

H.R. 4810 would cost more than \$280 billion over 10 years if its provisions were permanent, making it significantly more expensive than either of the bills originally approved by the House and the Senate. It is poorly targeted toward delivering marriage penalty relief—only about 40 percent of the cost of H.R. 4810 actually would reduce marriage penalties. It also provides little tax relief to those families that need it most, while devoting a large fraction of its benefits to families with higher incomes.

Taking into account H.R. 4810, the fiscally irresponsible tax cuts passed by the House Ways and Means Committee this year provide about as much benefit to the top 1 percent of Americans as to the bottom 80 percent combined. Families in the top 1 percent get an average tax break of over \$16,000, while a middle-class family gets only \$220 on average. But if interest rates went up because of the congressional majority's plan by even one-third of one percent, then mortgage payments for a family with a \$100,000 mortgage would go up by \$270, leaving them worse off than if they had no tax cut at all.

We should have tax cuts this year, but they should be the right ones, targeted to working families to help our economy grow—not tax breaks that will help only a few while putting our prosperity at risk. I have proposed a program of targeted tax cuts that will give a middle-class American family substantially more benefits than the Republican plan at less than half the cost. Including our carefully targeted marriage penalty relief, two-thirds of the relief will go to the middle 60 percent of American families. Our tax cuts will also help to send our children to college, with a tax deduction or 28 percent tax credit for up to \$10,000 in college tuition a year; help to care for family members who need long-term care, through a \$3,000 long-term care tax credit; help to pay for child care and to ease the burden on working families with three or more children; and help to fund desperately needed school construction.

And because our plan will cost substantially less than the tax cuts passed by the Congress, we'll still have the resources we need to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit; to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare; and to pay off the debt by 2012—

so that we can keep interest rates low, keep our economy growing, and provide lower home mortgage, car, and college loan payments for the American people.

This surplus comes from the hard work and ingenuity of the American people. We owe it to them to make the best use of it—for all of them, and for our children's future.

Since the adjournment of the Congress has prevented my return of H.R. 4810 within the meaning of Article I, section 7, clause 2 of the Constitution, my withholding of approval from the bill precludes its becoming law. *The Pocket Veto Case*, 279 U.S. 655 (1929). In addition to withholding my signature and thereby invoking my constitutional power to “pocket veto” bills during an adjournment of the Congress, to avoid litigation, I am also sending H.R. 4810 to the House of Representatives with my objections, to leave no possible doubt that I have vetoed the measure.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
August 5, 2000.

Remarks at a Dinner for Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts

August 5, 2000

Well, thank you very much. I've had a wonderful time. When I saw what a big crowd it was, I thought I had come to the wrong place. I thought you were just having a family reunion. [*Laughter*] I wanted to come here for a long time, and I'm honored to be here for Kathleen. I have said—every time I go to Maryland I say she is the finest Lieutenant Governor in America by a long stretch, but it is clearly true.

You heard Mark say this, but I came here not only because of my friendship for her and so many members of her family but because she did make Maryland the first State in the country to require community service for graduation from high school. That meant something to me. And she and Governor Glendening were out there on the frontlines fighting for gun safety legislation when the

NRA was trying to beat their brains out and beat our brains out, and I haven't succeeded in Congress yet, but they did succeed in Maryland in passing sweeping gun safety legislation. And she deserves a lot of credit for it.

And I can say so much else about her, but I admire her so much. And she and her husband and her kids, they're the kind of family that we ought to lift up in America. And I look forward to her elevation, and who knows, maybe someday I'll be knocking on doors for her when she's running for national office. I'd like to do that.

Now, let me say—Ethel, you may have to put me up tonight—[laughter]—and if so, that would tickle me, because Ethel's been sending me these raunchy Valentine cards for years. [Laughter] And I'm completely in love with her, and I keep trying to get some tabloid to write something sleazy about it, and I haven't been able to so far. [Laughter]

But the reason you may have to put me up tonight is, on the way out, Hillary said, "You're going to this fundraiser for Kathleen tonight." I said, "Yes." And she said, "And last week you went to one for Patrick." I said, "Yes." She said, "And a couple of weeks ago you went to one for Teddy." She said, "But it's your wife that's running for Senator from New York in 90 days"—[laughter]—"where it costs \$30 million-plus to run." She said, "Maybe they'll just put you up tonight." [Laughter] And then she said she was glad I was going and wished she could be here. But I thank you—thank you, Ethel, for being my friend all these years.

I want to thank Joe Kennedy. I miss him so much in the Congress, and I was reminded of how much I missed him when I saw him up here speaking tonight. And I'd say Mark has a good future, wouldn't you? [Applause] He did a great job over here.

