

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

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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

Senate are the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol and a February 2, 2000, letter from the Council of the European Union regarding voting within the Assembly established under the Protocol.

The Protocol will offer several major advantages to U.S. trademark owners. First, registration of trademarks internationally will be possible without obtaining a local agent and without filing an application in each Contracting Party. If the United States accedes to the Protocol, the Protocol will provide a trademark registration filing system that will permit a U.S. trademark owner to file for registration in any number of Contracting Parties by filing a single standardized application in English, and with a single payment in dollars, at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (PTO). The PTO will forward the application to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (respectively, the “International Bureau” and “WIPO”), which administers the Protocol. Second, under the Protocol, renewal of a trademark registration in each Contracting Party may be made by filing a single request with a single payment. These two advantages should make access to international protection of trademarks more readily available to both large and small U.S. businesses.

Third, the Protocol will facilitate the recording internationally of a change of ownership of a mark with a single filing. United States businesses experience difficulties effecting valid assignments of their marks internationally due to burdensome administrative requirements for recordation of an assignment in many countries. These difficulties can hinder the normal transfer of business assets. The Protocol will permit the holder of an international registration to record the assignment of a trademark in all designated Contracting Parties upon the filing of a single request with the International Bureau, accompanied by a single payment. To carry out the provisions of the Protocol, identical implementing legislation, which is supported by my Administration, was passed by the House of Representatives and introduced in the Senate.

Accession to the Protocol is in the best interests of the United States. Therefore, I rec-

ommend the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to accession, subject to the declarations described in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 5, 2000.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Protocol Amending the 1950
Ireland-United States Consular
Convention With Documentation**

September 5, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the Senate’s advice and consent to ratification, the Protocol Amending the 1950 Consular Convention Between the United States of America and Ireland, signed at Washington on June 16, 1998. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol.

The Protocol expands the scope of tax exemption under the 1950 Consular Convention Between the United States of America and Ireland to provide for reciprocal exemption from all taxes, including Value Added Taxes (VAT) on goods and services for the official use of the mission or for the personal use of mission members and families. The amendment will provide financial benefit to the United States, both through direct savings on embassy purchases of goods and services as well as through lowering the cost of living for United States Government employees assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Dublin.

Because the Protocol will achieve long-term tax exemption on the purchase of goods and services for our embassy and personnel in Ireland, I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 5, 2000.