

two, if your doctor says that he or she can no longer treat your condition and you need to see a specialist, you ought to be able to see one. Number three, if you work for a small business who changes providers, health care providers, at a given time during the year, you still shouldn't have to change your doctor if you're in the middle of a critical treatment.

Now, let me just graphically demonstrate what that means. This happens. These things happen. You remember when you had your first child. How would you feel if you were 7 months pregnant and your employer says, "I'm sorry, go get another obstetrician"? If anybody in your family has ever had chemotherapy—I've been through that—if your family member needs chemotherapy, you sit around thinking; you try to figure out ways to make jokes about it. My mother stood there thinking, "Well, maybe I won't lose my hair, or when I do, maybe I will finally get a wig." I never had to—you think—you try to be funny about it. And then you wonder whether you're going to be too sick to eat, right? In the middle of a chemotherapy treatment, do you think somebody would say, "I'm sorry, go get another doctor"? That's what this is about—basic things.

Our bill also protects the privacy of your medical records, which I think is very, very important and will become more important in the years ahead.

Now, the House of Representatives, the Republican majority passed a bill that guarantees none of these rights and leaves 100 million Americans out of what little it does cover. The Senate wouldn't even vote on the bill because they didn't want to be recorded, so they shut down business.

That's what this election is about. Don't be fooled about a smokescreen. This election is: Are we going to have a Patients' Bill of Rights? Is our policy going to be to grow the economy and preserve the environment? Are we going to put education first? Are we going to stabilize the global economy, so we can continue to grow? Are we going to save Social Security first? That's what it's about.

And if we go out and say, we are Democrats, this is what we're running for; we believe elections should be about the people that live outside Washington, not about who's

crawling on whom in Washington, DC—everything is going to be fine. So I ask you, go out there and make sure that's what it's about.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts William S. and Star Lerach; Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Lynn Schenk, candidate for State attorney general; and San Diego City Council member Christine Kehoe, candidate for California's 49th Congressional District.

Statement on Social Security

September 26, 1998

The Republican tax plan drains billions of dollars from the surplus before we have done the hard work of strengthening Social Security. First things first. I will insist that we reserve the entire surplus until we have seized this historic opportunity to save Social Security, and veto any bill that doesn't meet that principle. While it is regrettable that this plan survived today, I am heartened by the strong commitment to fiscal discipline and Social Security shown by those who opposed it.

Remarks at a Unity '98 Dinner in Los Angeles, California

September 26, 1998

Thank you very much. I hate to begin with a request, but if there was any way to turn down some of these lights, I would like it. I can't see any of you out there. Can you turn these lights down? It's not a nightclub act. But I'd just like to know that you're out there, you know? [*Laughter*] Thank you.

Let me begin by telling you how very grateful I am for the warm welcome you have given me tonight, to those of you whom I saw earlier. I thank you especially for the personal messages you had for me and for Hillary. You know, even Presidents and their families have to be people, too, and that means a very great deal to us. And I thank you more than you will ever know.

I want to thank Haim and Cheryl for having me back in their home and having all