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Statement on signing consolidated appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2000

William J Clinton

November 29,1999

I have signed into law H.R. 3194, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2000. 1 am pleased that my Administration and the Congress were able to reach agreement on the first budget of the 21st Century-producing a hard-won ,ictory for the American People.

This legislation makes progress on several important fronts. It puts education first, honoring our commitment to hire 100,000 qualified teachers to lower class size in the early grades and doubling the funds for after school and summer school programs.

It makes America a safer place. The bill provides an acceptable funding level for my 21st Century Policing Initiative, which builds on the success of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program. To date, the COPS program has funded more than 100,000 additional police officers for our streets. This bill funds the first increment of the 21st Century Policing initiative, which will place an additional 30,000 to 50,000 police officers on the street over the next 5 years, while expanding the concept of community policing to include community prosecution and law enforcement technology assistance. I appreciate the Congress' efforts to forge a bipartisan commitment to the program, which will build upon our successful efforts to reduce crime in our communities.

The bill strengthens our effort to preserve natural areas and protect our environment by its support of my Lands Legacy Initiative. I am very pleased that the bill does not include most of the environmental riders that would have put special interests above the national interest.

This budget agreement also strengthens America's leadership role in the world by paying our dues and arrears to the U.N.; by meeting our commitments to the Middle East peace process; by making critical investments in debt relief for the poorest countries, by enhancing the security of our overseas personnel; by providing for new, critical peacekeeping missions; and by funding efforts to safeguard nuclear weapons in Russia.

Labor/Health and Human Serviced Education Bill

Specifically, I am pleased that the legislation provides $1.3 billion for the second installment of my plan to help reduce class size in the early grades. The Republican proposal did not guarantee funding for the teachers hired last year and would have instead allowed Class Size dollars to be used for virtually any activity, including vouchers. The final budget agreement supports the over 29,000 teachers hired last year plus an additional 2,500 teachers.

The bill appropriately includes several other high priority education initiatives. One million students will continue to be served by the Reading Excellence Initiative and 375,000 more students than last year will have access to 21st Century Community Learning Centers. By providing $145 million for Public Charter Schools, approximately 650 more schools than last year will receive startup funding..

I commend the Congress for providing increases to several programs in my Hispanic Education Agenda that address the disproportionately low educational achievement and high dropout rates of Latino and limited English proficient students. The Hispanic Education Agenda includes programs such as Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Adult Education, Bilingual Education, the High School Equivalency and College Assistance Migrant Programs (HEP/ CAMP), Hispanic-serving Institutions, and support services to promote the graduation of low-income college students (TRIO).

I am disappointed, however, that this legislation does not provide any of the funding that I specifically requested for Troops to Teachers. This lack of funding jeopardizes this program, which would have provided 3,000 new teachers in high-need subject areas and school districts.

I am pleased that the bill funds most of my major proposals for job training, worker protection programs, and grants for working with developing countries to establish core labor standards. For example, $1.6 billion is included for dislocated worker assistance, enabling the program to provide training and re-employmentservices to 858,500 dislocated workers. Since 1993, my Administration has succeeded in tripling funding for, and participation in, programs that help dislocated workers return to work.

As authorized in the bipartisan Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the Congress has provided $140 million to expand services to job seekers at One-Stop centers.

I am pleased that the bill provides the funds I requested for major youth job training programs. Specifically, the bill includes the $250 million I requested for Youth Opportunity Grants to finance the second year of the 5-year competitive grants that provide education, training, and support services to 58,000 youth in Empowerment Zones

and Enterprise Communities. In addition, the bill provides the $1 billion for Youth Activities Formula Grants to provide training and summer employment opportunities to an estimated 577,700 youth. Also it includes $55 million for the final year of Federal funding for the School-to-Work initiative. The bill provides $1.4 billion for the job Corps program, including financing for enhanced follow-up services for graduates, completion of a four-center expansion initiated in FY 1998, and construction of Head Start child care facilities on five job Corps campuses.

The bill provides $83 million, or 8 percent above the FY 1999 enacted level, for labor law enforcement agencies, funding key initiatives to ensure workplace safety, address domestic child labor abuses, encourage equal pay, assist in complying with pension law, and promote family leave.

I am especially pleased that this legislation includes critically needed changes to the Welfare-to-Work program's eligibility requirements. We have worked closely with the Congress to ensure these changes were enacted this year. By simplifying eligibility, this legislation will allow the Welfare-to-Work program, within existing resources, to serve more effectively long-term welfare recipients and noncustodial parents of low-income children. The bill also establishes an alternative penalty that is tough, but fair, for States that have not implemented certain child support enforcement requirements.

