

Dingell, it is clear that there is now a bipartisan majority of House Members ready to vote for a strong and enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. Unlike the partisan Senate-passed bill, this bipartisan initiative is a Patients' Bill of Rights not just in name but in reality. It provides meaningful patient protections to all Americans in all health plans, and it holds plans accountable when their actions cause harm to patients.

Today's action proves that patient protections need not and should not be a partisan issue. It is time to do what this bipartisan coalition has done—put the well-being of patients before politics and special interests. I call on Speaker Hastert to schedule a vote on this long-overdue legislation immediately upon return from the congressional recess in September.

Statement on Juvenile Crime Legislation

August 5, 1999

Months after the tragedy at Columbine—and the day before they are set to recess—Congress will finally begin the conference on juvenile crime legislation. Let's show our children that when it comes to their safety, Washington will not take a break. I urge the conferees to stay in Washington and finish work on the bill during the August recess. This is a vital opportunity to take common-sense steps to keep guns out of the wrong hands, prevent youth violence, and steer young people away from crime. They should send me a balanced and bipartisan juvenile crime bill—with the Senate-passed gun provisions—so we can give our Nation's parents more peace of mind as our children return to school.

Statement on Intention To Veto the Republican Tax Plan

August 5, 1999

Whether the Republican tax plan is sent to me today, tomorrow, next week, or next month, I will have no choice but to veto it immediately. It threatens Social Security and Medicare, makes it harder to pay off the

debt, and imperils the prosperity that has brought real benefits to American families.

Executive Order 13133—Working Group on Unlawful Conduct on the Internet

August 5, 1999

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to address unlawful conduct that involves the use of the Internet, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment and Purpose. (a) There is hereby established a working group to address unlawful conduct that involves the use of the Internet (“Working Group”). The purpose of the Working Group shall be to prepare a report and recommendations concerning:

- (1) The extent to which existing Federal laws provide a sufficient basis for effective investigation and prosecution of unlawful conduct that involves the use of the Internet, such as the illegal sale of guns, explosives, controlled substances, and prescription drugs, as well as fraud and child pornography.
- (2) The extent to which new technology tools, capabilities, or legal authorities may be required for effective investigation and prosecution of unlawful conduct that involves the use of the Internet; and
- (3) The potential for new or existing tools and capabilities to educate and empower parents, teachers, and others to prevent or to minimize the risks from unlawful conduct that involves the use of the Internet.

(b) The Working Group shall undertake this review in the context of current Administration Internet policy, which includes support for industry self-regulation where possible, technology-neutral laws and regulations, and an appreciation of the Internet as an important medium both domestically and internationally for commerce and free speech.

Sec. 2. Schedule. The Working Group shall complete its work to the greatest extent

possible and present its report and recommendations to the President and Vice President within 120 days of the date of this order. Prior to such presentation, the report and recommendations shall be circulated through the Office of Management and Budget for review and comment by all appropriate Federal agencies.

Sec. 3. Membership.

(a) The Working Group shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) The Attorney General (who shall serve as Chair of the Working Group).
- (2) The Director of the Office of Management and Budget.
- (3) The Secretary of the Treasury.
- (4) The Secretary of Commerce.
- (5) The Secretary of Education.
- (6) The Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- (7) The Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.
- (8) The Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration.
- (9) The Chair of the Federal Trade Commission.
- (10) The Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration; and
- (11) Other Federal officials deemed appropriate by the Chair of the Working Group.

(b) The co-chairs of the Interagency Working Group on Electronic Commerce shall serve as liaison to and attend meetings of the Working Group. Members of the Working Group may serve on the Working Group through designees.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 5, 1999.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,
8:45 a.m., August 10, 1999]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 6, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on August 11.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Convention on the Prohibition
and Elimination of the Worst Forms
of Child Labor With Documentation**
August 5, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification of the Convention (No. 182) Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, adopted by the International Labor Conference at its 87th Session in Geneva on June 17, 1999, I transmit herewith a certified copy of that Convention. I transmit also for the Senate's information a certified copy of a recommendation (No. 190) on the same subject, adopted by the International Labor Conference on the same date, which amplifies some of the Convention's provisions. No action is called for on the recommendation.

The report of the Department of State, with a letter from the Secretary of Labor, concerning the Convention is enclosed.

As explained more fully in the enclosed letter from the Secretary of Labor, current United States law and practice satisfy the requirements of Convention No. 182. Ratification of this Convention, therefore, should not require the United States to alter in any way its law or practice in this field.

