

victims as they strive to rebuild their lives, and to keep victims' rights a primary concern in America's criminal justice system.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 19 through April 25, 1998, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. I urge all Americans to remember crime victims and their families by working to reduce violence, to assist those harmed by crime, and to make our homes and communities safer places in which to live and raise our families.

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

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 22.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the "Education Savings Act for Public and Private Schools"

April 20, 1998

Dear Mr. Leader:

As you consider H.R. 2646 this week, you will have the opportunity to vote for the first time on a version of my proposal to help build and modernize more than 5,000 schools across America. I am writing to ask for your support in this important effort and for your opposition to the expanded Education IRAs in the bill.

Never before have the education infrastructure needs of the Nation been so great. In order to accommodate record enrollments, move to smaller class sizes, repair aging buildings, take advantage of new tech-

nologies, and better educate children with disabilities, States and localities are faced with unprecedented construction and renovation needs. The Federal Government helps build roads, bridges, and other infrastructure projects, but none of that will matter much if we let the education infrastructure come crumbling down on our children. We must be part of the solution.

I understand that Senator Moseley-Braun will offer an amendment that would replace the IRA provisions with a proposal to allow communities to issue nearly \$22 billion in bonds for modernizing public schools. Because bond purchasers would receive interest payments through a Federal tax credit, communities' costs would be reduced by one-third or more. A vote for the amendment is a vote for safer, state-of-the-art schools that will open doors to the future for our children.

The IRA provisions, which provide tax benefits for elementary and secondary education expenses, are both bad education policy and bad tax policy. Instead of targeting limited Federal resources to build stronger public schools, this proposal would divert needed resources from public schools. In addition, the expanded IRAs provide little financial assistance to average families, disproportionately benefiting the highest-income taxpayers. For these reasons, and because of other potential amendments that may be adopted, I would veto this bill.

Our children deserve schools they can be proud of. I urge you to help our schools provide a learning environment that will prepare our children for the challenges of tomorrow by supporting the Moseley-Braun amendment, and opposing the expanded Education IRAs.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Trent Lott, majority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, minority leader, United States Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Lithuania-United States Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaty and Documentation

April 20, 1998

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on January 16, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activity more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including “white-collar” crime and drug-trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; locating or identifying persons or items; serving documents; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; and rendering any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 20, 1998.

Remarks on the 1998 Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

April 21, 1998

The President. Good afternoon. In the coming weeks, Congress will be making an awful lot of important decisions about how to best prepare our children and our Nation for the 21st century. First, we have an historic opportunity to pass bipartisan legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco. The legislation would put an end to the tobacco industry’s calculated, multi-million-dollar media campaign to hook our children early to the deadly habit of smoking.

For years the cartoon character Joe Camel was the star of their efforts to create a new generation of customers for cigarettes—what the tobacco industry euphemistically called “replacement smokers”—what most of us call our children. Even as the executives denied they were targeting children, Joe Camel became as recognizable to them as Mickey Mouse.

Now, some in Congress say that teen smoking has nothing to do with Joe Camel. Medical science and common sense makes it plain: Teen smoking has everything to do with Joe Camel, with unscrupulous marketing campaigns that prey on the insecurities and dreams of our children. Indeed, a recent study by the American Medical Association found that over a third of our young people who try cigarettes do so because of advertising and promotion, and that Joe Camel was the overwhelming favorite among 12- to 15-year-olds.

The industry has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on such marketing campaigns—plainly not designed to appeal to adults. It is time to end this story once and for all. So again I say to Congress, now is the time to pass strong bipartisan tobacco legislation. And again I say, I hope that both parties will work together for the benefit of our children.

Today is an extremely important day for the future of public education in America. Soon the United States Senate will be faced