This legislation fully funds my request for Head Start, adding up to 44,000 new slots for low-income children and continuing on the path to serve one million children by FY 2002.

Unfortunately, the bill reduces the Social Services Block Grant by $134 million below the FY 1999 level, undermining programs serving our most vulnerable families.

The bill includes historic investments in biomedical research, mental health, pediatric training, and a number of other critically important public health initiatives. It also makes an essential downpayment on my Safety Net proposal, which is designed to provide financial and technical support to those providing a disproportionate amount of care to the uninsured. Lastly, it provides payment restorations to hospitals, nursing homes, and other providers serving the 39 million elderly and disabled beneficiaries.

It also provides a $34.5 billion investment in health programs, 11.7 percent above the FY 1999 enacted level, including an historic increase of $2.3 billion for the National Institutes of Health. These new initiatives will strengthen the public health infrastructure, provide critical prevention and treatment services to individuals with mental illness, and invest in pediatric training programs. Specifically, the bill provides $40 million to support

graduate medical education at freestanding children's hospitals, which play an essential role in the education of the Nation's pediatricians; $67 million above the FY 1999 funding level for the Mental Health Block Grant, a 23 percent increase over FY 1999 and the largest increase ever; $30 million for health education, prevention, and treatment services to address health disparities among minority populations; and an additional $62 million over FY 1999 funding levels to provide critical immunizations to children nationwide. The $239 million for the Title X Family Planning program will enable family planning clinics to extend comprehensive reproductive health care services to an additional 500,000 clients who are neither Medicaid-eligible nor insured. In addition, the $25 million for the Health Care for the Uninsured Initiative will support the development of integrated systems of care and address service gaps within these systems.

It provides $25 million, a full down payment on our proposed $1 billion investment to develop integrated systems of care for the uninsured. It also dedicates an additional $15 million to identify the best ways to deliver health care coverage to this population. I am pleased that the bill includes a $73 million increase in funding for HIV prevention activities to help stop the spread of this disease; an increase of $183 million in the Ryan White CARE Act, which helps provide primary care and support for those living with HIV/AIDS; and an estimated $300 million in additional funds for AIDS-related research at the NIH. The bill also includes $80 million in funding to the Minority AIDS Initiative, which utilizes existing programs to reach African-Americans, Latinos, and other racial and ethnic minorities that are disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS, as well as an additional $100 million to fight AIDS internationally. Finally, the Administration helped protect local authority over HIV prevention activities, successfully removing language from the District of Columbia appropriations bill that would have tied the hands of community health agencies in their ability to use needle exchange programs as part of their overall HIV prevention strategy.

The bill includes $264 million to expand HHS' bioterrorism initiative. It provides $52 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) national pharmaceutical stock pile and $123 million for CDC to expand national, State, and local epidemiologic, laboratory, and surveillance planning capacity, as well as to conduct a vaccine study. The bill also fully funds my request to expand the number of Metropolitan Medical Response Systems that can respond to the health and medical consequences of a chemical, biological, or nuclear incident, and to enhance smallpox and anthrax vaccine research and development. I am particularly pleased that the bill funds the creation of a new national electronic disease surveillance system, which will also help detect outbreaks and strengthen the public health delivery system.

I commend the Congress for providing funding for my Nursing Home Initiative, including resources for more rigorous inspections of nursing facilities and improved Federal oversight of nursing home quality, and for funding the 31-percent increase in Home-Delivered

Meals that I requested.

Finally, the bill also includes the Balanced Budget Refinement Act of 1999, which invests $16 billion over 5 years to address the flawed policy and excessive payment reductions resulting from the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. It lifts caps on therapy services, increases payments for very sick nursing home patients, restores teaching hospital funding, and eases the transition to the new prospective payment system for hospital outpatients. It also includes provisions to limit cost-sharing requirements for Medicare beneficiaries and extends coverage of important immunosuppressive drugs. Unfortunately, it includes provisions that are not justifiable, such as a $4 billion payment increase to managed care plans that are already overpaid according to most experts. This is troubling because any excess payments from the Medicare trust fund put the program at greater risk.

Commerce/Justice/State Bill

Regrettably, the bill does not contain a needed hate crimes provision that was included in the Senate version of the bill. I urge the Congress to pass legislation in a timely manner that would strengthen the Federal Government's ability to combat hate crimes by relaxing jurisdictional obstacles and by giving Federal prosecutors the ability to prosecute hate crimes that are based on sexual orientation, gender, or disability, along with those based on race, color, religion, and national origin.

