

FINAL DRAFT - 7-5-94 at 6 p.m.

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA
PRESS CONFERENCE
WEST SIDE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA
JULY 6, 1994

INTRODUCTION

I'm delighted to be in Minnesota today. I was with Congressman Martin Sabo in Minneapolis this morning and I'm pleased to join Senator Paul Wellstone and Congressman Bruce Vento here at the West Side Health Center.

As you may know, Congressmen Sabo and Vento are co-sponsors of the President's Health Security Act and Senator Wellstone, although deeply committed to the single payer concept, is a strong worker for the right kinds of health care reform, including universal coverage. You just couldn't have three better men representing you in Washington, D.C.

Along with Mayor Coleman and Councilman Thune, we've just completed a tour of this Center, which does an outstanding job of serving the health care needs of a low income, minority community (48% *Hispanic*, 26% *Asian*).

The people I've talked to, not just at this clinic, but the business people I saw this morning and almost everyone I've met today -- all Minnesotans -- are concerned about health care. And no issue is more

important to them than universal coverage -- guaranteed insurance for everyone -- insurance that can never be taken away.

Not only the low income people who use this center, but the broad middle class citizens who have health insurance -- all want insurance that cannot be lost if they change jobs or taken away for any reason.

A recent poll showed 78 percent of all Americans support universal health care coverage and from what I've heard today, Minnesota is right in step or maybe out front of the rest of the country on this number one health care issue.¹

Two years ago in his campaign, President Clinton promised health care reform and it's a promise he has kept. But it must be the right kind of health care reform. And we are headed in the right direction.

That's why I was so glad to see four health care reform bills ready to go to the House and the Senate floors after the Independence Day recess. Three out of four of the bills provide health care coverage for every American. Thanks to the courage and determination of members of Congress such as Senator Wellstone, Congressmen Sabo and Vento.

¹ ABC News/Washington Post Poll June 27, 1994

I am very encouraged that the Health Security Act will be voted on by both Houses of Congress shortly after the recess. After the vote, the leadership of the two houses can work out a suitable final bill, which I hope and believe will include universal coverage and many other points in the President's plan.

UNIVERSAL COVERAGE

The President's bottom line remains guaranteed, comprehensive private insurance for every American, coverage that can never be taken away. It offers first rate benefits, including prescription drugs and preventive care, protection against catastrophic illness, and low, affordable deductibles without lifetime limits.

This is the only kind of *real* health care reform that will bring health security to every American.

Without universal coverage every American will remain at risk of losing health insurance coverage. Those who urge band-aid solutions say they're reforming the health care system. But they fail to provide every American with the ironclad guarantee that they'll have private health insurance that can never be taken away.

According to a new study by Families USA, under anything less than universal coverage over one million Americans a month will still lose their insurance. We need universal coverage because every family -- including middle class families -- must be protected.

²If we do not have universal coverage, here's what will happen in Minnesota by the year 2000:

- 280,968 Minnesotans who work for a living will be denied health care protection;
- 38,104 of Minnesota's children will be left out in the cold;
- Minnesota businesses that currently offer insurance will pay an estimated \$389 million more in premium costs.
- Minnesota workers employed by firms that offer insurance will pay an estimated \$274 million more for insurance.
- Minnesota workers will lose an estimated \$311 million in wages.
- Minnesota will pay \$789 million more on health care by the year 2000.

These are just a few local examples of why we must have universal coverage -- *real* health care reform that will protect middle class Americans. Anything short of universal coverage will leave millions of hard working middle class Americans without coverage.

²Based on document prepared by Senators Daschle and Rockefeller June 16, 1994 and sent by White House to be used in speeches.

In short, I want each of you to have the same guarantee that I have: *(hold up health care card)* As a federal employee, I have true health security -- private coverage provided by my employer, the taxpayers. I want to give you the same health security that I, and every member of Congress have.

Now, in addition to guaranteeing health insurance for every American, the President's proposal is a comprehensive package that will:

One, increase choice. Americans will be able to select the type of care that best meets their needs -- and not merely their insurance company's. That could mean a network of doctors or hospitals, or a health maintenance organization, or a traditional "fee for service plan" with their own doctor.

Two, the President's plan outlaws unfair insurance practices. It will be illegal for insurance companies to drop coverage or cut benefits, or to raise rates on the sick. They will not be able to discriminate against older Americans by using lifetime limits to cut benefits, or to charge more based upon age.

Three, Medicare -- an existing program which works -- will be preserved under the President's plan.

Four, the President's plan will give Americans insurance through their jobs, building on the existing employer-based insurance system which now covers four of five working Americans.

COMMUNITY BASED HEALTH CENTERS

The President's proposal will provide special incentives, capital development programs, and public health initiatives to community based health centers such as this one.

The Health Security Act will increase funds for medical schools that train primary care doctors and expand the National Health Service Corps Programs that will help the community health clinics.

Under the Health Security Act, health plans serving the poor, inner city communities will receive additional payments to adjust for the higher costs of providing services to individuals with complex needs.

CONCLUSION

So, no one will be left out. And that's just the point. That's why we must enact the President's Health Security Act as soon as possible.

Efforts to gain national health care go back to the days of Harry Truman. With four bills ready to go to the floor of both houses of Congress, this is the closest we've

ever come. And we are going to succeed because we have a President who is determined and great members of Congress such as those with me today who will fight until we win this historic battle. And we have an American public eager for universal health coverage.

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TALKING POINTS
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA
FEDERAL RESPONSE TO SOUTHEAST FLOODS
JULY 15, 1994

- * Whenever disaster strikes, the Clinton Administration responds immediately and effectively -- whether to the great Midwest floods of last summer, the California earthquake this January or to the terrible floods now ravaging parts of Georgia, Alabama and Florida.**
- * Just two days ago, after visiting Georgia, President Clinton released \$12.5 million in highway emergency relief funds to Georgia and Alabama to repair damaged roads and bridges and begin recovery.**
- * Today, I'm pleased to be able to deliver an additional \$5 million in emergency relief to the state of Georgia, an additional \$2 million to the state of Alabama, and an initial \$2.5 million in emergency relief to the State of Florida.**
- * This second round of federal highway aid to the region brings the total -- so far -- to \$22.5 million. We fully expect to provide far more support once the flood waters recede and damage can be more accurately assessed.**

- * I want to thank all those members of the House and Senate who have worked so hard with us to get help for their constituents and to begin rebuilding: Senators Sam Nunn, Howard Hefflin and Richard Shelby of Alabama, Pete Peterson and Bob Graham of Florida, Congressman Sanford Bishop and Roy Rowland of Georgia.**
- * We are working in close partnership with Governors Zell Miller of Georgia, Lawton Chiles of Florida and Jim Folsom of Alabama and their emergency management teams to save lives and help communities get back to normal life.**
- * Led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, every element of the federal government -- the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Defense, Agriculture, Commerce, Transportation, the Small Business Administration and other agencies -- are all working as a team to help the people of Georgia, southeast Alabama and the Florida panhandle get back on their feet.**
- * DOT is already providing emergency repair funding and we already have engineers in to help assess damage to highways, bridges, railways. We want the vital transportation systems in the Southeast to recover as quickly as humanly possible.**

- * In crises like this one, transportation recovery is often the key to allowing other services to be provided.
- * That's why we are also cutting red tape on operating rules to allow truck drivers, for example, to work longer than normally-permitted hours while the emergency lasts. We will get relief to people and businesses with no bureaucratic hassles.
- * Transportation throughout this region and the goods and services produced here are both vital to the whole United States, but this relief effort reflects more than concern about economic output.
- * This is about Americans helping Americans, it's about government acting on behalf of the whole American community. As President Clinton says, "we're all in this together." Every American can be proud of the way we pull together as a nation of neighbors helping neighbors.
- * I also want to assure you that the federal government is going to be here, lending a hand, all through the long, hard work of recovery. Much of the toughest work will begin only after the floods recede and the TV cameras move on. When it does, we will be engaged as a full partner -- rebuilding housing and roads, bridges and businesses -- until the people of Georgia, Alabama and west Florida get their job of recovery done.

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**SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERICO PEÑA**

Transportation Trends



**NATIONAL GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND COMMERCE**

**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
JULY 18, 1994**

Introduction

I'm pleased to speak to you on behalf of an Administration led by a President who understands your concerns, and who is striving to address them -- which is what you might expect from the first sitting governor to be elected President since Franklin Roosevelt.

I was with the President when he spoke to you in Washington shortly after he took office last year, and again at the White House in your two-and-a-half hour working session on health care and welfare reform. And I enjoyed the breakfast session I had with a number of you this past January, when we discussed various transportation matters.

As a former state legislator and mayor, I also appreciate -- all too well -- the dilemmas you face in trying to balance your budgets while meeting demands for better education, public safety, better roads, and other services.

And so I want to speak to you today about how the Clinton Administration is working with you to meet one of our nation's greatest challenges: ensuring that every state has the transportation systems and the infrastructure -- the roads, railroads, and ports -- needed to maximize economic productivity, and to reduce congestion and gridlock in our cities, on our highways, and at our airports.

Critics have been saying for years that action must be taken to fix America's crumbling roads and bridges.

As Mark Twain might have said, infrastructure is like the weather; it seems that everybody *talks* about it, but no one *does* anything about it.

Well, this is an Administration which *is* doing something about it.