When Ted and Vicki were taking me through the house tonight with Ethel, or all the houses, and Sarge and Eunice and Pat went with us, and Sarge told me in a couple of weeks he was going to be 85 years old, I thought, "Well, Mark, you've got another 40 years to run for office. You don't have to even be in a hurry. It's great." [Laughter]

Let me just say one word, too, if I might, about Senator Kennedy. He has been so good

to me and to Hillary and to our family and so wonderful to work with. And when we suffered the terrible disappointment of losing the Congress in the 1994 elections, you know, a lot of people wanted to quit. Some people did quit, because the Democrats had been the majority for quite a long while, except for a 6-year interruption in the Senate. And the thing that I liked most about Ted Kennedy is that he doesn't understand the meaning of the word quit.

You know, he was sort of like me. I woke up the next day, and I said, "Boy, we got a terrible licking. We've got to figure out why it happened and go take it back and keep working for the things we believe in, and in the meanwhile, we could certainly stop them from doing what they're trying to do." And Ted thought it was a pretty good fight.

I cannot tell you what an inspiration he has been not only to me but to people in the Congress, just reminding them that nobody's got a right to be in the majority; nobody's got a right to be in office. But we do if we have the office, a responsibility—we have a responsibility to get up every day and make something good happen. And that's what he does. And I should tell you, I have said many times that there would be no way in the world any well-informed historian could make a list of the 10 greatest United States Senators from the beginning of the Republic in the 18th century without putting Ted Kennedy's name on it. That's absolutely true.

I also want to thank my old friend Brendan Byrne, the former Governor of New Jersey, for being here tonight. And two of my former Ambassadors, Tom Siewert, who was my Ambassador to Sweden, and Elizabeth Bagley, who represented us in Portugal, are here tonight. I thank them for being here. The chairman of our Democratic Convention in L.A., Terry McAuliffe, is here tonight. He's probably the one who has really been copying your license number down. [Laughter]

Let me also say that I first came to this place—not to this compound; I've never been here before—but I first came here 32 years ago with my college roommate. And I nearly drowned, actually, swimming off the waters here. It was just a year after then-Senator Robert Kennedy had filled in for his

brother at a meeting that my class at Georgetown sponsored, along with a Massachusetts club. And my roommate, Tommy Caplan, got him to come. And he came with me tonight, and I think that's pretty sweet that after 32 years we're still bumming around together. So I want to thank him for coming.

Now, I want to stop walking down memory lane for just a minute and tell you that I believe that Kathleen represents the best of what I want for the future. I'm really proud of my wife for running for the Senate seat once held by Robert Kennedy in New York. I am glad that there are devoted people who still believe public service is noble and worthy and worth spending your life on. And I'm always tickled when the people who run against them think they can't beat them head up, so they just try to breed personal resentment against them, as if public service were some sort of possession. Well, for some of them it might be, but for us, it's an opportunity to serve.

And all the memories that are piled high here, from President Kennedy and Senator Kennedy and Ambassador Joe Kennedy before, all the memories that are embodied in the wonderful pictures I saw in the house, and the sacrifice of their older brother in World War II, and all the things that this farflung network of younger people have done, really make a case for the primacy of citizenship.

What's that got to do with anything? Well, the Republicans just had their convention. We're about to have ours. Kathleen wants to run for Governor. A lot of the other young people here are going to run for things, themselves. Some of you may run who aren't even related to the Kennedys. *[Laughter]* And what I would like to say to you is that what happens this year will have a lot to do with the world in which you grow, in which you raise your children, and if you're fortunate enough to be elected, the world in which you serve.

I have done everything I could do for 7½ years to turn our country around. We were in a time of economic distress, social division, political decline in 1992. And we not only have the strongest economy in our history, but this is a more just nation. We have the lowest minority unemployment we ever re-

corded, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, the lowest single-parent household poverty rate in 46 years, a lower crime rate, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years—it's a more just society—the lowest child poverty rate in a generation.

But the issue is, what are we going to do about it? I was pleased that the Republicans said one thing at their convention I really like. They did acknowledge these were good times. *[Laughter]* And it was both perceptive and generous of them to do that. *[Laughter]* But of course, they differed about what caused it. I noticed it was a totally different take than they had back when Mr. Reagan was in office. And they differed about what we ought to do with it. That's good. That's what makes America a great and thriving democracy.

But what I want to say to you is that what you're about to do this year as citizens—and this election is every bit as important as the election in 1992. In fact, it may be more important. Why? Because you didn't have to be a genius in 1992 to know that the country was in the ditch, and if we were going to get out of it we had to change. But it takes some real thought and analysis and kind of hooking your brain in with your heart to feel your way and think your way through what we should do with this phenomenal time we're living in.

