejected an unwise and unwarranted attempt to deny the American people the facts about global warming.

With much of the country suffering a stifling heat wave, and with each month so far this year setting a new record for global temperature, the American people expect and deserve a fair, honest, and informed debate on the issue of climate change. Some in Congress would have stifled that debate by effectively imposing a gag order on Federal agencies. Thankfully, the House voted to remove this language from the VA-HUD appropriations bill.

Unfortunately, the bill still contains other provisions that would restrict our ability to move forward with cost-effective steps to reduce the greenhouse gases that cause global warming. And appropriations bills moving through Congress would cut by nearly one half my proposed research and tax incentives for energy efficiency and clean energy technologies—measures that would reduce energy costs for American families while curbing greenhouse gases.

Americans have demonstrated time and again that we can protect our environment while growing our economy. We can and must meet the challenge of climate change in the same way. I urge Congress to join us in this critical endeavor.

Remarks at a Birthday Celebration for Jazz Musician Lionel Hampton

July 23, 1998

Thank you. I would say you gave a better speech for me than I played a song for you. *[Laughter]*

Let me say to Lionel Hampton and this wonderful orchestra, to all of you who are here who made this evening possible—LeVerne, thank you. Max Roach, thank you for coming. All of us who have been your fans for so long are honored to be in your presence. Thank you, Reverend Jackson. Thank you, all the Members of Congress who are here. A very, very special word of thanks to two perfectly wonderful men and fellow travelers along the road of jazz music and progressive politics—*[laughter]*—John Conyers and Charlie Rangel. Thank you for making this evening possible.

You know, Hillary and I have loved many things about the opportunity to serve here, but maybe none more than the opportunity to share with America the great gifts of our artists. And this is a special night. Lionel Hampton is 90 years old this year. You should know that he has played for every President since Harry Truman. I was minus one when Harry Truman became President—*[laughter]*—so he's been at this a day or two.

It's been a long time since he joined Louis Armstrong and gave him a hit song and revolutionized jazz music forever. I was telling Hillary when Hamp was up there playing and singing, I said, "You know, my ears are going. I can't even hear the pitch anymore, and there he is, hitting the pitch." *[Laughter]* All of you who've ever played or tried to sing, the idea that he hit the pitch is something. And they played magnificently tonight. They lifted our spirits; they lifted our hearts.

I am personally indebted to Hillary and Charlie Rangel and John Conyers for cooking this night up, and I think all of us are. And I just want to say that even though your real birthday was a few months earlier, what the heck, you only turn 90 once—*[laughter]*—we think it ought to be a year-long celebration.

So I would like to ask the White House magnificent chef who does these things for