Let me describe our efforts with three points:

First, we believe that investment in America's transportation systems is key to our economic growth and global competitiveness.

- more -

Secondly, we are developing an investment plan for America's surface transportation systems -- a program which is going to bring America the roads, bridges, and other improvements it desperately needs.

Third, we believe that we can protect our environment as we rebuild America's infrastructure.

The Critical Role of Infrastructure

Let me address the first point: the critical role of our nation's infrastructure. In a sad way, we have been reminded of this critical role as recently as last week, when I visited Georgia and Florida, sites hard-hit by flooding.

You couldn't have a more vivid demonstration of just how crucial transportation infrastructure is to our way of life. We also saw significant economic disruption caused by the

Northern California earthquake and the Midwest floods last year.

It seems we most appreciate the value of our transportation infrastructure when it is not working.

This Administration has responded quickly and effectively to such emergencies. But just as we responded to sudden disaster in the Midwestern floods and the California earthquake, we must also respond to the slow-motion disaster of our nation's decaying transportation infrastructure.

Over the past decade and more we've failed to invest enough to prevent our infrastructure deficit from growing worse.

From 1981 to 1991, while passenger transportation usage rose 40 percent, capital investments by all levels of government rose at only half that rate -- and federal transportation investments actually fell

-- from \$25.7 billion to \$22.8 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars.

In 1981, our nation invested 1.2% of Gross Domestic Product in transportation infrastructure; by 1991, we were investing just 0.8% of GDP in transportation.

As a result, limited capacity, poor connections, and congestion have decreased our transportation system's reliability and increased its social and economic costs -- causing a drag on our economy and on the quality of life for millions of Americans.

Traffic congestion *alone* costs our 50 largest cities \$43 billion a year -- that's more than \$1,500 for every family of four living in those areas. *And* those people waste 1.6 million hours a day sitting in traffic.

Companies lose productivity as employees come to work late and parents waste

hours of non-work time away from their families.

Imagine what we could do for "family values" if every parent could spend one more hour a day with their children instead of wasting that time stuck in traffic.

American business suffers, too. By next year, half of the nation's manufacturers will use "just-in-time" delivery systems to hold down inventory costs. Those delivery systems won't work if parts and materials are sitting in traffic on a highway. And the cost from that waste is then passed on to consumers through higher prices.

[Transportation accounts for one-sixth of our nation's economy -- more than \$1 trillion a year. That is more than health care nearly four times as much as defense.]

Indeed, if we can generate just a *one percent* increase in

nationwide transportation efficiency, we can save Americans *\$100 billion* in a decade.

This brings me to my second point: "investing strategically in transportation infrastructure" to fortify the economy, increase productivity, and create jobs.

We have several strategies to do this: increasing federal funding, developing a National Transportation System, and using a new Innovative Financing Program.

Increased Federal Funding

President Clinton understands the strategic importance of investing in and rebuilding our infrastructure. That's why he has worked so hard to provide as much transportation funding as possible even while reducing the overall budget deficit.

Indeed, he proposed that 71 percent of his 1995

transportation budget -- *more than \$28 billion* -- be dedicated to such investments.

That's the highest level in history, and it included *full funding* for the highway and transit formula capital grant programs under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 -- ISTEA.

Congressional committees have earmarked these funds to support Congressional high-priority projects, reducing the regular funds which go directly to your state departments of transportation.

The President's preference was to give maximum flexibility to the states. I certainly hope that the final appropriation bill will put this back on the right track, since full funding of ISTEA is still the President's goal.

The National Highway System

In addition to funding, we have developed for Congressional ratification the National Highway System -- 159,000 miles of the most strategically and economically important roads in all 50 states. We worked for two years on this with your state transportation officials as well as taking input from many local officials.

The NHS will help to maintain our nation's economic growth by enabling us to accurately target our investment on the roads which carry more than half of America's commercial and interregional traffic.

The House passed the NHS, and last Friday I presented it to the Senate public works committee. Our goal is to pass the NHS this year as a "clean" bill without earmarks for specific projects -- so that your states have the flexibility to decide

what's best for yourselves. I hope that you support this concept.

The National Transportation System

When I first unveiled the NHS last December, I also proposed the next logical step: a comprehensive National Transportation System.

The NTS I envision will embrace *all* forms of transport -- highways, waterways, transit systems, pipelines, airports, seaports and rail lines -- both passenger and freight, *as well as* their connections.

A National Transportation System will identify, connect and prioritize all the key forms of transport in a truly integrated national system.

It will institutionalize the intermodalism that the private sector developed, applying that same concept on a national basis -- to passenger

transportation as well as freight.

The NTS will also focus our nation's infrastructure investments -- well into the next century -- by identifying bottlenecks, missing links, and needed new components of our total transportation system -- particularly as the North American Free Trade Agreement unifies this continent and strengthens links with the whole Western Hemisphere.

Most importantly, the NTS will help guarantee to the American people that their tax dollars are being invested wisely on transportation projects that will be part of a truly national system -- one that will stimulate the economy, create jobs, and give citizens unprecedented mobility. Pork-barrel projects will be anathema to the National Transportation system.

DOT staff met with NGA officials and

members of your Washington offices two weeks ago to discuss the NTS. We'll continue to work closely with you to begin to identify the strategic systems that will be included in the NTS.

We want to produce a system which meets each state's mobility and economic development needs, *and we need the personal involvement of Governors to achieve that goal.*

The FHWA's Innovative Financing Program

I believe that the NTS will enable us to generate far greater efficiencies from our existing transportation infrastructure.

But increased efficiency alone can only go so far. We have to look at strategies to make our transportation dollars go further.

Perhaps the most exciting opportunity to rebuild America by constructing needed transportation projects

is our Innovative Financing program, which I spoke about when we met last January.

ISTEA was designed to eliminate the rigid funding restrictions which discouraged states from choosing the best project for their transportation needs.

While some have talked about innovative financing, we are now making it a reality.

In March, we announced a pilot creative financing program through which we invited every state to propose critical transportation projects which needed unique financing arrangements to become reality.

Let me emphasize that this doesn't supersede our grants process. What this pilot program *does* do is to allow states to test new ideas.

We looked for places where flexibility

would spur project development. We asked states to look at things like bond financing, public-private partnerships, and leasing rights-of-way for other uses.

Our guidance was deliberately kept general to encourage your creativity. We simply said that we would cut through the red tape to allow you to qualify for ISTEA funding whenever possible.

In effect, we said to your DOTs: let's strategize together and tailor new financing ideas for *each specific project.*

We've now received 60 proposals from 26 states, with projects ranging from a few hundred thousand dollars up to a *billion dollars.*

We've had some very creative ideas.

For example, two states asked us to commit funds beyond ISTEA's expiration in

1997. That will cut down the risk on the construction bonds they hope to issue and reduce the interest rates they would pay.

Another state has asked to lease its roadsides for private telecommunications lines -- telephone lines and fiber optic cables linking businesses along the way -- to help pay for construction.

And two states have asked us to allow tolls on federally-funded highways -- to pay off bonds they would issue - - so that construction could be done faster than if *only* federal funds were used.

Innovative Financing's Benefits

Considering that only four months have gone by since we announced this effort, we have received a remarkable response. We're reviewing these proposals now, and I look forward to joining many of you soon to

announce the projects we select.

The benefits from this program will be enormous. Projects which wouldn't have been done, or which would have been delayed for *years*, will be possible *now*.

We'll see immediate gains through construction work beginning *this year*, generating economic impacts and thousands of jobs. In the longer term, we'll see higher productivity for regional economies and the national economy.

Finally, as we learn about new project ideas and models, we'll share success stories and assist other states in developing their own projects.

I encourage all Governors to become personally aware of this innovative financing effort. I am certain that your direct involvement will generate more creativity as we have

seen in Washington state.

The Challenge of Conformity

The third topic I'd like to address is how we balance the demands of economic growth and the legitimate concerns we all have about protecting our environment.

We know that striking that balance is not always easy.

There's no denying that conflicts will arise: transportation, like all human activity, can't help but affect the environment. But we should bear in mind two principles.

First, we must avoid false choices between a sound environment and a healthy economy. Of course, choices *will* have to be made. But we don't have to choose between environmental protection and economic growth.

After all, many of our environmental problems don't come from economic growth itself, but from *thoughtless* growth.

Second, as we seek ways to encourage growth that will not degrade our environment, we need to stay focused on the fact that while such growth will not be easy -- it *can* be achieved.

As Mayor of Denver in the 1980s, I faced a serious air quality problem. We took strong, controversial steps -- adding oxygen to gasoline to make it burn cleaner, restricting wood-burning fireplaces, implementing voluntary "no drive" days -- *and they worked*.

Achieving those results on a national level is going to be hard -- and it's going to take leadership from you, from local officials, from citizens and from those of us in the federal government.

As you know, EPA recently issued the transportation conformity rule, which requires that transportation do its share to reduce air pollution.

Implementing conformity is partly DOT's responsibility, and I want to assure you we are doing everything we can to implement this rule fairly and reasonably. EPA Administrator Browner, who is addressing your Natural Resources committee as I speak, shares this view.

Administrator Browner and I met with representatives of the NGA and other public interest groups earlier this year -- in fact, Governor Sundlun represented the NGA -- and senior DOT and EPA staff continue to meet with your representatives on a monthly basis.