In the interest of clarifying the domestic application of the Convention, my Administration proposes that two understandings accompany U.S. ratification.

The proposed understandings are as follows:

The United States understands that Article 3(d) of Convention 182 does not encompass situations in which children are employed by a parent or by a person standing in the place of a parent on a farm owned or operated by such parent or person.

The United States understands the term "basic education" in Article 7 of Convention 182 means primary education plus one year: eight or nine years of schooling, based on curriculum and not age.

These understandings would have no effect on our international obligations under Convention No. 182.

Convention No. 182 represents a true breakthrough for the children of the world. Ratification of this instrument will enhance the ability of the United States to provide global leadership in the effort to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. I recommend that the Senate give its advice and consent to the ratification of ILO Convention No. 182.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 5, 1999.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 6.

Statement on the Convention on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

August 6, 1999

Yesterday, I sent to the United States Senate for advice and consent to ratification International Labor Organization Convention Number 182, the "Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor."

Around the world, tens of millions of children are deprived of their childhood and subjected to the worst forms of child labor—slavery; forced or compulsory labor, including forced recruitment for use in armed conflict; prostitution; pornography; use for illicit activities; and other forms of harmful and unsafe work. Education, not hard labor, is ultimately the path to a better life for families and a stronger economy in the countries affected. But too often, very young children are denied an education and forced into abusive and exploitative work that poses immediate risks of harm and can also perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

Convention Number 182 was adopted unanimously by all the government, labor, and business delegates to the ILO Conference at its 87th session in Geneva on June 17, 1999. The convention will establish a widely recognized international standard for

the protection of children against the worst forms of child labor. During my visit to the ILO Conference in June, I urged other nations to ratify the convention. The United States should do so as well.

Under the leadership of Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, the U.S. helped to shape a convention that can be widely ratified. A tripartite panel of American government, labor and business representatives has reviewed the convention and concluded that the United States can ratify the convention without changing our laws or regulations. Under the convention, the United States and all ratifying nations accept a basic obligation to "take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor, as a matter of urgency."

By ratifying Convention Number 182, the Senate will make clear our resolve that no child should be subjected to slavery, prostitution or pornography, used for drug activities, or work under conditions likely to harm their health, safety, or morals. I urge the United States Senate to support this convention to demonstrate our commitment and enhance our ability to help lead the world in eliminating the worst forms of child labor. I thank Senator Tom Harkin for his continuing leadership in the fight to eliminate abusive child labor. I look forward to working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate leadership to advance this convention toward ratification.

Remarks on Departure for Little Rock, Arkansas, and an Exchange With Reporters

August 6, 1999

Drought/National Economy

The President. Good morning. Before I leave to go home to Arkansas, I want to comment briefly on two matters.

First, I want to talk about the action we're taking to address the terrible, crippling drought that continues to grip so much of our Nation. Throughout much of this country, we have seen the worst drought since the Dust Bowl days. And as the National

Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration will formally announce later today, in Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and Rhode Island, this is the worst drought for farmers ever recorded.

Such a natural calamity can have devastating consequences, not only for farmers but for small businesses and communities that depend upon a thriving agricultural sector and for the electric power systems so vital to our Nation. We're worked hard to help the victims of the drought and the heat wave. But as weather disruptions become even more common, and they will, they will demand a more coordinated response by the National Government. So today I'm directing that the White House immediately convene a task force of the relevant cabinet agencies to coordinate our efforts and focus our attack on this problem. We must do more. It is our duty as a national community.

Second, I want to talk a little more about our efforts to continue our prosperity for all Americans. For 6½ years now, we have pursued a different economic strategy from the previous 12 years; one based on fiscal discipline, investing in our people, selling our products around the world. It has produced sustained prosperity, the longest peacetime expansion in history. Now, it has also produced an era of surpluses after 12 years in which we quadrupled the national debt. This is working. Today we received more evidence.

Just this morning it was announced that America's remarkably low unemployment rate remains at a remarkably low rate of 4.3 percent, that inflation is low, and that last month alone, over 300,000 new jobs were created in America. This brings the total since January 1993 when I took office to 19.2 million new jobs.

We should not abandon a strategy that is working, especially since now we are beginning an era of surpluses which will enable us to meet our big, long-term challenges for the 21st century, the aging of America, the education of our children, sustaining our long-term economic growth. Therefore I am disappointed, though not surprised, that the majority party in Congress has chosen to pass its massive tax cut; one that plainly would damage our economic future and make it im-

possible to secure and modernize Medicare. But again, I want to assure the American people—because this tax cut will not save and strengthen Medicare, because it will not add a day to the Social Security Trust Fund, because it will not pay down the debt and pay it off for the first time in over 150 years—this tax cut will not become law.

