

taskmasters at election time, but she has worked hard. She's worked effectively with us, and if for no other reason than New Hampshire ranks first in the participation of children in the Child Health Insurance Program, she's earned reelection.

That's the last thing I want to tell you. We appropriated funds at the Balanced Budget Act in 1997, the biggest expansion of child health care since Medicaid was passed in 1965. We appropriated funds for 5 million children from low-income working families to get health insurance, children that desperately needed it, but their parents earned just a little too much money to get them into the Medicaid program—5 million.

Today, 3 years later, we have only enrolled a little over 2 million. Why? And Parris has done well, too. But the reason is that not every State has done that well. So there are children all over America tonight who are sick, who need to see doctors, who need to have checkups, who need to have everything that's covered in these programs who don't get it. But they get it in New Hampshire because she's been a good Governor.

So I want you to go home, those of you from New Hampshire, and redouble your effort. I did say to Jeanne, for those of you who gave money tonight, in New Hampshire, \$75,000 is still real money. That's a lot of television ads on the Manchester TV station. And if you can do anything to help her, I hope you will.

I think that this election, because of what she represents and because of her opponent and the clear ideological divide, represents one of the seminal contests in our country this year. But the most important thing is that the people that live in New Hampshire need, deserve, and ought to have her leadership for another term.

I'm glad we're here tonight. And if you can do anything between now and November to help her, I hope you will do that, too. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. in Theater One at the Visions Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; and Gordon Humphrey, Republican gubernatorial candidate in New Hampshire. Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire is a candidate for reelection.

Remarks on Departure for Flint, Michigan

September 21, 2000

“Conservation and Reinvestment Act”

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to begin by thanking this distinguished group of Americans who have joined me, and I want to introduce them all. To my immediate left, looking over my shoulder here is Mayor Brent Coles of Boise, Idaho; Senator Gaylord Nelson, the founder of Earth Day; and next to him, his small namesake, Major League Baseball legend Gaylord Perry. Henry Diamond is here, who is a partner in the law firm of Beveridge and Diamond, and a distinguished environmentalist, heading the largest environmental law firm in the Nation; Roger Schlickeisen, the president of Defenders of Wildlife, over my right shoulder here. Jack Hanna is here, the director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo; Frank Beamer, the head coach of the Virginia Tech football team—as he said, “Last year number two; and rising this year.” —[laughter]— Jimmie Lee Solomon, the senior vice president of baseball operations for Major League Baseball; Dr. Michael Hirshfield, the vice president at the research protection programs of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation; David Waller, the director of wildlife resources division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, who told me to say something good about wildlife today. I often feel that we're in the presence of it here in Washington. [Laughter] And I appreciate his efforts to preserve it. And the lady to my left is Sue Maturkanich, who is a teacher from Grand Rapids, Michigan. I wanted to thank her for being here and for her interest in the intersection of education and the environment for our children.

These conservation and community leaders have come here from all over America to work for the protection of our open spaces and our most precious lands, to ask Congress to provide permanent funding for them with Federal funds dedicated to supporting State and local communities.

Under the leadership of Chairman Don Young and Congressman George Miller, the House recently cast an overwhelming bipartisan vote to provide permanent funding for

America's open spaces from the resources the Federal Government gets from Federal offshore oil leases. There is significant support in the Senate for this legislation. And we are here today to ask the Senate leadership to work with Senators Frank Murkowski and Jeff Bingaman, again on a bipartisan basis, to pass the "Conservation and Reinvestment Act" known as CARA.

When I was growing up in Arkansas, I had such easy access to parks and woods and mountains and rivers and lakes that I suppose I took them for granted a little bit. But we know that we can no longer take our access to our natural resources and our wildlife for granted. In too many communities, our green spaces and our open spaces continue to disappear.

For too many of our young people and their families, it's becoming harder and harder to protect what we have left, the meadows and seashores, the lands farmers harvest, the streams where families fish. With more and more people visiting our national parks and forests, we also have to do more to protect and preserve these treasures. That's why Gaylord Perry is here today. He believes that all our children should have a place to play Little League ball. That's why Sue Maturkanich is here today, all the way from Michigan, to remind the Congress how essential it is for children to have a good place to play.

For 7½ years now, Vice President Gore and I have fought for these causes, to protect our natural resources, to provide communities with resources they need to preserve green and open spaces. Working with Congress, again on a bipartisan basis, we protected Yellowstone from the threat of mining, preserved the Baca Ranch in New Mexico, saved age-old California redwoods, set aside huge stretches of the Mojave Desert for the national park system, and launched the most ambitious environmental restoration effort ever in the magnificent Florida Everglades. But we also provided significant new resources to help States and communities preserve farms, urban parks, and other precious open spaces.