At those meetings, we learned more about the problems you face. For example, we

discovered that the highly-technical modeling tests for NO_x -- oxides of nitrogen -- could delay necessary transportation projects *even in areas which were meeting air quality standards*.

As a direct result of your advice, EPA provided for waivers from this test.

We'll continue to work with you and with EPA to ensure that our efforts to clean the air make sense. We will use every bit of flexibility the law allows to meet special circumstances.

The Clean Air Act *can* work. To *make* it work, we'll need your leadership, guidance and feedback. It's important for us to hear from you about what works -- and what doesn't -- in the world beyond the Beltway.

*The Clinton
Administration's
Commitment
to Innovation and
Cooperation*

We look to your leadership, cooperation and innovation to help meet our infrastructure needs and to enhance our environment. *And we see state governments as partners in this effort.*

That's why I ask you to make your voices heard in the Congressional debates on transportation infrastructure.

That's why I ask you to help us as we try to make the National Highway System a reality.

That's why I ask you to work with us as we next develop a strategic National Transportation System for the 21st century.

And, most of all, I ask you to keep providing us with new ideas for bold strategies and initiatives.

This is an Administration whose roots run deeply in state and local government, and whose policies, in many cases, have been inspired by you.

Working together, I believe that we can meet these challenges.

Together, we can prove that America's ability to dream and to build, to compete and to win, is alive and well.

Thank you very much.

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1st DRAFT - 7-15-94 at 5:30 p.m.

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA
HARVARD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
INJURY CONTROL CENTER
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
JULY 18, 1994

INTRODUCTION

I want to thank Mark Rosenberg for that generous introduction -- and the gift -- and tell you all how pleased I am to be in Boston today to speak about the historic effort to reform America's health care system.

It is an honor to have Mayor Thomas Menino with us today -- as a former Mayor of Denver, I know how busy he is -- and I am very grateful to Dr. Mitchell Rabkin, of Beth Israel Hospital for coming as well.

Dr. Rabkin represents the Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals, an alliance of ten great institutions in greater Boston, all of which are supporting President Clinton's fight for universal health care coverage for all Americans -- coverage that can never be taken away.

I'm especially pleased to be speaking today at the Harvard Injury Control Center, whose work does so much to guide public policy on ways to save lives and prevent injuries. Harvard's School of Public Health and the Injury Control Center work closely with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the Department of Transportation.

The partnership we share for transportation safety also plays a vital role in America's public health.

More than 40,000 Americans a year die in highway crashes, hundreds of thousands are injured and the total cost to society is more than \$137 billion.

By any measure, that means that the injury prevention and treatment research done here, together with safety enforcement by all levels of government play a central role not only by saving lives and preventing suffering, but by saving billions of dollars of health care costs.

I can't think of a better forum to speak about the historic challenge that President Clinton has placed at the top of our national agenda: universal health care coverage for all Americans.

Securing universal coverage will benefit all Americans, not only those of low income or those who have no insurance now.

Only by ensuring universal coverage can we buttress the security of middle class and working Americans. Only universal coverage will protect the vast majority of our people -- and the businesses they work for -- from the rising burden they bear now -- the burden of paying for the uninsured as well as for their own coverage.

This cost-shifting adds everyday to working Americans' health premiums. It threatens all Americans' insurance coverage. It is, in fact, the central cause of this country's health care crisis.

The American people are already convinced that universal coverage must be the central goal of health care reform. They realize that anything less threatens their personal security -- even if they have insurance for the time being.

That's why a recent poll showed that 78 percent of all Americans support universal health care coverage. From what I've heard today, the people of Massachusetts share this view.

Two years ago in his campaign, President Clinton promised health care reform. Now he is fighting -- every single day -- to keep that promise.

The President seeks dramatic, serious, comprehensive reform. He knows that the partial, bandaid solutions that some are proposing would not only perpetuate America's health care crisis -- they would make things worse.

That's why I am so glad to see that committees in both houses of Congress have approved bills that guarantee health coverage to every American family.

This is a testimony to the President's courage and the leadership of members of Congress who have acted to put an end to decades of neglect, rising costs and human tragedies.

The next stage in this historic effort will see both houses of Congress debating, voting and hammering out a final bill.

This will be a profoundly critical moment for American health care -- and for America's working families.

UNIVERSAL COVERAGE

The President's bottom line remains guaranteed, comprehensive private insurance for every American, coverage that can never be taken away. President Clinton's basic plan offers first rate benefits, including prescription drugs and preventive care, protection against catastrophic illness, and low, affordable deductibles with no lifetime limits.

This comprehensive, universal reform will bring health security to every American. Anything less would leave every American still at risk of losing health coverage.

According to a new study by Families USA, without universal coverage over one million Americans a month will still lose their insurance.

That's why, in a real sense, universal coverage is what the whole health care debate is all about. We have less than universal coverage now. That's the problem. Less than universal coverage is precisely what causes the inequities, distortions, perverse incentives, and cost-shifting that we so desperately need to fix.

The stakes in this health care debate are high for all Americans. But let me tell you what will happen right here in Massachusetts by the year 2000 if we do not secure universal coverage:

- 358,050 Massachusetts citizens who work for a living will be denied health care protection;**
- 124,636 Massachusetts children will be left out in the cold;**
- Massachusetts businesses that currently offer insurance will pay an estimated \$913 million more in premium costs.**
- Massachusetts workers employed by firms that offer insurance will pay an estimated \$703 million more for insurance.**
- Massachusetts workers will lose an estimated \$730 million in wages -- \$289 per worker, per year.**
- The state of Massachusetts will pay \$2.4 billion more on health care by the year 2000.**

These are just a few local examples of why we must have universal coverage -- *real* health care reform that will protect middle class Americans.

President Clinton wants every American to have the same guarantee that I have and all federal employees have: (*hold up health care card*) As a federal employee, I have true health security -- private coverage provided by my employer, the taxpayers.

This is what the President and every member of Congress has -- and it's what the American people need and deserve.

Now, in addition to guaranteeing health insurance for every American, the President's proposal is a comprehensive package that will:

One, increase choice. Americans will be able to select the type of care that best meets their needs -- and not merely their insurance company's. That could mean a network of doctors or hospitals, or a health maintenance organization, or a traditional "fee for service plan" with their own doctor.

Two, the President's plan outlaws unfair insurance practices. It will be illegal for insurance companies to drop coverage or cut benefits, or to raise rates on the sick... illegal. Insurers will no longer be able to discriminate against older Americans by using lifetime limits to cut benefits, or to charge more based upon age.

Three, Medicare -- an existing program which works well -- will be preserved under the President's plan.

Four, the President's plan will give Americans insurance through their jobs, building on the existing employer-based insurance system which now covers four of five working Americans.

There will be special discounts for small businesses. But this reform will finally create a level playing field. It will relieve the vast majority of businesses -- those who now provide their workers with insurance -- from the heavy cost of picking up the tab for those businesses who don't insure their workers.

There will be no more "free-riding", no more pressure on decent, responsible employers from the hidden costs shifted to them and their workers by firms that offer no insurance.

And for those hospitals that absorb so much uncompensated care today, universal coverage will reduce and even out the financial burden.

Under the President's plan, many of the hospitals in Boston will receive far more equitable payment for the services they provide to Americans most in need.

The Health Security Act that President Clinton seeks will also increase funds for medical schools that train primary care doctors and expand the National Health

Service Corps Programs that help staff the community health clinics.

Under the Health Security Act, health plans serving the poor, inner city communities will receive additional payments to adjust for the higher costs of providing services to individuals with complex needs.

Disadvantaged Americans will gain from reform, but let me be very clear about one thing: the greatest beneficiaries of universal health care coverage will be middle class and working Americans who do have coverage now and businesses that do provide their workers with health insurance now.

Let's face the simple truth: the very poor have access to Medicaid now. The wealthy will be able to buy great coverage under any system.

That means that the most powerful reason we need reform is to help the middle class and the companies they work for.

Because it is middle class and working Americans whose insurance coverage is threatened now. It is the responsible majority of employers -- those who provide their workers with coverage now -- who are faced with massively rising costs today -- costs shifted to them by employers who offer no health coverage.

Make no mistake. Any so-called reform that fails to come to grips with these basic problems is a betrayal of middle class Americans -- it's really "more of the same" with a bandaid on.

We can't afford that. We can't afford to lose this unique chance to put America's health care house in order and to provide Americans' security the only way we really can: universally.

CONCLUSION

This is an historic moment, much like the 1930's when Americans decided that we would no longer allow people who work all their lives to retire in destitution -- so we enacted Social Security. In the 1960's, we enacted Medicare and Medicaid so that retirees would not be forced into poverty and so poor people would not be denied the medical care they need.

Now we must settle, once and for all, the greatest remaining health and economic-security issue of our time. We must decide whether the world's richest nation will guarantee medical coverage for all of its people -- or whether fear and the forces of the status quo will carry our nation into ever deeper medical, financial, and human crisis.

This is the closest we've ever come to joining the ranks of medically civilized nations. We must carry the battle on until real change becomes the law of the land.

And this time, no matter what kind of fear-mongering and half-truths that vested interests use to scare us -- we are going to succeed.

We have a President who will fight until we win, and the American people want universal health coverage.

I hope that all of you will join us.

Thank you very much.

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**TALKING POINTS
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA
QUINCY SHIPYARD VISIT
QUINCY, MASS
JULY 18, 1994**

President Clinton and this Administration are working to ensure the competitiveness of American industries in the global marketplace. By investing in technology and infrastructure, we are investing in America's ability to compete -- and win -- in world markets. We are creating and preserving high-tech, high-wage jobs for American workers.

