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that were failing and give the children a chance to succeed. And that's what they believe in in Chicago, and what we should believe in everywhere.

So I'm looking forward to working with all the Senators and House Members who care so much about this, both to improve after-school programs and to end social promotion but to do it in the right way. We have to do everything in our power—after school, smaller classes, better teachers, modernized facilities, Internet hookups, summer programs—to help our kids succeed. We have to have high standards not only for students but for the preparation of our teachers and for the performance of our schools. And I'll have more to say about that later.

Scarce dollars should not be spent on failed policies. If we've learned anything, Hillary and Dick Riley and I, after 20 years and more of working at this, listening to teachers and parents, going into schools, it is what Congressman Ford said: We do believe all children can learn. And that gives a much greater urgency to this work.

Look, this is not really just about making the American economy strong or even making sure that when we baby boomers retire we'll be supported by two workers that made Bs or better instead of a 1.7. [*Laughter*] It makes a good point. But that's not really what this is about. Everybody just gets one chance. Everyone just has one life. This is about giving people a chance to make the most of that one life. This is about the sure knowledge we have that the rest of us will just be fine; everything is going to work out all right if we give our children the chance to make the most of their lives.

I watched Harold Ford up here giving that speech, and I thought, there's a 28-year-old young guy with his whole life ahead of him. And I knew that he had a family that told him he had to show up in the morning, that his work was school, that he was expected to learn. And I want that for every child.

You know, I go to a lot of schools. Today when I speak to children—I was out in Maryland or Virginia not long before last November, and I was talking to this group of kids, this wonderful group of kids. And they said, "You know, all the parents are going to come, and we just only wish we had time to translate your remarks into Spanish and into Arabic, because there are so many parents who can't understand you." That's the America of tomorrow.

In a global society where we're trying to get other people to put aside their hatreds, to lay down the burdens of the past, to embrace one another, to reach across the lines that divide them, that's a great resource. But the challenge of giving all of the children from whatever backgrounds they come from the chance to make the most of that one life is more formidable than ever. Because of these after-school programs, a million kids will have a better chance. That's really what this is all about, a million more stories like those two beautiful pictures that Lissette showed us today. And that's what we should always, always remember.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:28 p.m. in the East Room at the White Hose. In his remarks, he referred to Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder, Special Olympics; and Lissette Martinez, parent-mentor, Frederick Funston Elementary School, Chicago, IL, and her husband, Leonard.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Comprehensive Plan for Responding to the Increase in Steel Imports

January 7, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting the attached *Report to Congress on a Comprehensive Plan for Responding to the Increase in Steel Imports* in response to the request from the Congress described in section 111 of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105–277 of October 21, 1998).

As the global financial crisis has unfolded, it has touched the lives of many Americans. I am very concerned about the surge in low-priced steel imports into the United States and its impact on our companies, workers, and communities. Our steel industry and workers have taken difficult and commendable steps over the past 2 decades to make

America's steel industry a world class competitor.

Our goal in this comprehensive action plan is clear: we seek to ensure that competitive American steel companies and steel workers have the opportunity to compete fairly and that they not be asked to bear an unfair share of the burden of a global financial crisis they did not create. The plan outlined in this report details our actions to vigorously and expeditiously enforce our own trade laws, engage major steel exporting and importing countries to enforce fair trade and fairly share the import burden, work with the IMF and our foreign partners to address the financial crisis that has contributed to the current surge of steel imports, and provide American steel communities, workers, and companies with the resources they need to adjust to the forces of globalization.

I will continue to make clear my deep personal concern about the steel situation, as I have done in recent statements. I will continue to engage leaders of Japan, Russia, the Republic of Korea, and the nations of Europe with the goal of ensuring that they follow fair trading practices, fairly share the burden of absorbing additional steel imports, and respect established international rules, including prohibitions on subsidization.

The solution to the financial crisis and the crisis facing our steel industry is not for us, or for any other nation, to go backward or turn inward. The solution is, instead, for America to continue to lead the world in stemming the current financial crisis and creating an open, rules-based trading system. At this critical juncture, it is essential that all nations remain committed to open markets.

Open and fair trade is absolutely essential for both global economic recovery and continued U.S. prosperity. It is essential that all nations respect international trade rules to ensure that the trading system commands the confidence of the American people. Maintaining strong trade laws and vigorous enforcement will continue to be a critical element of my trade policy, just as I will continue to lead efforts to open markets around the world.

My Administration will continue to monitor developments in the steel industry and to consult with representatives of steel-producing and -consuming industries and labor, Members of Congress, and our trading partners, and we will consider additional actions as circumstances warrant. We will continue to work closely with Members of Congress in ensuring an effective response to this serious matter.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at the Economic Club of Detroit in Detroit, Michigan

January 8, 1999

The President. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, even though the mayor's promised warm welcome to Detroit turned out to be a bit of false advertising today, I am delighted to be back. I've had a wonderful time. The Auto Show made me feel like a kid again. I wanted to leave with 10 of the cars myself, but I was embarrassed to say, you know, I haven't bought a car in 6 years so I had to go around and ask what every one of them cost. [*Laughter*]

I liked the concept cars. I liked the orientation toward the future. It was a wonderful thing. And we have some people here associated with the Auto Show, and I'd really like to thank them for making me and the congressional delegation and our guests feel so welcome today.

I want to thank the mayor for letting me be his stand-in. We've been friends a long time. Mayor Archer's friendship is one of many thousands of things I owe to my wife. They were friends in bar association work. I knew Dennis Archer when he was just a mild-mannered judge with no political opinions. [*Laughter*]

I'd also like to thank your Attorney General, Jennifer Granholm, for being here; my good friend, Ed McNamara, to my left. Thank you, Jennifer. Thank you, Mr. McNamara, for being my friend. And City Council President Gil Hill, Frank Garrison, President