And one of the things that has concerned me, as President and as a citizen and as someone who is not on the ballot this year, is all the stories I read saying that people think the economy's gone along so well that it doesn't really much matter what happens in this election, or stories I read that say that there's really not much difference in the public's mind between the two candidates.

What I would like to say to you is, there are three things you need to remember about this election: one is, it is profoundly important; two is, there are huge differences; three is, only the Democrats want you to know what they are. What does that tell you about who to vote for?

If you see the reports in the paper today, finally a kind of a reassessment of the convention that was just adjourned, and interviewing all these undecided voters and they said, "It was really nice. It was very appealing

and all, but where are the specifics?" There's a reason they weren't there, because they can't do that—not and win. [Laughter] And the object is to win. So I say to all of you, if you believe in the spirit of public service and the piling high of sacrifice that is embodied by this magnificent piece of history that Ethel's made it possible for us to share tonight, you've got to go out and do your part in this election. I can tell you, it would be a lot easier for Kathleen to be Governor if Al Gore is President. It will be a lot easier if Dick Gephardt is Speaker. If Tom Daschle is the majority leader, it will be easier.

And let me just say, just very briefly, you have got to tell the people you know who are not here tonight—every one of you has friends who are not as political as you are. I hope you do. Otherwise, you'd all go nuts if everybody were like us. [Laughter] Every one of you do. What are you going to tell them about this election? The first thing I want you to tell them is, it is a really big election. What a country does with an unprecedented moment of prosperity may be a bigger test of its character than what you do in adversity.

There's not a person in this audience tonight over 30 who hasn't made at least one mistake in life, at a time—not because it was so tough but because things were going so well you thought there was just no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Isn't that right? Everybody—if you're over 30, that's happened to you. Now, that's all I'm worried about in this election. If we get that out of the way, the rest of it's fine.

What are the differences? What does it matter? Let me just mention two or three. I think this is a moment for laying before the American people the great challenges and great opportunities of the 21st century. I think we ought to say this is not a time for complacency. Who knows when we'll have times this good again. We have to think about the long term and do the big things.

We have to deal with the aging of America. We have to deal with the fact that we've got the largest and most diverse group of school-children we've ever had. We have to deal with our opportunities to spread this economy to people in places who have been left behind in our prosperity. We have to deal

with environmental challenges. We have to deal with the challenges, as well as the opportunities, presented to us by the revolution in information technology and in biomedical sciences. We have to fulfill our responsibilities around the world to help people deal with the challenges of AIDS, of malaria, of TB, of crushing debt in the poorest countries in the world. We have to deal with new security threats. There's a whole world out there. We should be thinking big, big, big, big.

Now, let me just deal with two or three things. The economy, one of the reasons I think Al Gore ought to be President and Hillary ought to be in the Senate and Ted ought to be a committee chairman again is that we didn't quadruple the debt of this country in 12 years, and we got rid of the deficit in 6, and we're going to have \$400 billion of the debt paid down, and we still have the lowest average tax burden on average families we've had in 35 years, and we've doubled investment in education.

Now, it's a good economic strategy. But the American people have got a big choice to make here—huge. And they don't understand yet how different the two strategies are. Our strategy is, let's modernize what got us this far; let's keep paying down the debt, keep investing in education and science and technology and health care and the environment; give the American people a tax cut we can afford. In other words, do those things and then have a tax cut with the rest, and help people send their kids to college, pay for long-term care for the elderly and the disabled, increase tax benefits for lower income people with lots of kids, help people save for retirement, moderate the marriage penalty but don't, for goodness sakes, go back to the bad old days of big deficits and high interest rates.

Now, it took me a while to say that. Their plan is so much easier, and it sounds better at first. They say, "Hey, we've got this big surplus. It's your money. We're going to give it back to you." Doesn't take very long to say, and it sounds so good. Well, there's a few problems with it. The first problem is, they don't save any money for their promises. If they do what they say they're going to do on Social Security, that will cost a trillion dollars. If they do what they say they're going

to do on defense, that will cost another \$200 or \$300 billion. And then there will be emergencies along the way.