Key elements of this economic strategy include the strategic programs we support to revitalize the American shipbuilding industry and to ensure we will continue to have a U.S.-flag merchant fleet. In a world of steadily growing trade flows, there are economic security as well as defense security reasons for the world's most active trading nation to retain the ability to build and operate cargo ships. Ensuring America's maritime security is one of my top objectives as Secretary of Transportation.

Our five-part shipbuilding program should be of particular interest to the Quincy area -- the the whole South Shore. This initiative includes federal loan guarantees to help finance shipyard modernization projects, as well as vessels built in U.S. shipyards both for domestic owners and for export.

President Clinton has made a commitment to Chairman Studds for up to \$30 million in loan guarantees to modernize of the Quincy shipyard, and up to an additional \$200 million in loan guarantees for the purchase of vessels built at Quincy. Both commitments depend on finding viable private sector partners.

These programs can directly benefit the renewal of the Quincy shipyard and the entire region's economy.

Chairman Studds has been doing an outstanding job supporting the industry as a whole and promoting shipyards. His leadership has been essential in efforts to authorize and fund shipbuilding and maritime revitalization initiatives.

He also has been a strong advocate of maritime education programs, as everyone associated with Massachusetts Maritime Academy can attest.

Chairman Studds' efforts on behalf of America's maritime industry are an example of a seamless fit between benefitting his local constituents and serving the interest of all Americans in a vigorous U.S. maritime industry.

We in DOT and the Maritime Administration have been working with him, the Quincy yard, Massachusetts State officials and prospective project managers. We know of the proud, century-long past of this shipyard. Chairman Studds is keeping its great potential future in focus.

The President, Chairman Studds, and I need the support of Congress to authorize and fund programs that will ensure America's future as a maritime nation.

With Chairman Studds' guidance, the people of the Quincy area and Project 2000 can help achieve that support. I urge your aggressive support and involvement. None of us -- neither President Clinton nor Chairman Studds nor I can imagine an America without a strong and vigorous maritime industry. We need your help to ensure its future.

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FACT SHEET QUINCY SHIPYARD TOUR

President's Shipbuilding Program

- o On October 1, 1993, the President submitted a report to; Congress entitled "Strengthening America's Shipyards," which included five key elements:
 - ▶ Ensuring Fair International Competition
 - ▶ Improving Commercial Competitiveness (MARITECH)
 - ▶ Eliminating Unnecessary Government Regulation
 - ▶ Financing Ship Sales Through Title XI
 - ▶ Assisting International Marketing

National Shipbuilding Initiative

- o Enacted into law November 30, 1993.
- o Expanded the Title XI program to include vessels built in U.S. yard for export and shipyard modernization projects.
- o Implementing regulations were issued on March 31.
- o Funding for the current fiscal year and what we have requested for next year would provide nearly \$150 million in funding for the program, which could generate nearly \$1.5 billion in shipyard modernization and ship construction projects.

Quincy Projects

- o The President December 17, 1993, letter to Chairman Studds refers to Title XI guarantees as follows;
 - Up to \$30 million in loan guarantees for modernization of the shipyard.
 - Up to \$200 million in loan guarantees for the purchase of vessels built at Quincy for domestic or export consumption.
- o Maritime Administration staff have been working with representatives of the yard, State, and prospective project managers to clarify their intentions.
- o Lease terms for the yard are being negotiated.
- o Based on information from the Congressman's staff, an outline of a proposal may be available in 4 - 6 weeks.
 - It appears a principal potential proposal would involve the building of a cruise vessel (Regency Cruise Line).
 - Determinations as to qualification cannot be made until details are known.

#####

**WARNING TO AIRLINE PASSENGERS OF PESTICIDE USE
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERICO PEÑA
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 21, 1994**

* I am very pleased to join Senator Patrick Leahy and Congressman Pete DeFazio today in taking an important action to inform and protect airline passengers.

* This action reflects our commitment to putting the traveller first in aviation policy and builds on our efforts to address concerns about cabin air quality in such areas as passive smoking and carbon dioxide levels.

* Today, we are acting in response to hundreds of complaints from American travellers about the practice by some nations of requiring airlines to spray insecticide aboard flights entering their countries -- even while passengers and crew are still in their cabins.

* Such spraying is a long-standing practice which has raised increasing concerns recently from travellers. When it was brought to my attention this January, I acted immediately, ordering the DOT's Safety Division to determine which nations require such spraying and what insecticide is used.

* Most nations, including the United States, do not require air carriers to spray insecticide on arriving aircraft while passenger and crews are still aboard. The United States, in fact, dropped all insect spraying requirements for arriving aircraft 15 years ago because of concerns for passengers' health and because U.S. public health officials came to have serious doubts about the need for and the effectiveness of spraying. In the decade-and-a-half since, we have experienced no example -- none -- of infectious disease or crop damage caused by insects carried to the United States aboard aircraft.

* But the practice of insecticide spraying with passengers aboard has continued in some nations. American passengers travelling to those nations have been surprised and seriously discomforted by it.

* Over the past few months, with the assistance of the State Department, we have identified 25 nations or territories that require spraying of insecticides with passengers still on board on arriving flights from the U.S. Five countries, Costa Rica, Mexico, Jamaica, Madagascar and Mozambique themselves reported that they require such spraying.

* Australia, New Zealand and Panama reported that they require spraying either while no passengers are aboard -- [a practice known as the "residual method"] -- or with passengers present leaving the choice of method up to the airlines.

* In addition to a State Department survey of every nation on earth -- and two follow-up cables -- The DOT also surveyed 11 airlines on the question. Their replies reported that some 19 other countries and the territory of American Samoa also require spraying on flights coming into their airports. These include Argentina, American Samoa, Antigua, Barbados, Belize, Cape Verde, Chile, Congo, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Granada, India, Kenya, Mauritius, New Caledonia, Nicaragua, Seychelles, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and Yemen.

* This list was based on the letters and follow-up cables sent by the State Department. In addition, countries identified by the airlines as requiring spraying were contacted directly by the Department of Transportation. Still, today's list may not be definitive. Indeed, we urge airlines and passengers to come forward with further information -- and the DOT intends to update our list of nations requiring spraying periodically. We are releasing what information we do have with the dual aim of informing travellers and encouraging countries to reconsider what we consider a needless and potentially hazardous practice.

* We recognize the concerns that nations have to protect public health from insect-borne disease and to protect national agriculture from crop-damaging parasites. But we need to explore how to address these concerns without subjecting travellers to abrupt, unexpected exposure to pesticides.

* We have informed both the International Civil Aviation Organization and the World Health Organization of our concerns about on-board spraying of insecticides. And we will support a WHO technical symposium on aircraft spraying and insect control next year.

* We have adopted a three-part strategy to deal with insecticide spraying of airline passengers. First, we have chosen a long-term goal: having all nations cease the practice of spraying with passengers on board. Toward that end, we will work together with the State Department, ICAO and WHO to encourage nations to reconsider the practice and find alternatives.

* Secondly, we are acting to provide airline passengers with the best information we can so that they may make informed travel decisions. We are accomplishing that today with the release of this list of nations that spray passengers and we will make this information available to medical professionals and ask the State Department to include it in their international travel advisories.

* Thirdly, since we view it as the Department of Transportation's duty to ensure that American travellers be fully informed -- at the time of ticket purchase -- if they will be exposed to mandatory insecticide spraying on a given international flight we are today announcing a proposed rule-making.

* This rule will require all air carriers, U.S. and foreign, and all their agents to inform members of the travelling public -- at the time of booking a ticket -- if the flight they seek to travel on will be subject to insecticide spraying while they are on board.

* Air travellers deserve as much information as we can provide them. Undoubtedly, many travellers, including vacationers, will use this information in choosing their travel plans. I also hope this will encourage countries, particularly those accustomed to a flow of U.S. tourists, to reconsider and reform their spraying practices.

* We will continue to make information on aircraft spraying available to the media through press releases and through advisories to the medical community. We seek to stimulate debate and encourage nations to rethink and re-design their insect control practices to be more passenger-friendly. Toward this goal, information is itself a weapon. As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "sunlight is the best disinfectant."

* We intend to continue gathering data on pesticide spraying and to raise the issue for debate and resolution at the next meeting of the International Civil Aviation Association this Fall.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERICO PEÑA

Transportation Trends



ACI/AAAE LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 25, 1994

INTRODUCTION

Someone -- a Washington cynic, no doubt -- recently confided the two most important rules for success in this town.

The first is to delegate responsibility.
(Never do any work you can push off on someone else.)

The second is take all the credit for whatever work gets done.

I'd like to begin by breaking both rules, because this is one Washington resident who is willing to share responsibility for the viability of our nation's airports; who gives the members of this audience full credit for the progress you've made this year: whether it's Chip Barclay's and George Howard's input on national aviation policy or each one of your day-to-day progress on airport

development projects, on noise abatement and on airport security issues, you deserve credit for a very good year.

TOPIC OF SPEECH

This legislative conference is one of the most important meetings of the ACI/AAAE in years because of the thorny issues that must be resolved in order for airports to remain the hubs of our entire National Transportation System.

Today I want to discuss four major areas of concern for airport executives and for the role that airports play in our local, regional and national economies.

