

and those of you who have not. And especially I'd like to say a word of thanks to the former employees of tobacco companies who have stood up to tell the world the truth. And I want to recognize one in particular, the late Victor Crawford, whose wife, Linda, is here today. He was a great champion for our children. We miss him today. We wish he were here, and we know he's smiling down on us. Thank you, Linda, for being here, and God bless you.

My friends, we have come a long way in this endeavor, indeed, a long way since our administration made the first announcement about our efforts to reduce tobacco advertising and tobacco sales to young people. Now we have supermarket chains, athletes, workers, private citizens who have recognized the threat tobacco poses. And this movement is producing results. Just last week there was a major breakthrough when Liggett agreed to settle its lawsuits. It became the very first tobacco company to acknowledge that tobacco can be deadly. This is the first crack in the stone wall of denial. My message to other tobacco companies is, therefore, simple and direct: Take responsibility. Sell to adults, but draw the line on children.

I'm happy that Liggett has also agreed to begin changing their own advertising practices so that they have less influence over young people. That's a good start. And now I want them and the other tobacco companies to go the distance. If selling cigarettes to minors is illegal, no good corporate citizen should be aiming advertising at those minors.

My fellow Americans, we can win this fight. We can save countless lives of our young people. We can give them the future that we imagine when we look into the bright faces of these children who are here. But we have to do it together. It is folly to pretend that any one of us, including the President, can do it alone.

When he graduated from high school in 1968, Mike Synar called on his classmates to, quote, "Stand and be counted when the occasion arises." Well, he always did. This occasion requires us to do it for him, and I am honored that we can do it in his name.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House upon receiving the Mike Synar National Public Service Award from the Coalition on Smoking OR Health. In his remarks, he referred to Alan Synar, brother of the late Representative Mike Synar, and Lonnie Bristow, president, American Medical Association.

Statement on Signing Tax Benefit Legislation for Military Personnel Serving in Operation Joint Endeavor *March 20, 1996*

Today, in recognition of the sacrifices members of the U.S. Armed Forces are making in and around Bosnia, I signed a bill extending special tax benefits to military personnel serving in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Macedonia.

During Vietnam and the Gulf war, tax relief was granted to individuals serving in "combat zones." By extending similar tax benefits to those supporting peace efforts in the former Yugoslavia, this legislation recognizes the unique hardships and risks members of the U.S. Armed Forces face in non-combat missions like the one in Bosnia.

I wish to thank Congress for their overwhelming support and timely passage of this legislation and also for their recognition of the hardships encountered by American troops serving in Operation Joint Endeavor.

NOTE: H.R. 2778, approved March 20, was assigned Public Law No. 104-117.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Science, Technology and American Diplomacy *March 20, 1996*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

I am pleased to transmit this annual report on Science, Technology and American Diplomacy for fiscal year 1995, in accordance with Title V of the Foreign Relations Act of Fiscal Year 1979, as amended (Public Law 95-426; 22 U.S.C. 2656c(b)).

Science and technology (S&T) are central to the goals of economic security, military strength, and diplomatic engagement—the

vital elements of national security. The wisdom of our investments in S&T will significantly affect our ability to meet our national security challenges as we move into the next century. International cooperation in S&T serves to prevent and mitigate threats to society, increase exports of U.S. technologies, and promote sustainable development.

The Title V report provides the context for international science and technology cooperation in the implementation of our foreign policy. This year's streamlined report presents an overview of current U.S. S&T policy, S&T cooperation in the post-Cold War era, and its relation to foreign policy goals, such as building democracy, promoting and maintaining peace, and furthering economic growth and sustainable development. Following the thematic chapters are narratives on science and technology cooperation with key countries.

We face the challenge of seeking greater world stability at a critical time in our history. Finding effective solutions to global problems that impact Americans can be accomplished, in part, through interactions with scientists around the globe. We must continue to ensure that our country maintains world leadership in science and technology, and that international cooperation continues to advance our broad policy interests.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

Remarks to the Independent Insurance Agents of America Legislative Conference and an Exchange With Reporters

March 21, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. First let me welcome the Independent Insurance Agents of America to the White House and thank President George Shaffer for the fine statement that he made.

I want to say to the press here assembled that this is a big announcement out in Amer-

ica. Where Americans live, there are 300,000 agents and their employees in independent insurance agencies all across this country, people who know and serve their friends and neighbors and are active in their community and are trusted for their judgment on many issues, not the least of which is health care. The fact that they have decided to come in here today and express their support for the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill is a remarkable act of statesmanship and good citizenship, and it will reverberate in every Main Street in the United States of America.

It is a true bipartisan, almost a nonpartisan effort to make an honest endeavor to bring health care to millions of Americans who've been shut out of the market. These people know the folks who lose their jobs and can't get health insurance. These people see across a small desk in a modest room the people who can't get health insurance because someone in their family has a crippling condition or has once had a serious illness, even if they have overcome it. The Independent Insurance Agents are therefore, in some ways, about the most valuable partner America could have in shaping health care reform.

I want to say again how grateful I am to President Shaffer and all the other members here, the incoming president, Ron Smith, my longtime friend from Arkansas George Frazier, and the people who work for the organization here in Washington. They've all done a wonderful job, and I want to thank them for this.

As the Vice President said, this bill could help as many as 24 million Americans. That's a lot of folks out there, working people, people that are working hard to make this country go, to keep our economy strong and to keep our communities strong, and most important of all to raise their children and keep their families strong. In this new, more dynamic economy where we're creating more jobs than we have in a very long time, but where people are also feeling the sting of change, it is more important than ever before to pass this legislation.

From the beginning, this proposal has had enormous bipartisan support. Besides the strong bipartisan support in the Senate, which includes 30 Democratic and 23 Republican cosponsors, this bill has been en-