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Statement on Launching the "Who Pays? You Pay" Initiative

February 24, 1999

I am pleased to join the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Justice, and the AARP in launching the new "Who Pays? You Pay" campaign, a new initiative to combat fraud and abuse in the Medicare program.

This new campaign is another step towards ending the fraudulent practices that rob taxpayers and threaten the future of the Medicare Trust Fund. Today we are partnering with beneficiaries to teach them how to detect Medicare fraud. We have worked with, and we will continue to work with, those in the provider community who are equally committed to eliminating health care fraud.

We have a long-standing commitment to crack down on fraud, waste, and abuse, and I am proud to say that since 1993, the administration's efforts have saved taxpayers more than $38 billion, with health care fraud convictions increasing by more than 240 percent. The partnership between providers, the law enforcement community, and beneficiaries created by this initiative is a critical step towards ending waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare program. Physicians, nurses, hospitals, and nursing homes know that it is in everyone's best interest to weed out the bad-apple providers who threaten our ability to provide high-quality and affordable health care for older Americans.

I congratulate Secretary Shalala, Attorney General Reno, and the AARP for their commitment to preserve the Medicare program and ensure the provision of high-quality, affordable health care to our senior citizens.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Rawlings of Ghana

February 24, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. I want to welcome President Rawlings and Mrs. Rawlings and the entire Ghanaian delegation, along with the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, and our other distinguished guests to the White House. Hillary and I are delighted to see you all here.

There was so much interest and enthusiasm about this dinner that we had to move it from the dining room into the East Room. And you might be interested to know that it was in this room that Thomas Jefferson met with Meriwether Lewis to plan the great Lewis and Clark expedition, which explored the American Continent. It is fitting that we are having this dinner here, almost 200 years later, to chart a new century and to explore our relationship with Ghana and with Africa.

It was no accident that Ghana was our first stop, our gateway to Africa, when Hillary and I and our delegation, the Members of Congress, the administration, and citizens traveled to Africa last year. Mr. President, in the last decade, under your leadership, Ghana has made great strides toward fulfilling President Nkrumah's vision of a proud, strong country.

In important ways, it may even have surpassed that vision. Starting our African journey in a democratic country with a growing economy, a powerful commitment to tolerance at home and peace around the world allowed us to highlight for all Americans the progress that Africa has made and the promise of our future together. It allowed us to reaffirm for all of Africa that the United States is proud and determined to build a partnership of mutual respect with African nations which share our dreams of a better world. It also gave us the opportunity to get to know Ghana.

It has become the subject of some raw humor in the White House that I never tire of telling people that we had a half a million people in Independence Square in Ghana. About—[*applause*]—thank you. Every time the Vice President gets a good news story these days, I say, "But have you ever spoken to a half a million people?" [*Laughter*]

Let me say also, Mr. President, we all know that you have so many friends in the United States—quite a few here tonight. I want to mention, though, an astonishing fact that I learned about a friend of Ghana, and yours, who is not here tonight—also a friend of mine, who performed here for the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Stevie Wonder.

He spends considerable time in Ghana, and actually, Mr. President, he has boasted in the United States that he's flown your airplane. [*Laughter*] I hope you wore a seat belt. [*Laughter*] With a story like that, he may be planning to run for office soon.

I want you all to know I have spent an inordinate amount of time thinking about President Rawlings' political predicament. Listen to this: He was elected President by his fellow citizens in 1992. He was reelected in 1996. He loves his country, and he loves being President of his country. His Constitution prevents him from running again in 2000. [*Laughter*] Mr. President, I feel your pain. [*Laughter*]

It seems to me the only response for two slightly scarred but energetic warriors like us is to renew our commitment and dedication in these remaining 2 years of our service, to make them count every day for all our people, so that when our citizens choose new leadership for a new century, we can know that we have done our best to pave their way.

So let us tonight commit together to work on the things that matter to real people and to the children and their future: to strengthen our democracies; to broaden the reach of our economies; to make education and health care better and more widely available; to protect our environment; to work to convince others to seek peaceful solutions to conflicts within and among the nations we can reach. And let us commit to making the bonds between our two nations stronger than ever.

Mr. President, Nana, it is a profound honor for Hillary and for me to have you here. And we now ask all of you to join us in a toast to the President and the First Lady and the people of Ghana.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:03 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nana Konadu Agyeman-Rawlings, wife of President Rawlings; and musician Stevie Wonder.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 24, 1999

On March 1, 1996, by Proclamation 6867, I declared a national emergency to address the disturbance or threatened disturbance of international relations caused by the February 24, 1996, destruction by the Government of Cuba of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. In July 1996 and on subsequent occasions, the Government of Cuba stated its intent to forcefully defend its sovereignty against any U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft that might enter Cuban territorial waters or airspace while involved in a memorial flotilla and peaceful protest. Since these events, the Government of Cuba has not demonstrated that it will refrain from the future use of reckless and excessive force against U.S. vessels or aircraft that may engage in memorial activities or peaceful protest north of Cuba. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 24, 1999.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., February 25, 1999]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on February 26.