One, I want to give you a report card on what we have done in the year since the National Commission to Ensure a Strong Competitive Airline

Industry made its recommendations.

The second issue I want to discuss is progress toward new Airport Improvement Program legislation. I share your frustration at the slow pace of reauthorization of the Airport Improvement Program, but I believe we are on the verge of having a new program -- and we are going need your support in following this one very closely to the finish.

Thirdly, I want to talk about an issue that has been the thorniest issue holding up the AIP reauthorization. I'm referring to the rates and charges controversy.

Fourth, I want to say a few words about how airports will benefit more than you might imagine from an overhaul of the air traffic control system. You do a great deal of work

- more -

with the FAA and you may find it much easier to deal with a streamlined FAA that can concentrate on safety and other regulatory issues while a new, air traffic control structure improves procurement, operations and personnel.

Let's begin by recalling that none of us in the Clinton Administration came to Washington to preside over the demise of the strongest and best aviation industry in the world.

We came to Washington determined to change the way things are done so that U.S. aviation will dominate the 21st century just as it has the 20th.

That's why one of the first things the President and the Department of Transportation did was to ask the Congress to create the National Airline Commission -- the organization that had the benefit of Chip Barclay's very skilled labor. And I want to thank Chip personally for devoting so much of his time to the Commission's work.

REPORT CARD SINCE AIRLINE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

We found the Commission's effort invaluable. In January we unveiled the most comprehensive national aviation strategy since deregulation in 1978. It incorporated 49 of the Commission's 61 recommendations. We are implementing them now.

Our initiative supports five broad goals, all of which I believe will strengthen America's airports. Those goals are: one, revitalizing domestic aviation; two, promoting international aviation and competitiveness; three, encouraging airport investment and economic growth; four, enhancing safety, consumer benefits, and the environment; and five, improving the integration of aviation into the national transportation system.

Many of these recommendations fit seamlessly with our existing long-range commitments. For example, the President is -- and will continue to be -- deeply committed to

investing more in transportation infrastructure.

In fact, \$28 billion of the President's 1995 budget request for transportation goes to infrastructure development of all kinds -- roads, rails, airports, highways, and transit -- the largest such investment in American history.

This budget is in conference committee this week. As you know, the President's budget asked for \$8.8 billion for aviation, including \$1.69 billion for the airport grants program.

The House had offered \$8.5 billion with \$1.5 billion for airport grants; and the Senate had cut a little more -- \$8.4 billion with \$1.45 billion for airport grants.

So that looks like about a \$200 million loss, but with flat budget growth and programs throughout government taking a hit -- it's to be expected. One saving grace is that airport executives and operators had the good judgment to get your Passenger Facility Charges in place.

We anticipate distribution of \$750 million in Passenger Facility Charge funds in this fiscal year and even more in 1995. So when you include the PFC funds with the grant money -- it speaks well for the financing of airport infrastructure development.

AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Of course, the Clinton Administration is also working for a multi-year authorization of the Airport Improvement Program to secure long-term financing and development.

Before I go any further, let me thank you for the help you gave us on getting out the \$889 million interim authorization bill. We all worked very hard on the interim bill and we are committed to getting the balance of needed funding into action as quickly as it is approved by Congress.

The Airport Improvement Program remains our top priority because AIP is -- and will remain for a long time -- a major source of job

creation and economic development in communities, regions and our nation.

We need every penny we can get for airport investments because airports are now and will be key focal points of an integrated intermodal National Transportation System.

As you know, we've launched an effort to establish the NTS beginning last December. Our goal is to make better use of scarce resources by targeting investments in the most efficient, environmentally sensitive manner. Airport development has to be a part of that. The AIP bill now in conference takes the first step toward that goal. I want to work with all of you to continue the effort.

Which brings me to my next topic -- rates and charges.

RATES AND CHARGES

Let me say at the outset of any discussion on rates and charges that the Department of Transportation is committed to trying to head

off confrontations such as the recent one at LAX -- before they happen, not after.

We expect that airlines and airports will continue to resolve rate and charges issues as they have for years, at the local level - without federal intervention.

I hope all of you realize very clearly how strongly I favor keeping the federal government out of local business.

I've been Mayor of Denver and a member of a state legislature. I know a little about where the lines are drawn -- where the federal government can be helpful and where local issues are properly local.

The rates and charges issues are all basically landlord and tenant disputes that need to be settled locally. The federal government should be the court of last -- not first -- resort.

But if the local process does break down and rates and charges issues cannot be settled locally and they do threaten to shut

down airports and halt or even impede the flow of commerce, then the federal government must step in.

That's why we published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to streamline our method for resolving these disputes. We've also issued a draft policy statement and are seeking input on it.

We are also awaiting final resolution of the rates and charges issues in the Conference Committee on the AIP bill, so that we can proceed with proper Congressional input toward adopting procedures and policies that will guide us all in facing these issues in the future.

This brings me to my final issue, reform of the air traffic control system.

REFORM OF THE FAA

As we look forward to foreseeable demands on aviation for the coming years and decades, we have to act to ensure that our nation's aviation system as a whole is ready to meet the challenges.

Aircraft manufacturers are incorporating latest technologies as in the Boeing 777; airlines are constantly adapting to changing economies; airports are modernizing, building better intermodal links than ever before.

But how is the FAA adapting? Can it gear up to meet the challenges?

Over the last year, I've visited control towers from Seattle to Tampa, and I've become more convinced than ever that our air traffic control system works because the dedicated people who work in the system just won't let it fail.

You live with these people every working day, so I don't need to tell you how good they are or how cumbersome the bureaucratic nonsense they must function under is.

It's a system in which it takes 2-5 years to execute even relatively simple contracts, and where an 18-month delay in getting equipment is seen as a success. It's a system in which vacuum tubes -- a

technology invented in the Wright Brothers' time -- still are found throughout. And while some of them are being replaced, it's hard to be proud of the fact that we're only 35 years behind the rest of the aviation world.

It's a system where it's harder and harder to hire and train and retain people where they're needed most. And, it's a system in which funding for capital improvements is based not on need or on dedicated revenues coming in, but on what the budget process will let out.

The need for reform is crystal clear to those most in a position to know - the men and women who actually run our current air traffic control systems. And to people like you who run the airports.

The Airline Commission, the Vice President's National Performance Review, and other major studies all agree that the FAA as currently structured can't keep pace.

Over the years, Congressman Oberstar,

Senator Ford and many others have been frustrated by many of the same problems we've cited in our report and have called for reform.

Today, we have an unprecedented focus on these problems. We want to capitalize on that. We must take this opportunity to make fundamental changes in the way that the FAA operates and the rules it works under.

We need to create a modernized ATC system that can service a projected 60% increase in air travel over the next decade.

We need to get rid of complex and outdated procurement rules. We need flexible personnel rules. We need reliable funding sources, free of annual budget roulette, to pay for ATC services and to make long-term investments in the system.

We need to change the whole culture of the ATC system to permit flexibility, ingenuity and efficiency to come to the fore.

And we need to ensure that safety remains our Number 1 priority as we make these changes.

These goals are not incompatible. We can get greater efficiencies and enhance safety. The reality is that if we don't take steps to free the FAA from the outdated and inflexible rules it struggles with today, the safety record that we're all so proud of will be hard to maintain.

The safety record is the result of combined efforts of manufacturers, airlines, employees and the FAA.

The fact that this industry had its safest period ever at the same time it was losing \$12 billion is a testament to the commitment to safety of all the parties. We want to let the FAA be a full and equal partner in this relationship and not the weak link in the technological chain.

Our goal is to change what FAA, under its current structure, can't do well, and allow it to focus even more clearly on what it does do well.

Our ATC system needs to be as free as possible to run like a business -- buying state-of-the-art technology, deploying its employees where needed and rewarding them appropriately.

It should be self-supporting -- not dependent on annual federal budgetary appropriations. It should be financed by those who use the air traffic control services. And it should be able to finance capital improvements, as any other business would.

Over time, this financial flexibility will actually save money by achieving economies of scale and speed of acquisition -- rather than the piecemeal, stop-and-start investment patterns that now prevail.

All the while, the refocused FAA must retain authority for safety oversight of the new operation -- just as it does over private airliners and aircraft manufacturers.

You have joined many others in aviation in calling for FAA reform.

It's a time for fundamental reform, a whole new way of doing business -- now. Let me remind you that the FAA has already tried no fewer than two dozen internal re-organizations in the past decade.

Based on all we've learned and from all past efforts at reform, I believe that FAA Administrator David Hinson was right when he said last month, and I quote, "Piecemeal attempts won't work. The laws and regulations are too dense a thicket to be tidied up with a little pruning here and there. The best solution is ... a total package of procurement reforms. One which will allow us the freedom to use the best business practices..." unquote

Naturally, we will seek to do better within the current organizational structure. But for the FAA, the time has clearly come to recognize that only bold, fundamental reform will produce real change.

With the AIP conference on the verge of completion, I am looking forward to devoting time

and resources to working with the Congressional leadership and other interested members on meaningful reform -- the kind of reform that will allow us to meet challenges of the next century.

Again, I thank you for your support and urge you to join us and engage in this important effort.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by assuring you that I'm no Pollyanna about the tasks before us -- getting a strong Airport Improvement Program to meet rising infrastructure demands, creating a unified national transportation system with airports as a centerpiece, reforming the FAA. It won't be easy to get all of these chores done.

