

I hope you will tell your elected representatives it is a great investment in our children's future.

You know, the Vice President mentioned Teddy Roosevelt, who is a particular favorite of mine among our past Presidents. Ever since Teddy Roosevelt started talking about conserving our natural resources, for 100 years now, every time someone has said it, someone else says, if you do that, it will ruin the economy. And we now have 100 years of experience. They have uniformly been wrong every time they have said it for 100 years.

And since 1970 and Earth Day and the Clean Air Act, we have heard it with repeated intensity. It has always been wrong. Every time we have taken a sensible, reasoned, but strong step to protect the environment, we have actually increased the diversity of our economy, the breadth and width of it, and increased jobs and strengthened the long-term economic prospects of our country.

That is a lesson the whole world has to embrace now. We can only sustain economic growth if we can improve the environment, if we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, if we can build a balanced future together.

So I hope that all of you, as you leave here on this Earth Day, will honor the great gifts God has given us, will honor our National Park employees and others who preserve our treasured resources with their careers, will honor these volunteers, but most of all, will promise yourselves to be the best possible citizen stewards of our resources.

That is the ethic that inspired Americans to preserve Harpers Ferry, the landscape that President Jefferson said was worth a voyage across the Atlantic. That is the ethic that will enable us to honor our responsibilities as Americans well into the 21st century.

Thank you, and happy Earth Day.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:12 p.m. at the Point in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. In his remarks, he referred to Robert G. Stanton, Director, National Park Service; Mayor Walton (Kip) Stowell of Harpers Ferry; Pamela Underhill, Park Manager, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and volunteer Sandi Marra, member, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club.

Proclamation 7086—National Park Week, 1998

April 22, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Within our national parks, we find all the rich diversity and extraordinary beauty of America's natural heritage. From the majestic Grand Tetons to the mysterious Everglades, our parks preserve for us the treasures of our magnificent country: the astonishing variety of plant and animal life, the tranquility of forests and meadows, and the breathtaking grandeur of our great rivers, deserts, and mountains. Our national park sites also provide us with vital links to our heritage as a people and a Nation. They tell us the stories of the individuals, places, and events that have shaped the American character.

The Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island are tangible reminders of the more than 12 million immigrants who came to the United States through this small gateway to a new world and a new life. For many Americans, this national park site tells a very personal story of family struggles and triumphs and of the courage it takes to seek freedom.

Many African Americans took a different but equally brave route to freedom. Their story has been preserved for us by the National Park Service in the many historic sites marking the route of the Underground Railroad. In homes, churches, and farms in communities throughout Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New York, and elsewhere, we can experience the determination and indomitable spirit of African American men and women fleeing the bonds of slavery, and we can learn more about the many heroes like Harriet Tubman who helped them on their dangerous trek north to freedom.

This summer, our Nation will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. That event will be commemorated at Women's Rights National Historical Park, where we are reminded that the idea that men and women are created equal was once

considered radical. On this site, visionaries such as Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Frederick Douglass helped our Nation take an important first step toward legal, political, and educational rights for American women.

At these and so many other historic places across our Nation, the National Park Service preserves and protects the American legacy, reminding us not only of who we are as a people, but also of how far we have traveled together on our great American journey. Our national parks are classrooms and laboratories, windows on our past and doorways to our future. As we celebrate National Park Week, I commend all the talented and dedicated men and women of the National Park Service for telling the story of the people and places that have shaped our destiny and for preserving for our children the riches of our natural and cultural heritage.

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 20 through April 26, 1998, as National Park Week.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second 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

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 23, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 24.

Statement on the House of Representatives Release of Tobacco Industry Documents

April 22, 1998

The House Commerce Committee today released thousands of tobacco industry documents. I commend Chairman Bliley, Congressman Waxman, and the members of the Committee for helping to bring these documents to light.

The release of these documents underscores the urgency of enacting comprehensive, bipartisan tobacco legislation this year, which can stop 3 million children from smoking over the next 5 years and save one million lives. I am committed to working with legislative leaders on both sides of the aisle, in both the House and the Senate, to enact a comprehensive bill to stop young Americans from smoking before they start—a bill that raises the price of cigarettes, puts into place tough restrictions on advertising and access, imposes penalties on the industry if it continues to sell cigarettes to children, and ensures that the FDA has authority to regulate tobacco products. Our Nation's children are counting on us to put politics aside and work together in a bipartisan manner to get this job done.

Statement on the Kaiser Family Foundation Report on the Patients' Bill of Rights

April 22, 1998

Today the Kaiser Family Foundation released a new report that confirms our longstanding belief that the cost of the Quality Commission's patients' bill of rights, which I have endorsed, is modest and well worth the protections it would provide. By affirming the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) estimates, the Kaiser report convincingly rebuts the scare tactics that some have used to undermine bipartisan efforts in the Congress to pass a patients' bill of rights this year.

Many Americans today lack the protections necessary to ensure high quality health care. They may not be able to see the specialists they need or to get emergency care whenever and wherever a medical emergency arises. They may not be able to talk freely with doctors and nurses about all the medical options available—not only the cheapest. They may have no place to go to present grievances about their health care. The Quality Commission's patients' bill of rights guarantees Americans these and other common sense protections.

The Kaiser report reaffirms recent estimates by the CBO that these protections would increase health insurance premiums less than one percent (less than \$3 per family