

care for our Nation's children. I was also pleased that last week a group of Republicans introduced a promising child care proposal. I look forward to working with the Congress on a bipartisan basis to enact child care legislation this year that will help Americans fulfill their responsibilities as workers, and even more importantly, as parents.

**Statement on the Fifth Anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act**  
*February 5, 1998*

On this fifth anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act, I am happy to report that this law has been good for America's families and good for this country's businesses. Before I signed this bill into law, the United States was the only industrialized nation without a national family and medical leave policy. Workers shouldn't have to choose between their families and their jobs when a child is born or a parent is sick. This law keeps many workers from having to make that choice.

Many American families continue to face a serious shortage—a shortage of time needed to balance work and family obligations. Over a year ago I called upon Congress to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow 24 additional hours of leave each year so that parents can participate in children's activities or so that family members may take children or elderly relatives to medical or dental appointments or for other professional services. This law deserves support and expansion so it can continue to work for American workers, their families, and their employers.

**Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the National Endowment for the Humanities**

*February 5, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I am pleased to present to you the 1996 annual report of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Federal agency charged with fostering scholarship and enriching the ideas and wisdom born of

the humanities. The agency supports an impressive range of projects encompassing the worlds of history, literature, philosophy, and culture. Through these projects, Americans of all walks of life are able to explore and share in the uniqueness of our Nation's democratic experience.

The activities of the NEH touch tens of millions of our citizens—from the youngest students to the most veteran professors, to men and women who simply strive for a greater appreciation of our Nation's past, present, and future. The NEH has supported projects as diverse as the widely viewed documentary, *The West*, and research as specialized as that conducted on the Lakota Tribe. Small historical societies have received support, as have some of the Nation's largest cultural institutions.

Throughout our history, the humanities have provided Americans with the knowledge, insights, and perspectives needed to move ourselves and our civilization forward. Today, the NEH remains vitally important to promoting our Nation's culture. Not only does its work continue to add immeasurably to our civic life, it strengthens the democratic spirit so essential to our country and our world on the eve of a new century.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
February 5, 1998.

**Message to the Congress Transmitting the Extension of the Poland-United States Fisheries Agreement and Documentation**

*February 5, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Poland extending the Agreement of August 1, 1985, Concerning Fisheries Off the Coasts of the United States, with annexes and agreed minutes, as amended and extended (the 1985 Agreement). The Agreement, which was effected

by an exchange of notes at Warsaw on February 5 and August 25, 1997, extends the 1985 Agreement to December 31, 1999.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Republic of Poland, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
February 5, 1998.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting a Report of the  
Commodity Credit Corporation**  
*February 5, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by the provisions of section 13, Public Law 806, 80th Congress (15 U.S.C. 714k), I transmit herewith the report of the Commodity Credit Corporation for fiscal year 1995.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
February 5, 1998.

**Letter to the Chairman and  
Members of the Federal  
Communications Commission on  
Free and Discounted Airtime for  
Campaign Advertising**  
*February 5, 1998*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

In my State of the Union Address I called upon the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to act to require media outlets to provide candidates with free and discounted airtime for campaign advertising. Free and discounted time will reduce the need for more campaign money, and will allow candidates to spend less time fundraising and more time addressing the concerns of our country.

Spending on congressional campaigns has risen six-fold in the last two decades, more than three times the rate of inflation, and spending on television is the primary reason. In 1970 expenditures on television advertising in congressional campaigns totaled \$50

million. In 1996 that number had risen to \$400 million. The evidence at the beginning of this election year is that the cost of media spending by candidates for public office will continue to spiral upward. We must address the reason for the explosion in campaign costs.

The dawning of the digital age of broadcasting makes it imperative that we update broadcasters' public interest obligation. Broadcasters have been loaned an additional channel worth billions of dollars for free. The FCC must ensure that broadcasters, given the opportunity to benefit from their use of a valuable public resource, use this public resource to strengthen our democracy.

Free and discounted television time can make our most powerfully effective medium a powerful force for expanding democracy in the information age. I call upon the Commission to develop policies, as soon as possible, which ensure that broadcasters provide free and discounted airtime for candidates to educate voters.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

**Letter to the Members of the  
Federal Election Commission on  
Campaign Finance Reform**  
*February 5, 1998*

*To the Members of the Federal Election  
Commission:*

I strongly support action to end the soft money raised by both political parties. That is why last year I asked the Federal Election Commission to ban soft money, under its current legal authority. I am very pleased that your General Counsel has proposed a new rule prohibiting national parties from raising soft money. Banning soft money fundraising by national party committees will enable our election laws to catch up with the reality of the way elections are financed today, and along with new campaign finance reform legislation, will take significant strides toward restoring public confidence in the campaign finance process.