

and I'm very encouraged by the work they've been doing here today. Of course, we hope the legislation will pass the House today, and if it does then when it moves on to the Senate it is our intention, as I indicated when I was in St. Louis, based on Mr. Panetta's figures, to ask that the relief package be increased by another \$1.1 billion which will take us to just slightly above \$4 billion. And of course, we're still collecting damage estimates. It may get worse because it's still going on in some places. But I'm very hopeful that we can push this through and work this through. And of course, there are a lot of other issues the Governors want to talk about and deal with that we're going to try to help them on some. I'm encouraged by that.

In terms of the other question you asked me, go back to 1990. You know, I will say again, that the strongest reaction I got yesterday in Chicago with that highly bipartisan crowd was when I said we need to make a decision and go on with other things.

If you look at what happened in 1990, there was this sort of delay. If you delay it a couple of months you're going to have less deficit reduction, higher interest rates, more fragility and uncertainty in the economy, more consumer confidence going down. We have been working on this.

We have other things to do. The American people want us to solve the health care crisis, deal with welfare reform, to pass a crime bill. We have a whole range of other issues out there. The Congress is strangled from doing anything else until we put this budget issue behind us. So the time has come to act. We just need to move and go on and almost everything else that needs to be done, I hope and believe we'll have bipartisan support and we'll meet the needs of this country. Nobody wants to reduce the deficit because—the reason it got so bad as it did is that there were tough decisions required to turn it around. And I think to delay it while we nibble around the edges would be a serious error.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:54 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

July 27, 1993

It is great to see all of you. You know, I heard Tom's speech outside, and I want to say, first of all, how grateful I am, as an American, to Tom Harkin, and Steny Hoyer, and all of you who made the Americans with Disabilities Act a reality, but how much I owe, as a public servant, to Senator Harkin personally. You know, when we were on the campaign trail together, he made his brother the most famous brother in America—in a very beautiful way. And you need to know when he was up here speaking we've been killing time because his brother, Frank, is on the phone, and he doesn't have time to talk to me right now. *[Laughter]* His line is busy. This is true. His line's busy. We've been trying to call him which is great. It's great. It means that the thing is working. *[Laughter]* This is—yesterday, I guess, was the effective date when the telephone service had to be provided. So I'm so excited about that.

While we're waiting for the line to clear, let me just—if I might make a few points. First, I want to reaffirm strong support of our administration for implementing and enforcing the act. Yesterday, the Attorney General and a number of other Cabinet members conducted some activities designed to clearly remove any ambiguity about that and to re-enforce our commitment on that issue.

The second thing I want to do is to—I know that Roy's already introduced them, but to say a special word of thanks to Americans with disabilities who happen to be part of this administration and to those who will be, including some in this room and some who are not in this room.

Finally, let me say, we need your help because you have become a very powerful force. We need your help to pass this economic plan so we can get on with the rest of the business of the country, and then so we can get on the health care and try to deal with the issues of long-term care and personal services and empowerment, the kinds of things that are so important to—I heard Tom talking about the inclusion, independence, and empowerment. There are a lot of

Americans who need that, not just Americans with disabilities. And we have to go forward.

And I know a lot of people, but none more than you, are eager to see this debate on health care begin. It cannot begin until we have a budget and economic plan in place. And there are many more things that we have to do which are also of interest to you that are especially important. We need a new crime bill. We need a bill that reforms the welfare system. It also works on empowerment. We need a whole series of things that we are eager to get on with doing. But first we have to nail this budgetary issue.

I am especially interested in the health care debate, as you know. And I spoke with the First Lady this morning, as I do on most mornings—[laughter]—and we were reviewing our days, and I told her that Tom and I were going to be here with you today. And she was very interested in, you know, the fact that we were going to do this and asked me to give you her best and to thank those of you who have been involved already with her in the health care task force in trying to work through these issues.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Telephone Conversation With Frank Harkin

July 27, 1993

The President. Hello?

Agent 218. Yes, hello. Good afternoon. This is Agent 218 of the Federal Information Relay Service.

The President. May I speak with Frank now?

Agent 218. Yes, he's on line standing by for your conversation.

The President. Frank, this is Bill Clinton. I'm really glad to be able to talk with you now that the text telephone system is in place nationwide. And I'm here with your brother, Tom, who just gave a great speech.

If it hadn't been for you, I don't think we would have had all those great speeches he

made. I just told the crowd here that he made you the most famous brother in America last year.

Mr. Harkin. Gee, thanks.

The President. He said, "gee, thanks."

Mr. Harkin. Thanks for saying that.

The President. "Thanks for saying that."

What we all want to know is whether you are wet or dry.

Mr. Harkin. It is a great moment to talk to you, Mr. President.

The President. Frank, what we all want to know here is whether you are wet or dry. I've been to Iowa twice, and I know how much flooding you've had. So tell us how it is around where you live.

Mr. Harkin. Today it is humid and muggy. I did watch on TV when you were in Iowa.

The President. Well, I just had the Governors of six States, including Iowa, in to see me to talk about how we could help people get over the flood damage, and I certainly hope we can do a good job of that.

Mr. Harkin. Hopefully you will do your best.

The President. I want you to tell all the people here with me how you like this communications system.

Mr. Harkin. It is wonderful to have a TV crew from Des Moines in my house.

The President. Well, now I want you to say a word to your brother. You have proved that you are a person of fewer words than—[laughter]—than the President or your brother. Congratulations.

Senator Harkin. What did he say?

The President. He's waiting for you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:09 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The exchange was part of a ceremony honoring the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Interview With the Georgia Media

July 27, 1993

The President. Well, first of all, I want to thank you for coming. Welcome. As you