But we must succeed. If we don't strengthen the transportation infrastructure of our country -- including airports. Then America will lose our place as the #1 economy in the world.

We're not going to let that happen.

Instead, with your support, we will sustain the vision that created the greatest aviation system in human history.

We will build on our strengths and repair our weaknesses.

And we will keep American aviation as the leader and model for the world well into the second century of flight.

Thank you very much.

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FINAL

TALKING POINTS

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA

MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE DISABLED COMMUNITY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JULY 26, 1994

- * I am happy that you can join me today as we observe the fourth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This is the first meeting that *any* Secretary of Transportation has initiated with leaders of the disabled community -- *but it won't be the last*. I believe that we must develop a strong partnership.
- * Because this is an Administration with a deep commitment to equal opportunity for *all* Americans. And we know that transportation is the key that allows people with disabilities to enter the mainstream and participate fully in American life.
- * That is why one of my seven key goals for DOT is *putting people first* in our transportation system by making it relevant and accessible to *all* users. That includes ensuring mobility in *all* forms of transportation for Americans with disabilities.
- * This is something I have believed in for a long time. As Mayor of Denver during the 1980s, I worked with Wade Blank and ADAPT to make the city's buses accessible.

- * And we worked to make the new Denver International Airport a model of accessibility.
- * I am committed to ensuring similar progress elsewhere. For example, we now require that all airports and carrier terminals receiving federal aid have such features as accessible parking, baggage services, ticket counters, and lavatories.
- * And last year we issued specifications for accessible boarding equipment. Recently, a dozen cities with commuter aviation -- cities like Syracuse, Corpus Christi, and Grand Junction, Colorado -- were awarded federal funds to buy these devices.
- * These cities are in the forefront of the effort to improve accessibility. But since then, we have heard complaints of disabled passengers in other places being denied boarding rights, or being forced to board in ways which compromise their dignity. *That's completely unacceptable.*
- * In response, we are going to issue a rule requiring accessible boarding equipment for mid-sized planes -- commuter aircraft with more than 19 seats -- to prevent such incidents in the future.
- * We also require increased accessibility onboard aircraft as well. In mid-sized and large new or refurbished aircraft, half of all aisle seats must have moveable armrests.

- * New aircraft with 60 or more seats must have special wheelchairs to permit easy boarding and movement within the cabin. And new large, twin-aisle aircraft must have fully-accessible lavatories. These are all steps to ensure that the spirit -- as well as the letter -- of the ADA is met.
- * Nor are our efforts confined to aviation. We have made progress in *every* form of transportation. Every federally-funded mass transit system provides some type of accessible service for passengers with disabilities. Bus lifts and vehicle ramps are becoming common and demand-response paratransit services are appearing rapidly throughout the country.
- * Transit systems are updating their key stations -- transfer stations or heavily-used stations -- to make them accessible. They are also buying rail cars to meet the mandate that one car per train be wheelchair-accessible by next year. We are helping them do that by providing technical assistance and working through the National Transit Institute to provide instruction in all aspects of the ADA.
- * AMTRAK is making similar progress -- providing accessible cars and lifts, and working towards the goal of a fully-accessible national passenger rail system.

- * Non-mass transit bus services are not exempt from the ADA, and we are drafting rules establishing accessibility standards for intercity bus services and charter buses.
- * We also are looking for ways to make maritime travel accessible. This means not only cruise ships and luxury liners, but also ferry boats, which are important parts of the mass transit system in cities ranging from New York to Seattle. So, we are researching accessibility standards for ships and port facilities.
- * No effort to improve transportation accessibility can succeed without affecting the mode used for 90 percent of all travel -- the automobile. Simply having a vehicle designed for use by a disabled person is not enough. So, streets and roadside pedestrian facilities being built or renovated with federal funds now have curb cuts to accommodate people in wheelchairs. And rest areas on all Interstate Highways and all new federally-funded roads are now accessible.
- * I want to talk now about one of our most ambitious initiatives: the National Transportation System. The NTS will embrace *all* forms of transport -- highways, waterways, transit systems, pipelines, airports, seaports and rail lines -- both passenger and freight.

- * The National Transportation System will identify, connect and prioritize *all* the key forms of transport into a truly integrated nation-wide system. It will focus our nation's infrastructure investments -- well into the next century -- by identifying bottlenecks, missing links, and needed new components of our total transportation system.
- * Most importantly, the NTS will help guarantee to the American people that their tax dollars are being invested wisely on transportation projects that will stimulate the economy, create jobs, and give citizens unprecedented mobility.
- * We are undertaking an extensive outreach effort as we develop the NTS, meeting with highway advocates, environmentalists, maritime interests, and many others to design an NTS that truly meets national needs. We view you as essential partners in this effort.
- * We have already begun to include the disabled in our deliberations so that the NTS will be responsive to the needs of people with disabilities. DOT staff met with some of your organizations last week to discuss the NTS -- I believe that Paul Schrader was there -- and we will expand this as we continue to develop the NTS.

- * The NTS effort is only part of what we are doing to increase access to our transportation system. The Department has been working vigorously to carry out the requirements of the ADA, and we can point to many accomplishments.
- * However, the job is not over. There are some regulations not yet in effect, and other new rules that need to be put in place to remove barriers. I want to give you my firm commitment to work closely with you as we tear down the barriers to full participation in American life.
- * And now I would like hear your thoughts on how we can better serve the communities which you represent...

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SUMMARY TALKING POINTS

- * Today is the fourth anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act. First meeting that any Secretary of Transportation has initiated with disabled community leaders.
- * Administration has a deep commitment to equal opportunity, and transportation is the key that allows people with disabilities to enter the mainstream. "Putting people first" as one of key goals.
- * Worked with Wade Blank and ADAPT in Denver in the 1980s to make city buses accessible. DIA will be a model of accessibility.
- * Progress elsewhere: improved accessibility required in airports and onboard planes. Specifications issued for accessible boarding equipment to prevent unacceptable denial of boarding rights for the disabled -- 12 cities awarded funds to purchase them.
- * Mass transit has bus lifts and ramps, increased paratransit service. Rail transit key stations being made accessible, and one car per train to be accessible by next year. AMTRAK making similar progress.
- * Developing rules to make intercity/charter buses accessible; evaluating ways to make maritime travel (ferrys, etc.) accessible.
- * Autos used for 90% of travel, so no effort to improve transportation accessibility can succeed without affecting them; curb cuts, accessible rest stops on federally-funded highways.
- * The NTS: already begun to include the disabled in our deliberations so that the NTS will be responsive to the needs of people with disabilities. DOT staff met with some of your organizations last week to discuss the NTS -- Paul Schrader was there -- and we will expand this as we continue developing the NTS.
- * The Department has been working vigorously to carry out the requirements of the ADA, and we can point to many accomplishments. However, the job is not over. I want to give you my firm commitment to work closely with you as we tear down the barriers to full participation in American life.

TALKING POINTS

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA

AMERICAN AIRLINES HEALTH CARE EVENT

TULSA, OKLAHOMA

JULY 28, 1994

- * Thank you for that introduction. I'm happy to be here at American Airlines. Under the leadership of your chairman, Bob Crandall, American has long been a pacesetter in aviation, and its health care program is a pacesetter for corporate responsibility.
- * There's no better place to talk about health care reform than here, because the stakes in the debate on health care are higher for the transportation sector than for almost any other.
- * That's because transportation -- with its heavy equipment, often operating at high speeds -- is a high-risk industry. 40% of all occupational deaths are caused by transportation accidents.
- * These enormous human and economic costs are why I'm committed to continuing the Department of Transportation's leadership on safety. Indeed, I've made it one of the 7 key goals for DOT.

- * We at DOT are working hard to improve Americans's health by increasing their safety, saving lives and preventing injuries. We view our public *safety* responsibilities as public *health* responsibilities.
- * Our work to improve transportation safety is important to public health, but it's only *part* of the solution to America's health care crisis. We still need to address the fundamental problems of high health care costs and the lack of health security.
- * Many Americans' greatest worry is not being able to afford the health care their families need. It's a real concern: out-of-control health care costs have been straining government budgets, bankrupting businesses, and draining many families' life savings.
- * 1 in 6 Americans lacks *any* health insurance, and in many transportation professions the rates run much higher. It's not a problem for you here -- American Airlines has long been a leader in providing good health care protection for its workers -- but it *is* a problem for your friends and neighbors.
- * More than 700,000 Oklahomans lack health insurance -- and 87% of them are in working families like yours. *These are people who literally can't afford to get sick.*
- * Nearly 200,000 of Oklahoma's children lack health insurance. Without insurance, how many working

people can afford the hundreds, or even thousands, of dollars it could cost if their child breaks a leg or contracts pneumonia?

- * What's more, 2 million Americans lose their health insurance *each month* -- many of them when they lose their jobs or when they -- or their employers -- can't afford rising insurance premiums.
- * And just because you have insurance today is no guarantee that protection will be there when you need it.
- * 81 million people have what insurance policy fine print calls "pre-existing conditions," which allow insurers to use health problems as excuses to raise rates or deny coverage.
- * 133 million Americans have lifetime limits on their insurance which permit insurers to cut off benefits when people are older and most need protection.
- * So, the risk of inadequate health coverage is not something faced just by the poor: it's a problem for the vast majority of Americans. *That's something new.*
- * For a generation, Medicare and Medicaid provided protection to those whose health was most at risk: senior citizens and the poor.