I am pleased that we were able to secure additional funds for the Legal Services Corporation. Adequate funding for legal services is essential to ensuring that all citizens have access to the Nation's justice system. Similarly, through negotiations with the Congress, the funding level for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was increased above the FY 1999 enacted level. The additional funds will assist the EEOC in its continued progress in reducing the backlog of employment discrimination cases.

The bill funds my requested $13 million increase for the Department of justice's Civil Rights Division. These funds will support law enforcement actions related to hate crimes, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and fair housing and lending.

The legislation contains adequate funding for the decennial census, and includes a compromise on language requiring the Census Bureau to allocate funds among eight functions or frameworks. With the decennial census approaching, I am confident that this language will not inhibit the Census Bureau's ability to actually conduct the census.

The United States has recently entered into the U.S.-Canada Pacific

Salmon Agreement. The Agreement ends years of contention between the U.S. and Canada regarding expired fishing harvest restrictions and provides for improved fisheries management. I am pleased that legislative riders that would have hindered implementation of this important Agreement have been modified or removed from the bill. in addition, additional funds have been provided for implementation of the Agreement and for other salmon recovery efforts. These funds will allow us to work cooperatively with our partnersCanada, a number of western States, and Treaty Tribes-to implement the Agreement and to restore Pacific coastal salmon runs.

The bill does not provide additional requested funding to the Department of justice for tobacco litigation, but does not preclude the expenditure of funds for this purpose. We will identify existing resources to pursue this important case. Smoking-related health expenses cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year through Medicare, veterans' and military health, and other Federal health programs. The $20 million I requested is needed to represent the interests of the taxpayers, who should not have to bear the responsibility for these staggering costs.

Critical funds were added to help our Nation's 24 million small businesses. The bill now includes $16.5 million for my New Markets Initiative to invest in targeted rural and urban areas. Also, funding levels were increased for the Small Business Administration's (SBA) operating expenses and disaster loan program. These funds will enable the SBA to provide critical services, including a fast and effective response to Hurricane Floyd.

I regret that a provision is included that would amend the recently enacted Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2000, that could limit the access of Federal government employees to contraceptive coverage.

Foreign Operations Bill and Other International Affairs Appropriations and Authorizations

I am pleased that we were able to reach bipartisan agreement with the Congress on a level of funding for international affairs programs that supports our continued engagement on key global issues. Most notably, we were able to agree to meet our obligations to the United Nations, which will allow us to keep our vote in the General Assembly. We also obtained additional funding for international peacekeeping efforts seeking to redress the instability and suffering caused by conflicts in East Timor, Kosovo, and Afri

The bill includes my full request for the Wye River Agreement, which will support our partners in the Middle East as they accelerate their historic attempt to secure a permanent peace. We gained bilateral funding for the new Cologne debt reduction

initiative, as well as agreement from the Congress to allow the International Monetary Fund to use existing resources to finance its portion of the initiative, allowing us to begin to lessen the crushing debt burden that many of the world's poorest nations face as they try to implement difficult economic and democratic reforms.

unfortunately, the bill also includes a provision on international family planning that I have strongly opposed throughout my Administration. This is a one-time provision that imposes additional restrictions on international family planning groups. However, I insisted that the Congress allow for a Presidential waiver pro-vision, which I have exercised today.

I have instructed USAID to implement the new restrictions on family planning money in such a way as to minimize to the extent possible the impact on international family planning efforts and to respect the rights of citizens to speak freely on issues of importance in their countries, such as the rights of women to make their own reproductive decisions. As I have stated before, I do not believe it is appropriate to limit foreign NGOs' use of their own money, or their ability to participate in the democratic process in their own countries. Thus, I will oppose inclusion of this restriction in any future apPropriations bill.

The bill takes a step in the right direction in terms of paying our dues and our debts to the United Nations and other international organizations. The bill includes most of the funds requested for U.N. arrears, as well as the United Nations Reform Act, which authorizes payment of these arrears contingent upon certain U.N. reforms. My Administration is committed to making sure that all of our debts are paid, and, while doing so, pressing for reforms that will make the U.N. more efficient and effective.

International peacekeeping activities in this bill are funded at a level of $500 million, $300 million above the level in the bill that I vetoed. This additional funding is crucial and will support the United States' response to emergent peacekeeping requirements in Kosovo, Asia, and Africa. In each of these places, the United States has worked with allies and friends to end conflicts that have claimed countless innocent lives and thrown whole regions into turmoil. This funding will help America do its part to make and keep the peace in troubled regions.

