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2034 as the number of retired workers doubles. The Medicare system also faces significant financial shortfalls, with the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund projected to become exhausted in 2015. We need to take additional steps to strengthen Social Security and Medicare for future generations of Americans.

In addition to preserving Social Security and Medicare, the Congress and the President have a responsibility to future generations to reduce the debt held by the public. Paying down the debt will produce substantial interest savings, and this legislation proposes to devote these entirely to Social Security after 2010. At the same time, by contributing to the growth of the overall economy debt reduction will improve the Government's ability to fulfill its responsibilities and to face future challenges, including preserving and strengthening Social Security and Medicare.

The enclosed bill would help achieve these goals by devoting the entire Social Security surpluses to debt reduction, extending the solvency of Social Security to 2050, protecting Social Security and Medicare funds in the budget process, reserving one-third of the non-Social Security surplus to strengthen and modernize Medicare, and paying down the debt by 2015. It is clear and straightforward legislation that would strengthen and preserve Social Security and Medicare for our children and grandchildren. The bill would:

- Extend the life of Social Security from 2034 to 2050 by reinvesting the interest savings from the debt reduction resulting from Social Security surpluses.
- Establish a Medicare surplus reserve equal to one-third of any on-budget surplus for the total of the period of fiscal years 2000 through 2009 to strengthen and modernize Medicare.
- Add a further protection for Social Security and Medicare by extending the budget enforcement rules that have provided the foundation for our fiscal discipline, including the discretionary caps and pay-as-you-go budget rules.

I urge the prompt and favorable consideration of this proposal.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 26, 1999.

Statement on Senate Action on the Proposed "African Growth and Opportunity Act"

October 26, 1999

I applaud the strong, bipartisan vote in the Senate to move forward with consideration of the "African Growth and Opportunity Act." This historic legislation will help build a partnership that will strengthen economic and political ties, increase trade, and boost economic growth and opportunity in both the United States and Africa. It will strengthen the relationship between our Nation and a continent entering a new era of democracy and economic progress. I urge Congress to pass this legislation this year.

Statement on Signing the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999

October 26, 1999

Today I am pleased to sign into law the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999. By making it easier to use wireless phones to report emergencies, this bill could save thousands of lives every year.

Nearly 100,000 times each day, someone uses a wireless phone to make an emergency call. People with wireless phones can speed the delivery of public safety services by providing rapid reports of car crashes, incidents of aggressive or drunk driving, serious crimes, and natural disasters. Getting rapid care to someone who is suffering from a heart attack or is involved in a car crash can mean the difference between life and death.

The legislation I am signing today will improve emergency wireless communications in several ways. First, it will make 9-1-1 the universal emergency telephone number for

wireless and "wireline" telephones across the United States. Currently, there are 20 different emergency wireless numbers in different States. Second, it will encourage state-wide coordination of the efforts of public safety and law enforcement officials to protect our citizens and save lives. Finally, it will increase private sector investment in emergency wireless services by providing wireless companies with the same level of liability protection that "wireline" telecommunications companies have.

I want to thank Members of Congress, the wireless industry, public safety officials, and medical professionals who worked together to pass this important legislation.

NOTE: S. 800, approved October 26, was assigned Public Law No. 106-81.

Remarks at a *Vogue* Magazine Reception

October 26, 1999

Thank you very much, Annie, Anna, Madam Secretary, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, you've just heard in Madeleine Albright, who has done a magnificent job for our country, the introduction—give her a hand. [Applause] She was so generous to me, it was a perfect illustration of Clinton's third law of politics: Always be introduced by someone you appointed to high office.

It was so nice, I had to pinch myself to make sure I was still alive. [Laughter] Normally, you have to keel over before people say things like that for you. [Laughter]

Let me say, I am so honored to have all of you here for this truly historic moment in the cultural history of our country. We're here to honor two groups of people that I think are very important to our present and to our future, women and photographers. [Laughter] The White House—some of my former photographers, as well as some of my present ones, are here tonight, but a lot of people in the office have almost made fun of me, because I'm always comparing the job of a photographer in Washington with the job of a reporter or a columnist. And in some ways, the job of the photographer is easy, because a photographer is rewarded just for looking to see what's there and capturing it

in some remarkable, clear, crystal way. The poor reporters and columnists have to perform reverse plastic surgery on the event to get any notice whatever. [Laughter] But it's a really important thing.

I want to say one thing. I'm delighted that Senator and Mrs. Leahy are here. Senator Leahy, some of you may know, is also a very accomplished photographer. And we have in the home of our cabin at Camp David a magnificent picture that he took in Tibet, which we treasure very much. So there are a lot of people here who admire you, Annie, and your craft.

I also want to thank Susan Sontag for her participation in this. You never know how a book like this is going to do, but in terms of its appropriateness at this moment in our history, it strikes me that it could have the kind of impact that James Agee and Walker Evans had so many decades ago with their magnificent book, "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men," which captured the faces of the Depression. And for people like me who grew up the children of Depression-era parents in very poor places, it had a profound impact. And that's what I sense is possible here.

This work also—you heard about our Vital Voices initiative that Hillary has worked so hard on, the Secretary of State has worked so hard to support. But Vital Voices has a lot in common with what is being celebrated here, because it has worked to empower women all over the world who are just interested in making politics what it's supposed to be, an instrument of solving common problems. And I have seen the power of this.

Hillary and I went to Africa a couple of years ago, and we were in, I think it was Senegal, at the end of our trip, but we went to this meeting. Hillary is always getting to go to these meetings and talk to people about solving—[laughter]. And all of a sudden—and she said, "You know, I met these people the last time I was here from this little village, these women who were determined to end the practice of female genital mutilation." And they had a few token guys there who were cheering them on. It's the same thing everywhere. [Laughter] "And they have come all the way to the Capital to meet you.