- * Americans believed that we had a reliable safety net for the needy, and that affordable care and company medical plans could protect working people.
- * And that used to be true. When I was growing up during the 1950s and '60s we had 6 children in *my* family-- *and* we could afford a family doctor. But many working Americans can't afford that today. Skyrocketing medical costs and limited insurance have undercut the hard-working middle class.
- * *That's* the underlying issue in the national debate on health care: equity and fairness for *all* Americans. Ensuring that is a fundamental principle for President Clinton, who was elected with a commitment to *putting people first*.
- * He supports guaranteed, comprehensive, private coverage for *all* Americans, coverage that can *never* be taken away. *Coverage that gives all Americans the same protection enjoyed by me, by federal workers, and by Members of Congress.*
- * Senator Harris Wofford of Pennsylvania said it best: if criminals have the right to a lawyer, shouldn't every American have the right to a doctor?
- * And Americans agree: in a recent poll, 78% of you want health care protection for *all* Americans.

- * People who work hard and play by the rules shouldn't have to go without medical care, and they shouldn't have to bankrupt themselves to get it.
- * Like 72% of all Americans, President Clinton believes that Americans should get insurance through their jobs, building on the existing employer-based system you have here at American Airlines. These plans now cover 4 of 5 working Americans.
- * This is an issue of fairness not only for workers, but for employers, too. Responsible businesses like American Airlines shouldn't have to feel that offering their employees health insurance puts them at a disadvantage against those who are less responsible. And they shouldn't have to pick up the tab for companies that *don't* cover their workers.
- * Putting *all* employers on a level playing field means that *no one* will be at a competitive disadvantage.
- * The commitment to universal coverage has become the leading issue as health care reform is considered by Congress. I'm optimistic that Congress will adopt a health care bill that meets the President's bottom line of protection for all Americans.
- * Because the key to real health security is a plan that protects all Americans -- not *just* the rich, not *just* the poor, but *all* Americans.

- * We need to build on things which *work* -- Medicare, private insurance, employer-provided coverage -- and change the things that don't work -- unfair insurance practices, limited choice, the risk of losing insurance that all Americans face.
- * Securing what works, fixing what's broken --that's the *best* approach for America -- for our people, for our businesses, and for our long-term economic competitiveness. Nothing else, *and nothing less*, than protection for all Americans will do the job.
- * In closing, let me say health security can save lives and money for our entire nation. It's critical that *you* be involved as Congress moves towards final action. I urge you to make your voices heard in this debate.
- * This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to pass the kind of health care reform that has been delayed for a half-century. And it's not just about covering those without insurance -- it's really about protecting everyone who has insurance now.
- * So, when I ask you to speak out, when I ask for your support -- I'm really asking you to speak out for yourselves, for your families, and for your friends. If you do that, then we're going to win this one.

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FINAL

SECOND DRAFT - 7-26-94 AT 3:15 P.M.

TALKING POINTS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA
WHITE HOUSE FUEL CELL TECHNOLOGY SYMPOSIUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 27, 1994

The Promise of Fuel Cells

- I want to thank John Gibbons for that kind introduction and welcome all the experts and all of you to this White House Symposium on Fuel Cell Technology.
- I am thrilled to be here today because as Secretary of Transportation I am looking for opportunities to use advanced technology to transform our transportation system.
 - And as a former mayor I am particularly enthusiastic about the potential benefits fuel cells would bring to the quality of life in our cities. Imagine a city without diesel buses.
- Of all the many new technologies that are literally bursting forth on the transportation landscape, fuel cell technology holds great promise of efficient, environmentally sound power.

- Fuel cell/battery bus technology promises to clean our air -- a fleet of 200 fuel cell mass transit buses would have the same total emissions as one current diesel bus.
 - That more than meets 1998 EPA standards.
 - Fuel cell technology also promises to lower maintenance costs and improve efficiency on our mass transit buses. There are vast potential applications to the rest of the motor vehicle industry as well.
- Fuel cell propulsion is also one of those technologies we want to develop in America and create a whole new industry for export abroad.
 - The consulting firm, Arthur D. Little recently completed a study on the export potential of fuel cell technology and found that potential demand is high because Europe, Japan and other countries face the same needs as we do to improve environmental quality without choking economic vitality.
- Along with the Department of Energy, we began exploring the potential of fuel cell/battery propulsion systems for urban transit buses in 1987.

- To date, the Federal Transit Administration has provided over \$9 million out of the current program total of \$26.7 million.
- The results so far have been great.
 - In 1990 a model of this system was proven technically feasible.
 - It's taken until 1994 to actually get a bus on the road for demonstration. The first fuel cell bus was demonstrated here in Washington during earth week April 18-22. Two other prototypes will be completed and ready for testing by the end of the year.
 - That will put three prototypes on the road for demonstration and evaluation -- one in Washington, D.C., one in Los Angeles, and one in Chattanooga, Tennessee.
- Between now and December 1997, we hope to develop plans for production of 75-90 of these fuel cell buses for transit needs.
- We've made a great start, but the journey is just beginning.

- Fuel cell use for transit buses could become the first step toward a vast new American industry, employing American workers, paying American wages. All of us in the Clinton Administration are determined that we find ways to commercialize the products of American technological genius here at home -- not force their inventors to go abroad for capital and development.
- Fuel cell/battery technology may prove to be one of the first fruits of the partnership we are forging between scientists, technologists, government and private entrepreneurs.
- All of us today are present to nurture this partnership. I hope that you will freely and fully explore the promise of this new technology for American industry and for America's people and I thank you all for coming.
- Thank you very much.

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**REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERICO PEÑA
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LATINO ELECTED AND APPOINTED
OFFICIALS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JULY 29, 1994**

INTRODUCTION

I want to thank _____ for that very generous introduction and tell all of you how delighted I am to be speaking at NALEO's National Convention.

As a long-time NALEO member I am very proud of the work we do on issues affecting Hispanic-Americans and our communities.

We are the fastest-growing community in the whole United States. In many ways, we are moving from success to success. And yet we still have a long way to go before we achieve full participation in our country's public life.

That's why NALEO's work is so important. Whether it is helping immigrants prepare for citizenship, registering voters, sponsoring internships for young people in state government or monitoring the progress of Hispanic Americans in federal jobs and contracts -- NALEO's work is making our voices heard and opening doors to Latino talent every day.

Today, more than 5,000 Hispanic-Americans hold public office. In the years to come that number will multiply dramatically.

There will be more Hispanic-American state legislators and mayors, more Governors, more members of Congress and the Senate. And, I'm sure, more Hispanic-American cabinet members.

And each and everyone of those candidates and officials will owe at least some of their success to the work NALEO is doing now, every day, to empower our people.

That's why I am especially honored to be here.

And this year's conference theme of "Taking Charge of the Future/ Latinos in the Loop" is perfectly suited to the three topics I want to talk about with you today:

--- First, the Clinton Administration's achievements in taking charge of America's future.....

--- Secondly, the progress we've made in bringing Hispanic-Americans "into the loop" at the highest levels of government.....

--- And third, the especially high stakes that our Hispanic communities have in achieving true health security for all Americans.....

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S ACHIEVEMENTS

In a real sense, taking charge of America's future is what the Clinton Administration has been about from Day One.

This President campaigned on the idea that our country had spent too many years running up the federal deficit while at the same time failing to invest in America's people, in America's infrastructure and in the development and commercialization of American technology.

As President, he has addressed these problems with a comprehensive strategy that sets a new course to take back control of our future -- and to sustain America's dream of opportunity for all.

The first, most basic decision this President made was to rein in the runaway budget deficits run up during the Reagan-Bush years.

We all know that a lot of politicians and candidates had complained about these deficits for years.

President Clinton acted.

His first budget provided for more than \$500 billion in deficit reduction by the year 1997 -- most of it involving real cuts in federal spending programs. One hundred programs were cut out, 200 more were reduced.

The federal workforce under President Clinton will be trimmed by 272,000 in the next few years so that by 1999 we will have the leanest government payroll, less than 2 million people, since John Kennedy was President.

But the President's budget also delivered tax cuts for 90 percent of the small businesses in America.

And -- in the form of higher earned income credits -- tax cuts for 15 million American families. Millions of hard-working people have now climbed above the poverty line because of this single change in the tax law.

We won by one vote in the Senate -- Al Gore's vote.

Today, because this President stood firm and demanded that we get our fiscal house in order, we are seeing three years of lower federal deficits in a row -- for the first time since Harry Truman was in the White House.

And in the 18 months since Bill Clinton took that stand, our economy has taken off. We have seen 3.8 million new jobs since January 1993, and we're well on track for 4 million more by 1996. The unemployment rate is down by 1.7 percent.

Last year alone, we had the largest number of new businesses incorporated in America in our history.

Another tough fight we won last year was to pass the North American Free Trade Agreement -- creating the largest free trade zone in human history: more than 370 million people with total output of over \$6.5 trillion.

Clearly, NAFTA offers great opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Our exports to Mexico are growing faster than those to any other nation. We are not losing jobs -- we're gaining jobs because we passed NAFTA.

Later this year, at the Summit of the Americas in Miami we will take the first steps to reach beyond NAFTA to expanded trade with all of the nations of Latin America.

The President's strategy of linking America's economy through free trade with our Latin American partners will strengthen all of our economies, reinforce democracy in this Hemisphere -- and provide even more opportunities for Hispanic Americans to serve as cultural and economic links between the nations of the New World.

