

Because the spread of HIV has reached catastrophic proportions in many areas of our global community, AIDS has become a national and international security threat. The United States is working hard to develop partnerships with other nations and to mobilize a greatly expanded global response to address HIV/AIDS through our Leadership and Investment in Fighting an Epidemic Initiative. And this week, we will host a White House Summit of Religious Leaders to underscore the important role the world's faith communities play in preventing the spread of HIV and in caring for those affected by HIV. Many care and treatment programs around the world are operated by religious-based organizations, and often these groups provide the only available source of care. The summit will highlight successful efforts and raise awareness of our moral obligations in addressing HIV and AIDS.

Our goals are clear, and our resolve is firm. Working with our partners at home and abroad, we will triumph over the tragedy of HIV/AIDS and ensure a bright, healthy future for our children.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 1, 2000, as World AIDS Day. I invite the Governors of the States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of the other territories subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in reaffirming our commitment to defeating HIV and AIDS. I encourage every American to participate in appropriate commemorative programs and ceremonies in workplaces, houses of worship, and other community centers, to reach out to protect and educate our people, and to provide hope and help to all who are living with HIV and AIDS.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on December 4.

Remarks at the G&P Foundation Angel Ball 2000 in New York City

November 30, 2000

Well, first of all, thank you, Denise, for the saxophone. I'll have a little more time to play it in a week or two. [Laughter] And thank you for the wonderful gift. But let me say to all of you, I think that we should be here honoring Denise for remembering her daughter in such a magnificent way.

And I also want to thank Philip for all that you have done to make this evening possible. And I want to thank the other honorees tonight, for the power of their examples. Michael Jackson, who has been so kind to us, thank you for the wonderful thing you said, and Sir Paul McCartney. I don't know, I got the saxophone at an event which honored two of the greatest musical geniuses of the 20th century. I don't know what that says. [Laughter]

And I would like to thank Her Majesty Queen Noor, who has been a wonderful friend to Hillary and to me and, I think, is one of the truly great citizens of the world alive today. I thank her.

And thank you, Larry King, for being here. I forgive you for using this occasion to hit me up for our exit interview. [Laughter] I am not a very good story. You should be down in Florida doing interviews tonight. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, I want to just echo a thing or two Hillary said. I love this event. I had a wonderful time 2 years ago. I've had a terrific time tonight. But I look forward to the time when we will be forced to find another reason to meet, because the war on cancer will have been won.

Like all of you, I am tired of burying my family members and friends from diseases that it seems that we ought to be able to find a way to cure or even to prevent. It won't be long now, and when that happy day comes, all of you can take pride in knowing

that you did something to hasten the moment.

I can tell you that we're already making impressive progress. Earlier this year we learned that for the very first time, cancer deaths in the United States are on the decline. Researchers are now unlocking the secrets of the human genome; revolutionary new treatments are sure to follow. There are now medicines being tested now, not only to cure but to actually prevent various kinds of cancers.

Now, we actually know that the average human body is built to last more than 100 years. And the younger women in this audience who are still having children, in your childbearing years you will be having babies with a life expectancy of 90 years or more, because of the medical research that is now going on.

But it's important for the rest of us to do our part. And our administration, with Hillary and the Vice President in the lead, has worked hard. We've doubled research over the last 8 years. We have speeded the approval process for cancer drugs. We've involved more and more Medicare patients in cancer screenings and test trials. And we've extended coverage to uninsured women with breast and cervical cancer. But there's a lot more to do.

What I want you to understand is that all of us, and mostly you—I have been on the public payroll for some years—but those of us that are fortunate enough to have some income are always given all these opportunities to make charitable donations, and you always hope that the money you give will have some beneficial impact. But what I want you to understand is that the sequencing this year of the human genome is a truly seminal event in the entire history of science.

We have already identified, scientists have, the problems in the gene structure that lead women to be much more vulnerable to breast cancer. And it is just the beginning. There has never been a better time to invest money in cancer research, ever. And it is highly likely, even though none of us can know when the next discoveries are coming or which scientists will make them, it is highly likely that the money you invest in this project will actually directly lead to the dramatic acceleration

of cures for cancer, preventions for cancer, and the saving of other children's lives.

And so again I say, thank you, Denise. Thank you for everything you have done to make it possible for Hillary and me to serve. Thank you to those of you who have been so good to my wife. And thank you, Senator Schumer, for showing up. They will be a great team, and I'm very, very grateful for that. And as I leave office, let me say to all of you—I thank Michael Jackson for what he said—this has been the greatest honor imaginable for me to serve.

But the thing that really matters about this country is not who the President is; it's what kind of people we are. The thing about any free society is that it's the citizens who matter—the decisions they make, the work they do, the dreams they dream. There has never been a better time to dream of curing every kind of cancer or to give.

So, even though I won't be President next year, I hope you'll be here, giving next year, because it will really make a difference.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. in the Broadway Ballroom at the New York Marriot Marquis Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Denise Rich, cofounder, G&P Foundation, and her son-in-law, Philip Aouad; musicians Michael Jackson and Paul McCartney; Queen Noor of Jordan; and CNN talk show host Larry King, who served as master of ceremonies.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Alternative Plan for Federal Employee Locality-Based Comparability Payments

November 30, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting an alternative plan for Federal employee locality-based comparability payments (locality pay) for 2001.

Federal employees are the key to effective Government performance. During the last 8 years, the number of Federal employees has declined while their responsibilities have stayed the same or increased. Nonetheless, recent surveys show the American public believes it is now getting better quality and more responsible service from our Federal