On a number of other critical foreign policy priorities, we were able to achieve bipartisan agreements that will directly affect the lives of Americans and others alike. We fully funded a new initiative that will significantly expand our efforts to stem the spread of HIV/ AIDS in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world. We significantly increased funding for programs aimed at reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere. We agreed to a significant package of assistance to Kosovo and Southeastern Europe that will help to solidify the

fragile peace that we and our NATO allies have secured. We initiated new programs that will help to provide alternatives to the child labor practices that are still too prevalent in much of the world. I am particularly pleased the bill provides my full request for embassy security to protect the men and women who serve our country abroad.

There are still important commitments and goals that were not adequately addressed in this bill. I am disappointed that we did not achieve all of the funding that we need to fully implement the multilateral portion of the Cologne debt initiative, and that we were not able to meet our commitments to provide multilateral environmental assistance through the Global Environment Facility. However, in total, this bill demonstrates that the bipartisan consensus that America must remain engaged in global affairs, which has guided our interaction with the rest of the world since the end of the Second World War, is still very much alive and well, and I am hopeful that it will continue to guide our foreign policy into the 21st Century.

I continue to believe that various provisions prohibiting implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in this bill are unnecessary, as my Administration has no intent of implementing the Protocol prior to ratification. Furthermore, I will consider activities that meet our responsibilities under the ratified U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change to be consistent with this provision. Finally, to the extent these provisions could be read to prevent the United States from negotiating with foreign governments about climate change, it would be inconsistent with my constitutional authority. Accordingly, I will construe this provision as not detracting from my authority to engage in the many activities, both formal and informal, that constitute negotiations relating to climate chane.

This legislation includes a number of provisions in the various Acts incorporated in it regarding the conduct of foreign affairs that raise serious constitutional concerns. These provisions would direct or burden my negotiations with foreign governments and international organizations, as well as intrude on my ability to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive diplomatic negotiations. Similarly, some provisions would constrain my Commander in Chief authority and the exercise of my exclusive authority to receive ambassadors and to conduct diplomacy. Other provisions raise concerns under the Appointments and Recommendation Clauses. My Administration's objections to most of these and other provisions have been made clear in previous statements of Administration policy and other communications to the Congress. Wherever possible, I will construe these provisions to be consistent with my constitutional prerogatives and responsibilities and where such a construction is not possible, I will treat them as not interfering with those prerogatives and responsibilities.

District Of Columbia Bill

With respect to the District of Columbia bill, I am pleased that the majority and minority in the Congress were able to come together to pass a version that I can sign. While I continue to object to remaining riders that violate the principles of home rule, some of the highly objectionable provisions that would have intruded upon local citizens' right to make decisions about local matters have been modified from previous versions of the bill. My Administration will continue to strenuously urge the Congress to keep such riders out of the FY 2001 D.C. Appropriations Bill.

I commend the Congress for providing the Federal funds I requested for the District of Columbia. The bill includes essential funding for District Courts and Corrections and the D.C. Offender Supervision Agency and provides requested funds for a new tuition assistance program for District of Columbia residents. The bill also includes funding to promote the adoption of children in the District's foster care system, to support the Children's National Medical Center, to assist the Metropolitan Police Department in eliminating open-air drug trafficking in the District, and for drug testing and treatment, among other programs.

Interior and Related Agencies Bill

With respect to the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies bill, I commend the Congress for agreeing on an acceptable version-one that does not include most of the highly objectionable provisions that would harm the environment and benefit special interest groups by allowing the inappropriate use of national forests and other public lands and resources.

In particular, we have reached a fair compromise on millsite claims under the 1872 Mining Law. Hardrock mining operations under existing approved plans of operations, as well as applications for new mining plans filed by the date of the Interior Solicitor's Opinion of November 7, 1997, would go forward without the Department of the Interior applying the five-acre-per-mining-claim millsite limitation. The Department of the interior would impose this limitation on plans for new hardrock mining operations filed after November 7, 1997; it would also impose the limitation on amended plans of operations filed after November 7, 1997, that add millsite acreage.

Our agreement also will allow final rules to take effect in the near future that will provide a fair return to the taxpayers for the development of Federal oil resources; and will ensure more effective environmental protection in hardrock mining on Federal lands.