In short, this Administration is moving in the right direction on the economy -- at home and abroad.

And from the point of view of my job, I'm happy to say that, even as we cut the deficit, we have still managed to raise investment in roads and bridges and airports -- the transportation infrastructure and technology to move goods and people more efficiently, to raise our productivity, and to help clean up America's environment.

It's a pleasure to serve a President who agrees with me that transportation is one of the keys to our future.

But President Clinton's greatest insight is his understanding that our economy -- and America's future -- depends on America's people; on our knowledge and skills, on our ability to seize the opportunities opening up in the new global economy.

That's why we worked through Congress to achieve the most important education reforms in a generation -- expansion of Head Start to cover younger children; a major increase in childhood vaccination; passage of the Goals 2000 bill that sets high standards for all of our schools and encourages grass-roots reforms to meet them.

That's why we have dramatically expanded the availability of college loans -- to 50 million American students -- so that no young person will find the doors of their future slammed shut for lack of funding.

That's why we passed a National Service Act that is helping 20,000 students this year to pay for their college costs by serving our communities as teachers, or police or drug counselors after they graduate.

That's why we seek reforms that will turn welfare into a way back to work -- not a way of life. We want to support and train those who need welfare and direct them toward the dignity of a job.

That's why we passed legislation last year to create 9 empowerment zones and 95 enterprise communities in struggling communities in the inner city and in rural areas -- to create a partnership between the federal government, the private sector and communities to revive neighborhood economies and restore real hope for people.

That's also why we are fighting for a serious crime bill -- to put 100,000 more police on the streets, to tell violent criminals that on their third conviction they will spend the rest of their lives in jail.

Hispanic Americans and our communities have a great stake in seeing this bill pass. It is not just tough on crime, it provides billions of dollars for prevention, for job-training and skill-training in high-crime, inner city neighborhoods. It supports recreation programs, like the Midnight Sports League, to give our youth something to say "yes" to.

Passing this crime bill will help thousands of young people steer clear of gangs and drugs and the false values of the street.

The truth is that all of the major initiatives of this Administration -- from the budget to welfare to crime, and especially the fight for real health care reform, fit together to form a consistent strategy to revive our economy, to invest in our people and to take control of America's future.

All of these initiatives have their roots in the values of work and family that Hispanic Americans cherish so fiercely.

[-- DISCUSS YOUR FAMILY --]

And it is the basic values of justice and opportunity that infuse this Administration's commitment to Hispanic Americans.

That commitment is my second topic.

CLINTON ACHIEVEMENTS FOR HISPANIC AMERICANS

I am proud to be a member of an Administration that places equal opportunity for all Americans among its central goals.

Right from the start, President Clinton promised that he would form a government that "looks like America" -- and that's exactly what he has done.

This President has appointed more women, more African Americans, more Hispanics and more members of other minority groups to high office than ever before.

By doing so, President Clinton has proven something that NALEO members have known all along: that the talent, the skills and the dedication we need to serve our country can be found among all groups of Americans.

All we ever needed to do was open our eyes -- and then open the doors.

And no President has opened more doors for Hispanic Americans than Bill Clinton -- not only by asking me and my good friend Henry Cisneros to join his cabinet -- but throughout his Administration.

To date, there have been 288 Hispanic American political appointees to senior posts in this Administration -- two and a half times more than under President Bush. Eleven percent of Bill Clinton's judicial appointees have been Hispanic-Americans -- compared to just two appointments in each of the past two presidencies. Not two percent -- two, period.

I'm proud that at my Department our top leadership includes Katherine Archuleta, my Deputy Chief of Staff, Tony Califa, the new director of our Office of Civil Rights, Michael Huerta, the director of one of our most critical departments, my special assistant Jeff Morales, Dr. Ricardo Martinez, the nominee to head the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration, Luz Hopewell, the new Director of our Department's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, Ray Romero, the nominee for Assistant Secretary for Aviation -- and many other brilliant Hispanic-American appointees.

And I know that other departments all across this Administration have also opened their eyes -- and opened their doors -- to a new generation of Hispanic-Americans.

But I am still determined -- so is the President -- that we keep our eyes on the prize. We aim to raise the number of Hispanic-American appointees and use the power of this government to open new career paths for Hispanic-American youth and businesspeople.

That means stepping up our efforts to encourage our communities' young people to pursue rewarding careers as early as high school. We're doing that at the DOT with our High School/High Tech program that gives wings to students' dreams of careers in aviation.

It means recruiting more promising Hispanic-Americans through internships and straight out of College.

And it means ensuring that Hispanic-Americans, women, and other minorities are able to take full advantage of our programs for minority and disadvantaged businesses that seek to contract with the federal government.

Lip service isn't enough. We have to actively reach out -- to see that our Department's purchasing process gives Hispanic businesses, women and other minorities a real chance to compete -- and win.

We've put teeth in our programs to contract with disadvantaged businesses. We're bringing out small contracts as low as \$25,000 to the marketplace.

Section 8 (a) contracts [for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises] are up 35% over last year.

We have restructured our bonding program -- which was moribund -- to cover contracts up to \$1 million and we have already issued \$8.6 million in bonding this year alone -- more than the previous Administration did in four years. We've also committed \$4 million to short-term lending to minority contractors.

And we're seeing results.

This year, I'm pleased to tell you, 38% of the clean-up and repair work after Los Angeles earthquake went to disadvantaged businesses -- many of them Hispanic-Americans contracting with the federal government for the first time in their lives.

I don't need to tell NALEO that this is not a new commitment for me.

This is something that I've believed in all my life -- as a civil rights lawyer with MALDEF, as the Mayor of Denver, and in the job I hold now: we can best serve the American people only if we draw on the talents of all the peoples and communities of this nation.

Maybe this has been a long time coming, but I believe that this commitment is here to stay -- and it goes right to the top of this Administration.

As President Clinton said recently, "The America that I want us to build together will be an America where Hispanic leadership anchors its place in the boardrooms, the schoolrooms and all the halls of power, in which Hispanic Americans will be sought out as leaders among opinion makers and policymakers."

My friends, I believe that's a vision we all can share. It sets a goal that Hispanic Americans can aspire to -- and achieve.

But however far we advance in public life, the real measure of our achievement will not be whether more Hispanic Americans become mayors, or governors, or senators or CEO's or University professors or even President of the United States.

All of those things will happen one day soon. But The real measure of our careers will be what we accomplish to improve the lives of the people who elected us -- those we represent.

We need to work together and struggle together for better schools, for jobs, for parks and roads, tax fairness, equal opportunity for our people -- the great work and the small details of governing. That's the privilege of leadership.

But I suggest to you that there is one struggle above all that our communities desperately need us to join in -- and win. That is the struggle that Bill Clinton is waging -- every day now -- for comprehensive health care reform.

All Americans have a stake in this. But Hispanic Americans have even more to gain if we win -- and a great deal more to lose if we fail.

HISPANICS' STAKE IN HEALTH CARE REFORM

The reason is stark and simple: more Hispanic Americans from working families are uninsured than any other group of Americans.

One in six Americans have no health insurance today. But one in three Hispanic Americans have no coverage.

These people are one illness..... one serious injury away from losing their life savings, or their homes -- or, if they can't afford to seek preventive care, maybe even their lives.

These are working people -- chicanos, cubanos, puertorriqueños, salvadoreños, dominicanos -- our fellow Americans.

Most of them work for small businesses, or in part-time jobs with no health benefits. Many work for employers that honestly cannot afford health insurance benefits under the current system.

President Clinton wants to change that.

He believes that much of the reason that some businesses can't afford health coverage for their workers is that they just don't have the bargaining power to get the rates that big businesses can demand.

Those that do cover their employees wind up picking up the tab for costs shifted to them from employers who don't cover their workers.

The only way to stop this -- to give our people the benefits of the world's best health care -- is to change the world's worst system of health care financing.

The President's plan, as it emerges from Congress soon, will call for universal coverage for all Americans -- private insurance coverage that can never be taken away.

It will call for a sharing of premiums between employers and workers because this is the best and the fairest way to link work and health care and because this is the way most Americans already get their coverage now and because without universal coverage every American's health coverage will be insecure.

The President's plan will provide subsidies and phase-ins for small businesses. They will finally be able to get the lower rates that big businesses can get now.

And those businesses that cover their employees now will finally have a level playing field. They won't have to swallow costs shifted by companies that don't cover their workers anymore.

I don't need to tell an audience like this that rising health costs are the single most serious burden for all levels of government. If we do nothing -- or if we settle just for one more band-aid fix -- these costs will keep on surging until paying them keeps us from doing much of anything else.

These arguments are true for our whole nation. But for Hispanic Americans, the stakes are easily twice as high.

Nothing we do could do more to advance and secure the lives of Hispanic Americans than passing a health care reform with universal coverage right on the job.

This is the best thing we will ever have a chance to deliver to our communities -- and we have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to make our voices heard on it -- now.

Health reform is something that NALEO's founder, Congressman Ed Roybal, fought for all his life. He knew what this means for our people. Today his daughter, Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard is carrying on that good fight.

I say this is our fight, too -- because real health reform is key if Latinos want to take charge of our future. And this debate is our chance to get into the loop.

With your help, we can win this one for our people.

As President Clinton himself says: "Si, se puede"

Thank you very much.

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