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of the most significant is an end to the "slots" rules that restrict access to O'Hare, LaGuardia, and John F. Kennedy International airports. The restrictions will be eased almost immediately, and then ended completely in 2002 in Chicago and in 2007 in New York City. This Act also substantially achieves a second Administration proposal to enhance competition. We proposed allowing a $2 increase in the current $3-per-segment Passenger Facility Charge, with a condition that a "dominated hub" airport provide a competition plan that lays out how new entrants and other competing carriers can be included in the airport facility plans. This bill includes the requirement for a competition plan and a $1.50 increase. Because effective competition has not worked as well on lightly traveled routes (with resulting high fares), we endorsed the Senate's rural air service pilot program that is substantially adopted in this Act.

This legislation provides benefits to passengers and the aviation community, and represents a first step toward our long-term objectives for modernization and stability of FAA's critical air traffic control services. I thank the Members of Congress who led the 3-year effort to enact this bill, and I am pleased to sign it into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 5, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 1000, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 106–181.

Statement on Signing the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century

April 5, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1000, the "Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century." This legislation contains important measures to improve aviation safety, increase airline competition, protect air travelers with disabilities, and boost assistance for the families of victims of aviation disasters. The bill also takes an additional step toward our long-term objectives for modernizing and reforming the FAA's provision of critical air traffic control services.

I call on Congress to join me in moving forward to further system-wide reform of air traffic control. While this legislation seeks to provide substantial funding guarantees for airport construction and other capital investment, I remain concerned about the possible effect of the bill's procedural requirements on future appropriations for air traffic control and other crucial safety functions funded by the FAA's Operations account. My administration will work with the Congress to achieve more balanced funding of aviation programs in fiscal year 2001.

NOTE: H.R. 1000, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 106–181.

Statement on the Conclusion of the Independent Counsel's Investigation of Alexis Herman

April 5, 2000

I am very pleased to learn that Independent Counsel Ralph Lancaster has concluded his investigation. Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman has for many years served our Nation with selfless dedication and extraordinary talent. She did not deserve what she has had to endure over the past many months. As I said at the start of this inquiry, nearly 2 years ago, Secretary Herman did nothing wrong. But throughout it all, she was never deterred from her mission: making life better for America's working families. I am proud to call her my friend, and I am honored that she has been willing to work in this administration on behalf of working people everywhere.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report on Hazardous Materials Transportation

April 5, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

I herewith transmit the Department of Transportation's Biennial Report on Hazardous Materials Transportation for Calendar