The mayor of Boise is here, as I said earlier. We worked with him to give him the funds to develop a 55-acre recreation com-

plex so that children and parents have a place to enjoy the wonders of nature close to home.

Here in Washington, DC, we helped the city rebuild Girard Street Park, the only open space in an entire urban neighborhood, a park that will give children a place to play in safety and the community a place to call their own.

We believe every community should have such places so that neighborhood parks and baseball fields are as common as cell phones and video games. That's why CARA is so important and why Congress must pass it now before it adjourns.

I want to make it clear: The virtue of CARA is one of the things which makes it controversial in the ordinary course of congressional operations. It would set aside money that we have coming in every year, automatically, for these communities for these purposes, so that they would always know that there was a stream of money there to protect the future for our children.

I also hope Congress, before it leaves, will provide adequate resources for us to continue to protect our air and water and ensure permanent funding for land conservation. And I hope they will send me budget bills free of anti-environmental riders. Once again, too many of these bills are being watered down and polluted with riders aimed at weakening public health protections, blocking commonsense efforts to combat climate change, and surrendering public lands to private interests.

In the last 24 hours, Congress has added some more of these riders. I vetoed bills before because they contained them, and if I have to, I'll do it again. But I ask Congress to drop them so we can get on with the people's business, and they can go back home and talk to the voters.

A century ago President Theodore Roosevelt set our Nation on the path of conservation. He reminded us, and I quote, "Our responsibilities to the coming millions is like that of parents to children. In wasting our resources, we are wronging our descendants."

Since then, we've answered President Roosevelt's call to conservation. And time after time, over the entire length of the 20th

century, we put the restoration and protection of the environment ahead of partisan conflict.

In the weeks ahead, we should continue to do this. We have a unique and profoundly important effort to give people at the grass-roots level in America a permanent source of funding to protect our natural resources.

A chance like this comes along once in a great while. That's why there were over 300 votes for this bill in the House. And there ought to be 100 votes for it in the Senate, and I hope we can get it done, and these folks, by coming here today, have made it more likely.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks at Mott Community College in Flint, Michigan *September 21, 2000*

Give her another hand. [*Applause*] Wasn't she great? Thank you, Karla.

Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am delighted to be here at Mott Community College. And I want to begin by thanking Karla Hudson again for her sterling example, but even more for her commitment to helping other people build a better future for themselves.

I also want to thank my longtime friend and now Cabinet member, Secretary Mineta, for his years and years of commitment to empowering people with disabilities. I thank my National Economic Adviser, Gene Sperling, who is a native of Michigan, for the work he did on the announcements I will make today. And Mayor Stanley, thank you, as always. Judy Brewer, thank you for your work.

I also want to acknowledge Pamela Loving from the Career Alliance and Michael Zelley from the Disability Network for what they're doing. I'd like to thank Dr. Shaink, the board, and the faculty members and the students of Mott Community College for making us welcome here today.

And I'd like to acknowledge a couple of other people who came with me today to be here—first, the remarkable president of Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, Dr. I.

King Jordan, and a marathon runner—congratulations for being here—James Clark, vice president at NCR; Carl Augusto, the president of the American Foundation for the Blind; and from the administration, Judy Heumann, the Assistant Secretary for Special Education Rehab Services, and Jonathan Young from the White House. They're all around there. Thank you all very much for being here.

I would also like to thank the Vice President in his absence for the work that he has done with me for 8 years to empower all Americans.

Looking back, I think this is my fourth trip, Mayor, to Flint. I'm beginning to feel at home. I'm afraid if I come back, I'll get a tax bill, I've been here so often. [*Laughter*] When I first came here in 1992, Mayor Stanley welcomed me. Now I'm about to leave the Presidency, and when I'm gone, he'll still be mayor. [*Laughter*] I want to know what the secret is. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, as Secretary Mineta said, this is a very fortunate time for our country, and it happened because of a lot of people across America working together. Flint has worked hard, against tough odds, to bring this city back, to prepare for a new century. And you have made a great deal of progress. I am quite sure that the people whom I visited today who are involved with the Disability Network and the Career Alliance and the people at this community college have played a major role in the resurgence of this fine community.

But we all know that not everyone has shared in the American economic renaissance. We all know there are people and places who have been left behind, including millions of Americans with significant disabilities who want to go to work but whose path is blocked and who could work and could contribute, not only to their own lives but to the rest of us, as well.

The great labor priest George Higgins articulated a fundamental truth when he said, "Work is an important way in which we exercise our humanity. In return, society offers us not only our daily bread but a sense that we, ourselves, are honored for the contributions we make."