

recorded. The cost-of-living adjustment announced today ensure that Social Security benefits will continue to be an essential part of retirement and family security for all Americans.

This year we have an historic opportunity to protect and strengthen Social Security, securing it for future generations of retirees. At a minimum, we should agree on a down-payment on reform by passing a Social Security lockbox that extends the life of Social Security to about 2050 and pays down the debt by 2015. I remain committed to working with Congress to move forward in this area.

Statement on Senate Action To Block Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

October 19, 1999

Once again, a minority in the Senate has blocked bipartisan campaign finance reform. The failure of the Senate to adopt real reform is a victory for the politics of cynicism, and it leaves unchecked the influence of moneyed special interests. I will not let the Senate's inaction deter us from our goal, which is to restore the public's faith in our political system. That is why I will continue to fight for passage of real, comprehensive campaign finance reform like that passed recently by the House. The people of this country want reform, and the Senate cannot stand in their way forever.

Statement on the Vote in Indonesia To Accept the East Timor Referendum Results

October 19, 1999

I welcome the historic decision by the People's Consultative Assembly of Indonesia to accept the results of the August 30 referendum in East Timor. The assembly's unequivocal action shows respect for the will of the people of East Timor. It is also an important step forward in Indonesia's own democratic transformation, which the United States strongly supports.

Of course, much work remains to make sure that East Timor's transition succeeds. In the wake of the assembly's decision, the

United Nations must establish a transition administration leading to East Timor's full independence. And Indonesia must take the necessary steps to ensure the safe return of all displaced East Timorese, including allowing the international community full access to displaced persons in west Timor.

The United States is committed to helping the people of East Timor not only obtain the legal recognition of independence but also develop the institutions they need to thrive as an independent state. We are equally determined to help Indonesia achieve its goal of lasting democracy and prosperity. Today's action will bring both goals closer to fruition.

Statement on House Action on the "Work Incentives Improvement Act"

October 19, 1999

I am extremely pleased that the House, by an overwhelming bipartisan vote today, passed legislation that will remove barriers to work for Americans with disabilities. Today's impressive vote for the "Work Incentives Improvement Act" sends a strong signal that all Americans, including people with disabilities, should have the opportunity to work. Now I call on Congress to finish the job so more Americans can start to work.

My administration has helped create more than 19 million new jobs in the last 6½ years, and unemployment is at a 29-year low. Yet almost three out of four Americans with severe disabilities who want to work are not working. Since taking office, I have made empowering and promoting the independence of people with disabilities a priority. Central to this effort is taking down barriers to work for people with disabilities. One of the biggest barriers these Americans face is the fear of losing their health insurance when they get a job. Under current law, many people with disabilities cannot work and keep their Medicaid or Medicare coverage, creating a tremendous disincentive to work.

The "Work Incentives Improvement Act" would help ensure that people with disabilities do not lose their health care when they gain a job. It would give workers with disabilities the option to buy into Medicaid and would extend Medicare coverage for people