

millions of seniors to lead more independent lives by funding vital, everyday basics like transportation and Meals on Wheels. And I hope we will reauthorize it and strengthen it by funding our caregivers initiative, as well, to provide families with the information, counseling, and support services they need to sustain their selfless missions.

Finally, I hope that we will succeed in passing a voluntary affordable Medicare drug benefit this fall, which also will be a great help to families. Many of the people providing long-term care are doing it for people with extraordinary medicine requirements. Studies show that seniors who lack this kind of coverage are twice as likely to be admitted to nursing homes as those who have it. So again, this is not only the humane and decent thing to do, it's also common sense. It's good for family ties and good for economics.

We have a golden opportunity, as so many of our fellow citizens move into their golden years, to meet the challenges of the aging of America. We have never had a better opportunity to do it, because of our prosperity and our surplus. So I hope that we will continue to build on the spirit embodied in this bill today.

The Long-Term Care Security Act is worth celebrating. It is worth celebrating for what it does, for the indirect benefits it will have for people who are not covered by it but whose employers will be able to get this kind of group insurance, and for what it says about our values and what we can do in the future. I hope that we'll take every opportunity to build on it.

And now I'd like to ask all the folks on the stage with me to gather round, and I'll sign the bill.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Joan Madarases, mother of three, who cares for two disabled family members. Ms. Madarases introduced the President. H.R. 4040, approved September 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106-265. The Long-Term Care Security Act is Title I of Public Law No. 106-265.

Statement on Signing Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Legislation

September 19, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4040, the "Long-Term Care Security Act." It includes two titles—the "Long-Term Care Security Act" and the "Federal Erroneous Retirement Coverage Corrections Act." This bill authorizes the creation of a new program of group long-term care insurance for Federal employees and annuitants, active and retired members of the uniformed services, employees and annuitants of the U.S. Postal Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority, and relatives of these individuals. It also provides for a more equitable way to correct certain retirement coverage errors affecting thousands of Federal employees and their families.

Addressing the needs of an aging society has been one of my highest priorities. The retirement of the baby boom generation will have profound effects not only on Medicare and Social Security but on long-term care. Millions more seniors will need care from home and community-based providers, nursing homes, and families. Yet, today's system is a patchwork that often does not serve the needs of people with chronic illnesses. To address this, I announced a multi-pronged long-term care initiative in early 1999. It tackles the complex problem of long-term care through: (1) creating a \$3,000 tax credit to help people with long-term care needs or the families who care for them; (2) providing funding for services that support family caregivers of older persons; (3) improving equity in Medicaid eligibility for people in home- and community-based settings; (4) encouraging partnerships between low-income housing for the elderly and Medicaid; and (5) encouraging the purchase of quality private long-term care insurance by Federal employees. H.R. 4040, which is bipartisan, consensus legislation, implements the portion of the initiative concerning long-term care insurance for Federal employees.

It will improve the availability and quality of private long-term care insurance by allowing, for the first time, families of Federal employees to access a high-quality, affordable long-term care insurance option through the

Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The OPM will contract for benefits with one or more private contractors, enabling the agency to obtain the best value for the entire Federal family. The OPM will ensure that policies have important consumer protections that are generally not available in individual insurance policies, such as full portability, and that enrollees will have the option to purchase policies that include inflation and non-forfeiture protections. By using the size of the Federal workforce family—about 13 million people—as leverage, the Federal Government will be able to provide long-term care insurance at group rates expected to be 15 to 20 percent lower than individual rates. Coverage will be provided for a range of services, including personal care, home health care, adult day care, and nursing home care.

Our hope is that, by making high-quality private long-term care coverage available to the Federal family at negotiated group rates, we will continue to serve as a model to other employers across the Nation. This policy is also the most responsible next step in promoting private long-term care insurance. Building on the financial incentives I signed into law in 1996, this policy will increase both the number of people with long-term care coverage and the quality of such coverage—increasing confidence in this growing market as people start planning for their own future long-term care needs.

The bill also provides a comprehensive solution to the problems faced by many Federal employees and their families who, through no fault of their own, are affected by retirement coverage errors. Unlike current law, which directs how coverage errors will be corrected, it permits those placed in the wrong retirement coverage to choose the coverage that best serves their needs and preferences. This new authority to correct erroneous retirement enrollments and the new long-term care insurance program will greatly enhance the quality of life for Federal employees and members of the Armed Forces. I applaud the bipartisan congressional coalition and OPM Director Lachance for their yeoman efforts in developing and passing this important bill.

In approving H.R. 4040, I note that section 1002 of the bill (new section 9003(d)(3) of title 5, U.S. Code) provides that “the President (or his designee) shall submit to [specified congressional committees] a written recommendation as to whether the program . . . should be continued without modification, terminated, or restructured.” The Recommendations Clause of the Constitution provides that the President “shall from time to time . . . recommend to [Congress] . . . such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.” That Clause protects the President’s authority to formulate and present his own recommendations, which includes the power to decline to offer any recommendation. Accordingly, to avoid any infringement on the President’s constitutionally protected policy-making prerogatives, I shall construe this provision not to extend to the submission of recommendations that the President finds it unnecessary or inexpedient to present.

It gives me great pleasure to sign H.R. 4040 into law. I welcome the opportunity to offer Federal employees, members of the Armed Forces, and their families, this additional option to care for their aging parents, and let their children care for them with dignity and financial security. I look forward to working with the Congress to pass the other critical elements of my plan to improve long-term care for all Americans.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 19, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4040, approved September 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106–265.

**Remarks at a Luncheon for
Gubernatorial Candidate
Heidi Heitkamp**

September 19, 2000

Thank you. You know, I have a lot of interest in this race. Heidi was attorney general; I was attorney general. And I was Governor for a dozen years. It’s a wonderful job. It really matters whether we have a few more Democratic Governors. This year more than ever, I think women should be elected to