But forget about all that. Their tax program alone would take away the entire projected surplus. The big problem with their economic policy is, it's a projected surplus. You know, did you ever get one of those letters in the mail from Ed McMahon and the Publishers Clearing House? *[Laughter]* "You may have won \$10 million." That's a projected surplus. *[Laughter]*

You can use this, and you don't have to give me credit. *[Laughter]* You've got to clarify the choices. So tell people, say, "When you got that letter, if you went out the next day and spent the \$10 million, you should support them. Otherwise, you had better stick with us and keep this economy going." *[Laughter]*

Now, let me tell you. We got an economic study last week that said that the Vice President's plan, as opposed to the Republican plan, which would keep paying the debt down, would keep interest rates at least—at least—one percent lower over a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you in tax cuts effectively? It means \$250 billion less in home mortgage payments, \$30 billion less in car payments, and \$15 billion less in student loan payments. Never mind lower business loans and all that. This is a huge deal.

Let me give you another example. It's very important to Kathleen and to the whole Kennedy family and that affects the Governors big-time because it will have a big impact on the crime rate. Gun safety, what's our position? Our position is, I was right to sign the Brady bill, and the previous Republican administration was wrong to veto it. And since then, 500,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers haven't been able to get handguns.

Now, you know what they said to me when I signed the Brady bill—the "againers," the ones that were against it? They said, "This bill will do no good because all the real crooks buy their guns at gun shows or urban flea markets, so this won't do any good." Well, it turned out they were wrong. We've got a half million people that couldn't get guns.

So now, we want to close the loophole and apply to gun shows and urban flea markets

and put child trigger locks on and stop these large capacity ammunition clips from being imported into America and getting around our assault weapons ban, and the same crowd that once said that's where the criminals got their guns, they don't want us to do that now.

So our position is—and let me just faithfully repeat the Vice President's position—close the gun show loophole, mandate child trigger locks, ban large capacity ammunition clips, and establish a photo ID licensing system for people that want to buy handguns so they have to pass a background check, and show they can use the gun safety. Now, that's his position.

Their position is, more concealed weapons, even in houses of worship. Now, it's not like there's no evidence here. This is like the economy. That's the last point I should have made on the economy. It's not like you don't have any evidence. We tried it their way for 12 years. We've tried it our way for 8 years. Just ask your friends to make a judgment on the evidence.

The same thing is true on crime. Crime has gone down for 8 years in a row. Gun crime is down 35 percent. Listen, this is a huge issue. There are people's lives on the line based on who the American people think is right here.

And I could go through every—I just want to mention one more, because it's really important to me, and Senator Kennedy talked a lot about it, and Kathleen did. If God came to me tonight when I laid my head down and said, "This is the last night of your life, and you're not going to be able to finish your term, but I will give you one wish for America," I would not wish to continue the prosperity. I wouldn't wish for zero crime rate. I would wish for us finally to be one America, to be undivided by race, by gender, by income, by sexual orientation, by all these things.

Because, you know, we all find in our personal lives and our public lives that most of life's greatest wounds are self-inflicted. America can solve any problem. We can meet any challenge. We can overcome any mistake, except the poison in the human heart. So I've worked hard for that. That's why Ted and I are trying to raise the minimum wage

again. That's why I want to broaden the family and medical leave law. That's why we did have that event for people who are mentally retarded, but fully able to do so much, on the White House lawn. That's why I'm for the hate crimes legislation and the employment nondiscrimination legislation and all the civil rights initiatives we've undertaken.

And you know, we're just different there. We're for the hate crimes bill, and their leadership's against it in Washington because gays are protected. We're for the "Employment and Non-Discrimination Act", and they're not. And we want to raise the minimum wage, and they don't. And I could just give you lots and lots of examples.

And you know, we really do believe that the people that served this dinner tonight ought to have as much of a chance to send their kids to college of those of us who ate it. That's what we believe. That's what we believe. So I ask you to think about that. And I want to make one last point.

Kathleen introduced my longtime friend Dr. Craig Venter there, who has done so much to break through the barriers of ignorance on the human genome. There's one other thing I think you ought to think about in this election. It is very important that people be elected to important positions who understand the future.

I used to joke that before Craig and the people from NIH came to the White House the other day for us to announce that the sequencing—the first rough sequencing of the human genome had been completed—I had to read for a year to understand what I was going to say for those 15 minutes. [Laughter]

But you know, there are a lot of issues that have to be faced. How are we going to deal with all the implications when young mothers get to bring a little gene card home with their babies? What would Ethel's life have been like? How would it have been different? How much more hope and less worry would there have been? And would there have been more worry, if when every one of those little Kennedy tots she brought home from the hospital, had been a little gene card there that said, "Okay, this is the things that—now, Kathleen, this is the things that are likely to happen to her that are good, and the things

that are likely to happen to her that are bad"? That's going to happen. And some people will want to use that information to deny people employment or a pay raise or a promotion or health insurance. I think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands all that. And I think it's important.

