

people to remember something else about the estate tax repeal: It is not a bill standing on its own.

Many of these bills they've passed—it's very much—what they've done this year is better politically for them than what they did last year. Last year they sent me a bill down here that was obviously very big and unwieldy and ineffective.

This year, as Mr. Gephardt said, they're sending them down here in discrete bills. And every one of them appeals to some constituency or another. But when you add them all up, it's still part of a \$2 trillion plan that would wipe out the entire projected budget surplus. And I will say again, that is before we agreed to take Medicare spending off budget, the Medicare taxes, before they had to pay for a privatization plan for Social Security, and before they had to pay for any of their spending plans. They take away all the money that the country would have in a balanced budget to invest in education and health care and the environment for a decade. It is wrong.

Now, they've got a right to try to override any veto that I make. That's the way that the Constitution works. But I wish they would try just as hard to muster up the two-thirds to raise the minimum wage for people that are working 40 hours a week, the students that are still sitting in crowded classrooms and trailers, the patients fighting for the health care they need, the seniors struggling to pay for prescription drugs.

You know, if my health holds up, I'll probably be one of those people that will be fortunate enough to have some estate tax to pay one day, or my heirs will. But I'd kind of like to see us spend a little time—we seem to spend all of our time fighting in Congress over what they want to do to help people who, like me, that America has been very good to. I think we ought to spend a little more time working on the minimum wage, the schoolchildren, the people who need the Patients' Bill of Rights, the seniors who need the prescription drugs.

This is a great and good country. We should be fair to everybody. I'm for changes in the estate tax. All of us are. They all voted for it, but the Republicans wanted an issue. They want it to be an all-or-nothing thing,

and I just don't think that the most fortunate people in this country should be the only ones that are considered here.

I think the folks that don't have anybody up here lobbying for them and the folks that don't have the ability to contribute to any of our campaigns, but to keep this country going day-in and day-out, their kids deserve a good education too; their parents deserve medicine too; and they deserve to have the protections that the Patients' Bill of Rights gives that the rest of us can buy. That's what I believe, and we've got 5 weeks to give it to them, and we ought to just saddle up and do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:07 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Proclamation 7337—Health in Aging Month, 2000

September 5, 2000

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

At the beginning of the 20th century, there were only 3 million older Americans; today, at the dawn of the 21st century, there are 34 million older citizens in our Nation, and we anticipate that, by the year 2050, one in four Americans will be 65 or older. We can be grateful that because of extraordinary advances in medicine, technology, and science, as well as increased public awareness of the importance of good nutrition and physical fitness, these older citizens are now living longer, more active, more productive lives than any previous generation.

The dramatic increase in the life span of our citizens, however, presents us with new challenges. While Americans are no longer dying from many of the diseases that affected previous generations, they must now contend with chronic conditions such as arthritis, osteoporosis, heart and lung disease, dementia, and stroke. These conditions are major causes of disability and death in our Nation,

and their financial impact, in terms of medication, treatment, and long-term care costs, can be crushing. Older Americans now pay an average of more than \$1,200 a year for prescription drugs, up from \$559 in 1992, and that amount is projected to increase to more than \$2,800 over the next decade. Millions of these older citizens have no prescription drug coverage at all, and millions more have expensive, inadequate coverage or are at risk of losing what coverage they have.

My Administration has taken a number of important actions to meet these new challenges. We have proposed a new affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit option available to all beneficiaries. This new benefit should ensure that every beneficiary, whether covered under Medicare, managed care, or a retiree health plan, will be able to access prescription drug coverage, including protection against catastrophic drug costs. We have also proposed an initiative to assist millions of older Americans and their families in meeting the financial challenges of long-term care, including a \$3,000 tax credit for people with long-term care needs or their caregivers and improved equity in Medicaid eligibility for people living in home- and community-based settings rather than nursing facilities.

We are continuing our research efforts into chronic conditions that affect older Americans, such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and diabetes, and I am proud that my proposed budget for fiscal 2001 includes a historic \$1 billion increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health. And, most important, we remain committed to meeting the health and financial needs of older Americans by protecting and strengthening Social Security and Medicare and modernizing, improving, and reauthorizing the Older Americans Act.

But there is still much to do if we are to sustain the health and quality of life of our increasingly aging population. We must raise awareness of the unique needs of older Americans and ensure that caregivers and health professionals are specially trained to treat the elderly. We must expand our research efforts into chronic conditions that affect older Americans. And we must improve health care financing, delivery, and administrative structures so that health plans and

providers have the flexibility they need to reduce the prevalence of chronic diseases, slow the rate of disability progression, and ensure the continuity and quality of care.

The health of older Americans varies from individual to individual and can depend on many factors, but we all recognize the critical importance of quality medical care, financial security, and a caring support system to sustaining a high quality of life. As our Nation's population ages, let us work together to ensure that these essential components of good health are available to every American.

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 September 2000 as Health in Aging Month, 2000. I urge government officials, health care providers, business and community leaders, and the American people to work together to promote healthy aging and to ensure that older citizens enjoy fulfilling, independent, and productive lives.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 7, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 8.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol to the Madrid Agreement on International Registration of Marks With Documentation

September 5, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to accession, the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks adopted at Madrid June 27, 1989, which entered into force December 1, 1995. Also transmitted for the information of the