perhaps the easiest and most effective way that we can protect our sight is with comprehensive eye examinations. Early eye tests can help secure good vision for our children from the start. And with regular eye exams, the threat of vision loss does not have to be a normal part of aging.

For Americans at special risk, preventive care takes on added importance. The 14 million individuals nationwide who have diabetes face the possibility of developing diabetic eye diseases, the leading cause of blindness among working-aged Americans. This condition may show no symptoms—even in advanced stages—and it must be detected as soon as possible to prevent vision loss.

Glaucoma, another potentially blinding eye disease, can be controlled when detected early. Approximately 3 million Americans suffer from this disease, which strikes silently often without pain or noticeable symptoms. Especially at risk are African Americans age 40 and older and all people age 60 and older.

To remind Americans of how they can protect their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning March 5, 1995, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives. I invite eye care professionals, the media, and all public and private organizations committed to the goals of sight preservation, to join in activities that will make Americans more aware of the steps they can take to preserve their vision.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., March 6, 1995]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 7.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Child Support Enforcement

March 2, 1995

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to reiterate my firm belief that Congress must pass tough child support enforcement measures as part of welfare reform. When absent parents don't provide support, the inevitable result is more welfare, more poverty, and more difficult times for our children. It is essential that all Americans understand that if they parent a child, they will be held responsible for nurturing and providing for that child.

I am doing everything in my power to crack down on child support enforcement. In 1993, we collected a record $9 billion in child support—a 12 percent increase over the previous year. Last week, I signed an Executive Order to ensure that federal employees who owe child support live up to their responsibilities as parents, and that the federal government will do its utmost to help find parents with delinquent child support claims. Our welfare reform plan included the toughest child support measures ever proposed. If absent parents aren't paying child support, we will garnish their wages, suspend their licenses, track them across state lines, and if necessary, make them work off what they owe.

Parental responsibility should not become a partisan issue. At the bipartisan national Working Session on Welfare Reform that I hosted at Blair House, Republican and Democratic leaders from around the country and every level of government agreed that we should enact the toughest child support enforcement measures possible.

I hope the committee will not shy away from its responsibilities on this issue. A number of bills similar to our plan could serve as the foundation for any effort to reform child support—including the one offered by Representatives Barbara Kennelly, Nancy Johnson, and others. Critical elements include denying welfare benefits to any unwed mother who does not cooperate fully in identifying the father, powerful measures for

tracking interstate cases, and serious penalties—including license suspension, and if necessary, requiring work—for parents who refuse to pay what they owe. We must also include both the performance incentives and resources states need to do the job right.

It is time to get serious about child support in this country. I look forward to working with Congress to get it done.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Bill Archer, chairman, and Sam Gibbons, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

The President's News Conference

March 3, 1995

The President. Good afternoon. Ladies and gentlemen, now that the vote on the balanced budget amendment has passed, it is time for Congress to go forward to write a disciplined budget that brings the deficit down, cuts unnecessary Government spending, and continues to invest in our future.

Two years ago, 27 days after I became President, I presented such a budget to the Congress. It has succeeded in reducing our deficit by over $600 billion, while still increasing our investment in our children, in education, and in our economic growth.

As of today it has been 58 days since the new Republican majority took office. Congress has a deadline for passing a budget resolution of April the 15th. The American people now are entitled to see this work go forward. When the Congress proposes their budget and passes their resolution, of course, I will work with them. As I have said repeatedly, we can get more deficit reduction in responsible health care reform, but I learned last year that that is clearly something we must do working together with both parties.

The debate that is going on in Washington today is about more, obviously, than simply the deficit and the budget. It is also about the role of Government. And you can see it running through every issue, from the laws being debated now in the Congress to the question of the rescission legislation before the Congress. The old Washington view, I think it's fair to say, is that the Federal Government could provide solutions to America's problems. The Republican contract view reflects in many cases an outright hostility to governmental action, although in some cases a curious willingness to increase the Federal Government's control over our daily lives.

My view, what has loosely been called the new Democratic view or the New Covenant view, is to be skeptical of Government but to recognize that it has a role in our lives and a partnership role to play.

We have made the Government smaller. We have given more power to States and localities and to private citizens. Our proposals would further accelerate those trends. We have, as you learned here in this room just a few days ago, been working for months on a serious effort to reduce the burden of unnecessary regulation.

But we believe Government has important work to do, to expand opportunity, to give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, to enhance our security. That's why we support adding 100,000 police. That's why we support more affordable college loans. That's why we supported the family leave bill. That's why I support the minimum wage legislation now before Congress and why I do not want to reduce our investment in education in our future.

The Republicans now have proposed to cut education, nutritional help for mothers and schoolchildren, antidrug efforts in our schools, and other things which, to me, appear to target children in order to pay for tax cuts for upper income Americans. I do not believe that that is consistent with our interests as we build America into the 21st century and we move into this new global economy.

So my job, it seems to me, is to continue to push my view, what I believe is the essence of the New Covenant: more opportunity, more responsibility; reform welfare but don't punish people, require work. This is the sort of thing we need more of. And I look forward to this debate. I think it's healthy. I think it's good for the American people.