This morning it was reported in the press that the Republican leadership has revealed that actually they have the secret strategy even to spend the Social Security surplus. They very explicitly want to raid the Social Security surplus to pay for huge economic—huge tax cuts and a risky economic scheme. They say they're spending more money now to force that result. Now, that's the sort of thing they did before that got us in trouble and gave us an average unemployment rate that was too high and a growth rate that was too low and huge, huge deficits.

This really troubles me because for the last 2 years they have promised the American people they would work with us to save Social Security first. I can think of nothing more cynical and irresponsible. My strategy is still the same. Let's do first things first. Let's save Social Security, save and strengthen Medicare, pay off the national debt for the first time since 1835, figure out what we have to invest in the education of our children and in the national defense and preserving the environment and our essential mission, and then give the rest of the money back to the American people in a tax cut.

We can have a tax cut, but it is wrong to put the cart before the horse. It is wrong to plan the vacation before we pay the home mortgage and send the kids to college. That's what they're proposing to do. It is wrong. It will take us right back to the situation that got us in so much trouble in the 1980's, and I will not countenance it. But we can make progress.

Just today there was a report that, led by the Republican physicians in the House of Representatives, enough Republicans have joined the Democrats to guarantee that the House will pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. This is the sort of thing we can do if we work across party lines, as we did with welfare reform, as we did in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. We can do something

that would have seemed impossible just a few years ago. We can pay off the national debt, keep interest rates low, and give our children a healthy economy for a generation. We can save Social Security. We can save and strengthen Medicare with preventive benefits and the prescription drug. We can do these things. We can invest in our children's future. We can use this historic opportunity of a lifetime to do our duty by the next generation.

This is not a time to walk away from that duty, and again I implore the Members of the Republican majority to come up with their own Medicare plan, sit down with me and talk about it, figure out what we have to spend and invest, and then we can give the rest back to the American people in a tax cut. But we have to do first things first.

I will not—I will not see, after 6½ years of progress, us return to the problems that we faced in the years before I took office. We're not going to do it. It is not right. We should be looking to the 21st century and facing the challenges and doing right by our children. And that's exactly what I intend to do.

Drought Relief and Farm Aid

Q. Mr. President, on this Federal drought task force, sir—on this Federal drought task force, sir, what specifically do you have in mind? What could the Federal Government do that it's not doing now? And how do you respond to critics who say you haven't pushed hard enough for drought relief now for drought-stricken farmers?

The President. Well, I think that there should be more drought relief in the agricultural efforts. I believe we have to go back and—before the farm bill comes to me—the emergency farm bill that is working its way through Congress is designed largely to deal with the problems of the last 4 years—record-high world crops, the collapse of the markets in Asia, the collapse of the prices. And that's important because that deals with what all the farmers do off the East Coast. But if you look at what they're facing here, there needs to be a special provision to deal with the drought crisis. And I hope that, and believe that, there will be.

So, I wish we could have done it before the August recess, but I think it will be there in time to aid the farmers. I don't believe that this Congress will walk away without doing something to deal with the emergency problem caused by the drought. I'm going to be with James Lee Witt in Arkansas tonight. We're both going to be home, and I expect to have a discussion with him about it—about what we should do.

Yes, go ahead.

Q. And what about the task force?

Nomination of Roger W. Ferguson, Jr.

Q. What about Roger Ferguson? We understand that you're going to appoint him today to the FED?

The President. I am. He will be the first African-American Vice Chair of the FED. He is superbly qualified. He has served well. And I am very excited about the prospect of his service. I'm glad he's willing to do it.

Tax Cut

Q. Mr. President, you've made a point of saying that the only way of strengthening Medicare and meeting your priorities would be to have a tax cut in the \$300 billion range. Are you saying that the Republicans have to come down to that range? And if so, if it were to include an across-the-board tax cut or components that you don't philosophically agree with, would you be willing to entertain those as long as it's in the \$300 billion parameters?

The President. No. Let me back up and say first of all, the most important thing to me is that Congress engage in the same exercise I did and that I believe the Democrats on the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee tried to do, which is to say, what do we believe it will take to secure Medicare, provide a modest prescription drug benefit, these preventive changes, and all the modernization and competition things that I think we all agree need to be done—what will it take to do that?

What does the Congress—even the Republicans are up there spending a lot of money—what about the money they're going to spend over and above the '97 balanced budget limits for education, for medical research, for the teaching hospitals, the inner-