

Like our victory in World War II, this opens a whole new era for us. It gives us great opportunities, enormous challenges, profound responsibilities. At home, we have the chance and the duty to meet the challenge of the aging of America; of the largest and most diverse group of schoolchildren in our Nation's history; of families struggling to balance the obligation to work with the more important obligation to raise their children well; to explore the far frontiers of science and technology in a way that benefits ordinary Americans and protects our most cherished values; to get this country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Around the world, we have to face the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, narcotrafficking, the persistent, enduring ethnic, religious, tribal, and racial conflicts that grip so many places in the world, and new and different threats that could profoundly affect us all, including global warming and the rise of AIDS and other infectious diseases, along with the breakdown of public health systems around the world.

But we're well-positioned to deal with this, thanks in no small measure to what Harry Truman and his generation did so long ago. He gave us the opportunities we have today. It's a good thing that we say, thanks, Mr. President, by naming this building for him. It would be a far, far better thing if we would follow his lead and give the same set of opportunities to our grandchildren. I pray God that we will.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. outside the Harry S. Truman Building. In his remarks, he referred to President Truman's grand-nephew, John Ross Truman, and his daughter, Margaret Truman Daniel; George M. Elsey, former administrative assistant to President Truman; and actor James Earl Jones, master of ceremonies.

Statement on Signing the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000

September 22, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2869, the "Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000," which will provide important protections for religious exercise in America. This Act will, in certain cases, forbid State and local governments from imposing a substantial burden on the exercise of religion unless they could demonstrate that imposition of such a burden is the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling governmental interest. The Act would protect the exercise of religion in two situations: (1) where State and local governments seek to impose or implement a zoning or landmark law in a manner that imposes a substantial burden on religious exercise and (2) where State and local governments seek to impose a substantial burden on the religious exercise of persons residing or confined to certain institutions.

I applaud the Congress, particularly Senators Kennedy, Hatch, Reid, and Schumer, and Representatives Canady and Nadler for their hard work in passing this legislation. The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act will provide protection for one of our country's greatest liberties—the exercise of religion—while carefully preserving the civil rights of all Americans. Just as I fully supported the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993, I support Senator Kennedy's and Hatch's bill. Religious liberty is a constitutional value of the highest order, and the Framers of the Constitution included protection for the free exercise of religion in the very first Amendment. This Act recognizes the importance the free exercise of religion plays in our democratic society.

I also want to thank the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion and the civil rights community for the central role they played in crafting this legislation. Their work in passing this legislation once again demonstrates

that people of all political bents and faiths can work together for a common purpose that benefits all Americans.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 22, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2869, approved September 22, was not received by the Office of the Federal Register in time for assignment of a Public Law number.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

September 17

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

September 18

In the morning, the President met with former Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel in the Oval Office.

September 19

In the evening, the President attended a book-signing in honor of former aide Paul Begala's new book at West 24 restaurant.

The President announced his intention to appoint Leslie Russell Jin as Staff Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The President announced his intention to accord David R. Andrews the rank of Ambassador in his capacity as Special Negotiator for U.S./Iran Claims.

The President announced his intention to appoint Alfred Cho, Arthur Jaffe, Elizabeth Neufeld, and William Lester as members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

September 20

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Giuliano Amato of Italy in the Cabinet Room.

September 21

In the morning, the President traveled to Flint, MI, where he toured the Disability Network and viewed a demonstration of handicapped-accessible technologies. Later, he traveled to Detroit and Livonia. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Daniel P. Burnham to be the Chair of the National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald Fixico to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted September 22

Mary Lou Leary,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Laurie O. Robinson, resigned.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released September 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on a report on a low-income prescription drug plan