Al Gore—I noticed the Republicans made fun of him on whether he invented the Internet or not—which, by the way, if you read the New Republic, you'll see it's a totally bum rap, like a lot of the things they lay on him. But I'll tell you this. He sponsored legislation years and years ago when the Internet was the private province of a handful of physicists to make it broadly available to all people. And then in 1996, when we passed the telecommunications law, the Vice President said, "We can't do this unless we have an E-rate that guarantees that every single school and hospital in America can afford to hook up to the Internet so all of our kids can get a world-class education." I think we ought to have somebody that understands that in the White House—all these things, and what they matter.

So when you leave here tonight, another thing you'll remember most is seeing Ethel and Ted and all this younger generation, thinking that Mark and Kathleen have such enormous potential. But it's important that you do your job now. And it's important that we not sit on our laurels over the last 8 years.

Look, I'm grateful that I got a chance to serve as President. I listened to a lot of those guys at the convention. It sounded to me like they thought we had interrupted the ordinary flow of things when I got elected. [Laughter] I remember it being struck in '92 how they really thought there would never be anybody in our party elected President again. They kept referring to me as the Governor of a small southern State. [Laughter] And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do.

Listen to me now. I still do. Nobody is entitled to any of these jobs. If my life had taken one or two different turns I'd be home doing real estate deeds in some law office right now. So I don't feel like a lot of them do. I'm grateful for every day that I had here. I am very grateful. And I don't think—I don't believe—I don't think anybody's entitled to

serve. But I think that before anyone serves, the people have to make sure they know what they're doing. Now, you hear me tonight, and you can go out and tell people this. Tell people what the economic differences are. Tell them what the law enforcement differences are. Tell them what the environmental, the educational, the health care differences are. Tell them what the differences are in terms of what kind of national community we're going to be. Talk to them about these future issues. Climate change is very real, folks. I know it's cool tonight, and it's nice. If we don't do something, within 20 or 30 years the Everglades and the sugarcane fields in Louisiana will start flooding. The polar ice cap's already breaking up at an alarming rate. It's a big deal. I think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands it.

And I tell you, I've just tried to have a talk tonight. I haven't given much of a speech. But I know this: Things can get away from you. Ted said in a wistful way when he was talking tonight that—he didn't say it exactly this way, but I will say it exactly this way—before we broke the record for the longest period of economic expansion in history, the last longest economic expansion in history was between 1961 and 1969—the Kennedy-Johnson years. And I graduated from high school in 1964, and I thought, just like, apparently, a lot of voters today thought—thought, “Man, you couldn't mess this economy up with a stick of dynamite.”

Unemployment was low; inflation was low; growth was high—no problem. I thought all the civil rights problems were going to be solved in the courts or in the Congress. I didn't dream Vietnam would get out of hand. I never dreamed we would have riots in the streets or that people I literally adored could be killed. But it all happened in 4 short years. And then, the last longest economic expansion in history was history.

You need to nourish and cherish this moment. I have waited for 35 years for my country to be once again in the position to build the future of our dreams for our children. I am grateful that this family has given so much to that end. But in the end, we rise or fall on the good judgment and the good service of the people. Do not blow this election. The best is still out there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Lieutenant Governor Townsend's husband, David, and daughters Kate, Kerry, Meaghan, and Maeve; cousin, Mark Shriver; mother, Ethel Kennedy; uncle, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, and his wife, Vicki; uncle, Sargent Shriver; and aunts Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Patricia Kennedy. The President also referred to Gov. Parris Glendening of Maryland and J. Craig Venter, president and chief scientific officer, Celera Genomics Corp.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

August 6, 2000

Thank you. Well, first of all, I want to thank the Biondis for having us back at their home this year and for raising all this money. And I want to thank the Iscols and the others who helped them. And I want to thank all of you for helping Hillary.

I can hardly add anything to what Carol said; I thought that was great. I hope we got it on tape somewhere. [*Laughter*] But I would like to say just a couple of things about Hillary and about the election in a larger sense.

It is not often that someone runs for the Senate to do work that he or she has been preparing to do for 30 years. When I met Hillary, in 1971 in the springtime, wearing a yellow shirt—that's why I wore it tonight—[*laughter*]—I can't believe I said that. [*Laughter*] Anyway, she was working on children's issues. She wrote an article when we were in law school on the best interests of the child and what they really meant—one, I might add, that the Republicans attacked her for in 1992 when I ran for President, and one I was only too happy to defend.

She took an extra year when we were in law school to work at the Yale Child Studies Center in the Yale hospital, so she could learn more about children's biological development and the nature of child development and how it would impact on the law and what we could do to better give our kids—all of