

House attempted to undermine the administration's historic gun safety agreement with Smith & Wesson last night. Despite the failure of this attempt, the Republican leadership continues its assault on this agreement at a time when our Nation loses nearly 12 children per day in gunfire.

We should be doing all we can to move forward in the fight to reduce gun violence, not backward. I urge Congress to focus on measures that will improve public safety by fully funding my national gun enforcement initiative to give law enforcement even more tools to crack down on gun criminals. And Congress should finally pass the stalled commonsense gun safety legislation to close the gun show loophole and take other steps to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

Statement on the Shootings of Government Meat Inspectors

June 22, 2000

I was shocked and saddened to learn of the tragic shootings of three government inspectors, including two U.S. Department of Agriculture employees, in California. The Federal Government is working closely with local authorities on this matter. This grievous act was committed against dedicated individuals who were working to ensure the public's health and safety. I want to join all Americans in extending our thoughts and prayers to the victims and their families and coworkers.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on National Long-Term Energy Needs

June 22, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

With so much attention focused on the recent spike in gasoline prices and OPEC's decision to increase production quotas, it is critical that we not lose sight of our nation's long-term energy needs. For seven years, my Administration has pursued a sound, comprehensive policy to address those needs. Regrettably, several key elements of this Administration's strategy have languished in Congress. In recent days, in fact, budget initiatives to strengthen our energy supply have

suffered significant cuts, while some Members have advanced proposals that would seriously harm our environment in the name of energy security. I urge you to work closely with me to enact these critical energy proposals without further delay.

I remain very concerned about high gasoline prices and find the situation in the Chicago/Milwaukee region particularly troubling. Last week, the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Environmental Protection Agency sent analysts to the region to explore the reasons for this price differential. While a number of factors appear to have contributed to the unusually high prices in the region, it is possible that they may not account for the entire increase in gas prices. The Federal Trade Commission has initiated an investigation of pricing practices in the region to determine if there is any unfair or illegal activity there. We look forward to the results of these investigations.

Our concern about high gasoline prices in the short-term, however, cannot be allowed to distract us from addressing the long-term energy needs of our nation. My Administration has pursued an energy policy that provides a comprehensive and balanced approach to addressing the nation's energy needs. Unfortunately, Congress is considering proposals that are unnecessary and would do irrevocable harm to the environment, such as opening the Arctic refuge to drilling. Instead, Congress should act on the following key pieces of my energy policy.

First, I have proposed a \$4 billion package of tax incentives to encourage consumers to purchase more efficient cars, homes, and consumer products. Congress has failed to enact this package for over two years, even though these tax credits would save consumers money, protect our environment, and reduce our dependence on foreign oil. I also have proposed tax incentives to support renewable energy and the domestic oil industry, including the expensing of geological and geophysical expenses and delay rental payments.

Second, over the past seven years I have repeatedly proposed significant increases in Federal investments in responsible domestic sources of energy, including most recently \$1.4 billion in FY 2001 for high-priority items