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funding levels and improve programs for students attending Hispanic-serving institutions. I am also pleased that H.R. 6 reauthorizes the Education of the Deaf Act, which supports Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, and strengthens programs to support tribal and historically black colleges and universities.

The bill also revolutionizes the delivery of student aid by creating within the Government the first-ever Performance-Based Organization (PBO)—a concept promoted by Vice President Gore's National Partnership for Reinventing Government—to improve services to students and enhance administrative efficiency and accountability. I am delighted with this bipartisan effort to modernize student aid delivery in the Department of Education.

I do note some constitutional concerns regarding provisions in this bill relating to the appointment and reappointment of the Chief Operating Officer of the PBO, and the issuance of regulations regarding student loan repayment incentives that would have to be certified by the Congressional Budget Office. While I do not regard these provisions as binding, the Secretary of Education as a matter of policy will implement these provisions so far as possible in a manner consistent with the principles embodied in the legislation.

There are costs associated with H.R. 6 after fiscal year 1999 that are not fully offset under Administration budget scoring. Under the Budget Enforcement Act, a sequester of mandatory programs will be required in future years if savings to offset the costs of this Act are not enacted. My Administration will work with the Congress to offset these costs to avoid a potential sequester.

This bill represents a positive, bipartisan advancement for students, teachers, and the future of higher education. Now the Congress must take the critical next step, providing full funding for the new initiatives this legislation creates—GEAR UP, teacher preparation and recruitment, and LAAP—for fiscal year 1999. I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure this funding is made available.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 7, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 6, approved October 7, was assigned Public Law No. 105–244.

Statement on Signing the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 1999

October 7, 1998

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4060, the ''Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 1999,'' which provides $20.8 billion in discretionary budget authority for the programs of the Department of Energy (DOE), the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers, and several smaller agencies.

The Act provides necessary funding to maintain my Administration's commitment to ensuring the safety and reliability of our Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing. It also supports DOE's basic science programs, including funding for the Spallation Neutron Source Program. The Act also provides funding to develop and protect the Nation's water resources.

I am pleased that the Act includes authority to transfer funds to support the operation of the D.C. Courts.

However, I am disappointed that the Congress did not include my funding request for valuable research and development investments in renewable energy sources, and I will work with the Congress to explore options for funding these important investments. I am also disappointed that the Congress provided no funding for the Next Generation Internet and for discretionary programs of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and inadequate funding for the Clean Water Initiative, including the Initiative's Everglades restoration activities and Columbia River salmon recovery efforts. I look forward to

working with the Congress on options for financing and increasing support for these initiatives in the future.

Only 4 of the 13 FY 1999 appropriations bills have been sent to the White House. These 13 bills must be passed to fund the operation of the Government for the fiscal year that began on October 1. Time is growing short, and I urge the Congress not to delay, but to complete its work on the remaining bills by the end of this week, and to send them to me in an acceptable form.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 7, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4060, approved October 7, was assigned Public Law No. 105–245.

Proclamation 7134—National Day of Concern About Young People and Gun Violence, 1998

October 7, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During the past 18 months, Americans have been stunned by gun violence among our youth, including the tragic incidents of students shooting their classmates and teachers in Jonesboro, Arkansas; Pearl, Mississippi; Paducah, Kentucky; Edinboro, Pennsylvania; and Springfield, Oregon. In communities across the country, some young people are trying to resolve their conflicts and problems by taking a gun into their schools or onto the streets—guns that, although they are generally illegal for children to possess, are still too easy to get.

While recent data indicate that the overwhelming majority of American schools are safe and that the rate of youth violence is beginning to decline, we must not relax our efforts to protect our children from such violence. Since the beginning of my Administration, we have worked hard to make our schools and communities safe places for children to learn and grow. We have put more community police in our neighborhoods, encouraged the use of curfews, school uniforms, and tough truancy policies, and proposed funding for after-school programs that provide children and young people with wholesome activities that keep them interested, engaged, and off the streets. We instituted a policy of zero tolerance for guns in schools that is now the law in all 50 States. We have issued a guidebook to help teachers, principals, and parents recognize the early warning signs of troubled students and intervene before despair or anger gives way to violence. Later this month, I will host the first-ever White House Conference on School Safety to focus on the causes and prevention of youth violence and to share effective strategies that we can put into practice nationwide. Through these and many other measures, we have strived to protect America's youth from being either the perpetrators or the victims of gun violence.

While government can and must be an active partner in the effort to prevent youth violence, the real key to ending the killing is in the hands of young Americans themselves. Every young person must assume personal responsibility for avoiding violent confrontation, have the strength of character to walk away from a dispute before it turns deadly, and have the courage and common sense to refuse to participate in gang activities, to use drugs, or to carry or use a gun.

As part of our nationwide observance of National Day of Concern About Young People and Gun Violence, I urge students across America to voluntarily sign a ''Student Pledge Against Gun Violence'' as an acknowledgment of these responsibilities. This pledge is a solemn promise by young people never to bring a gun to school, never to use a gun to settle a dispute, and to discourage their friends from using guns. By keeping this promise and giving one another the chance to grow to healthy, productive adulthood, young Americans will be taking an enormous step toward a stronger, safer future for themselves and our Nation.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 8, 1998, as a National Day of Concern About Young People and Gun Violence. On this day, I call