This bill provides two-thirds of the funds I requested for my Lands Legacy initiative and represents a significant improvement over

prior-year funding, allowing us to protect such irreplaceable national treasures as the Baca Ranch in New Mexico, the Everglades in Florida, wilderness lands in the California Desert, and Civil War battlefield sites that are threatened by urban sprawl. There is also adequate support given to the Clean Water Action Plan. I am especially pleased with the additional funding for the Forest Service and for abandoned mine lands reclamation, which would make significant progress in addressing acid mine drainage and watershed problems in the Appalachian region. I look forward to working with the Congress next year to provide full and permanent funding for my Lands Legacy proposal, including full Federal and State funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

My Administration has also been able to secure additional funding for energy conservation, the single largest component of my Climate Change Technology Initiative, which will help us to form the partnerships with industry that are vital to the development of a new generation of ultra-efficient cars, more efficient and affordable housing, and more efficient, less-polluting industrial processes. This progress will help us to address the threat of global warming economically and practically.

I commend the Congress for the historic $157.2 million increase for Indian health, which is only slightly below the $172 million increase the Administration sought for the Indian Health Service. This funding increase represents a continuing demonstration of the Federal commitment to improve the health status of Native Americans and Alaska natives. I also commend the Congress for the removal of an objectionable rider that would have infringed on tribal sovereignty, and for providing specific funding to accommodate new contracts with tribes.

Although I am disappointed that the Congress has failed to increase funding for the National Endowment for the Arts for the eighth straight year, I am pleased with the generally positive debate and the first increase in 4 years in funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The bill also contains language on the American Heritage Rivers initiative. I believe that the congressional language is unnecessary and unfortunate. I will direct the Departments funded by this bill, within existing laws and authorities, to continue to support and undertake community-oriented services or environmental projects on rivers I have recognized as part of the initiative.

By increasing critical funding for land conservation efforts and removing harmful environmental provisions, the legislation represents a step for-ward in efforts to protect the environment and manage Federal lands and resources responsibly.

Disaster Assistance

I am pleased that the bill includes over $500 million in additional funds for our Nation's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities to help them recover from natural disasters, particularly this year's hurricanes. These funds will help farmers clear their streams and fields for next year's crop, just as the $2.5 billion in loans provided in the bill will help them secure the financing they need for planting. Vitally needed funds are included to help low-income rural families and farm laborers repair and replace housing damaged by Hurricane Floyd, and low-interest loans will be available to repair and replace farm structures and equipment lost in the storm. In addition, $186 million is included for additional crop loss payments across the country, including areas in the East that suffered through one of the worst droughts in memory. The bill also provides funding to implement the mandatory livestock price reporting authority included in the Agriculture Appropriations Act, which will make the livestock market more transparent and particularly help small producers get a fair price for their livestock in the market.

Authorization Bills/Other Issues

The bill also includes a provision that would delay the Department of Health and Human Services's Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Final Rule for a minimum of 42 days from the bill's effective date. This Final Rule is in response to my Administration's belief that the current organ allocation policies by the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network are inequitable because patients with similar severities of illness are treated differently, depending on where they may live or at which transplant center they may be listed.

The Satellite Home Viewer Improvement Act-part of the Intellectual Property and Communications Omnibus Reform Act of 1999-will increase the ability of satellite companies to compete against cable companies, and will result in more customer choice, lower prices, and increased access to local news and information. This Act puts the TV remote control back into consumers' hands and competition at their fingertips. In addition, the patent reform legislation that the Administration has fought for will help meet the needs of America's inventors and entrepreneurs. It strengthens protection in a number of Nways: it extends the term of a patent when there is an administrative delay in the patent process; it requires the timely domestic publication of patent applications that are also filed abroad; and it reinvents the Patent and Trademark Office as a performancebased organization to better serve America's entrepreneurs and innovators.

Unfortunately, the Congress did not fund my additional request to protect the Nation's critical computer and information based infrastructures from a growing threat of cyber attack from hostile nations, terrorists, or criminals.

In order that $68 million in interest accrued by the Abandoned Mine Land Fund (to be transferred to the United Mine Workers of America Combined Benefits Funddesignated by the Congress as an emergency requirement) not be scored against the discretionary spending caps, I hereby designate that amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended. I will shortly be designating other funds in this legislation as emergency requirements.

Finally, there are several provisions in the bill that purport to require congressional approval before Executive Branch execution of aspects of the bill. I will interpret such provisions to require notification only, since any other interpretation would contradict the Supreme Court ruling in INS vs. Chadha.

William J. Clinton

The White House November 29, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 3194, approved November 29, was assigned Public Law No. 106-113. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 30.