

**NLWJC - Kagan**

**DPC - Box 024 - Folder 003**

**Family - Child Care: Bridgeport  
Event**

**Nicole R. Rabner**

03/06/98 02:45:14 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
cc: Neera Tanden/WHO/EOP  
Subject: directive on federally-sponsored child care

You asked that we describe the Jeffords/Gillman legislation and how our directive will interact with it. Jeffords legislation, called the "Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act" has several provisions that would affect all federally-sponsored, non-military child care:

1. **State and local licensing requirements:** The legislation requires that federal child care centers comply with state and local licensing requirements no later than 6 months of the date of enactment of the legislation.
2. **Health, safety and facility standards:** The legislation requires GSA to issue regulations establishing standards relating to health, safety, facilities, facility design, and other aspects of child care that the Administrator determines to be appropriate for child care centers in executive facilities, and requires federal child care centers to comply with the standards.
3. **Accreditation Standards:** The legislation requires GSA to issue regulations for Federal child care facilities to achieve accreditation within 5 years of enactment of the Act.
4. **GSA ensures compliance for all federal child care centers:** The legislation requires that GSA evaluate the compliance of all agencies with its regulations (which include the health and safety standards, a requirement of meeting state and local licensing requirements, as well as the accreditation requirements). Right now, GSA is in charge of 109 centers and the other 127 non-military centers are controlled by the federal agencies that sponsor them.
5. **Beefs up Licensing Standards and Accreditation for Non-Executive Branch Federal Child Care Facilities:** The legislative and judicial branches operate 5 centers combined.
6. **Authorizes \$900,000 and allows GSA to be reimbursed by other federal agencies for its services.**

**POTUS DIRECTIVE:**

The President's directive dovetails with the Jeffords/Gillman legislation with respect to accreditation and is more ambitious in this area. While Jeffords' bill requires compliance within 5 years of enactment of the bill, the President's directive asks that all centers in the Executive Branch be accredited by the year 2000.

In addition to the accreditation requirement, the President's directive will: (I) ensure proper background checks of workers in federally-sponsored child care; (II) urge partnerships among federal agencies and with the private sectors to improve child care quality and affordability; and (III) ensure that all federal workers have full information on child care benefits and options available to them.

HHS report - all state plans

do spend CDBG - what they're

doing -

improving quality

undertaken -  
they don't cover  
nearly those eligible  
the # undertaken  
/ and

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CDF report - waiting lines in states

**Nicole R. Rabner**

03/05/98 07:44:45 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP  
cc: Neera Tanden/WHO/EOP, Christa Robinson/OPD/EOP  
Subject: Tuesday's child care event



DIRECT2.F

Neera and I want to bring you up-to-date on the planning for Tuesday's child care event with the President in Connecticut.

The event will include a brief tour of a child care facility in Bridgeport, CT (Housatonic Community College) and a speech. The speaking program will include the Mayor of Bridgeport, Senator Dodd, a parent, and the President.

The President's remarks will focus on his child care initiative, and include two policy announcements:

- (1) Release of a new HHS report that summarizes State plans to administer the Child Care and Development Block Grant. The message of this report is that States have innovative plans to spend their current CCDBG dollars, and with those dollars, cannot meet the need.
- (2) Issuing a Presidential Directive on Steps to improve federally-sponsored child care in the executive branch by (1) ensuring proper background checks of child care workers in federally-sponsored child care; (2) achieving 100 percent national accreditation of eligible, federally-sponsored child care; (3) exploring partnerships among federal agencies and with the private sectors to improve child care quality and affordability; and (4) ensuring that all federal workers have full information on child care benefits and options available to them.  
**Q: Should the President sign the directive at this event?** Our instinct is that he should not sign.

Children's Defense Fund (CDF) plans to release its compelling state-by-state on Tuesday, and leak it to Bob Pear for a story on Tuesday.

**Q: Should you leak any of the POTUS' announcements?**

In terms of process, the directive is in OMB clearance (via Mac Reed) for comment by the agencies by COB tomorrow (Friday). Staff Secretary plans to circulate the directive around the West Wing tomorrow for any comment. Attached is the latest draft for your review. Also, HHS and GSA are developing lists for heads up calls to MOC and/or Congressional staff to be made on Monday.

With respect to the HHS report, we are working to develop a solid executive summary (which HHS seems incapable of doing) for release.

# Bill Would Set Standards for Federal Day Care Centers

By KATHERINE E. HARRIS  
LEGI-SLATE News Service

There's a spirit of controlled anarchy as happy, squealing children play in clean rooms with brightly colored walls at a child care center that seems to be everything lawmakers and parents want: a creative, safe facility that meets rigorous quality standards.

"Most of the action around here goes on below your knees—think short!" joked Anne Schmitz, director of the Executive Child Development Center, which serves mostly National Institutes of Health employees. The Rockville center is housed in a building owned by the federal government and overseen by the General Services Administration.

GSA voluntarily applies nationally recognized health and safety standards to its 109 centers, including the Executive facility, run for children of federal workers.

But there is no law mandating health and safety standards for the more than 1,000 child care centers overseen by the federal government, which are exempt from local and state health and safety rules.

Lawmakers are concerned that some agencies are not doing an adequate job of policing their own facilities. Legislative aides say that many centers run by the Department of Veterans Affairs, for example, are "disappointing."

Sen. James M. Jeffords (R-Vt.) and Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman (R-N.Y.) are pushing legislation to require that all child care centers in non-military federal buildings meet state and local regulations that apply to other centers in the area. The federal facilities would not be forced to submit to state inspections.

The legislation also would mandate that the centers adopt regulations similar to the GSA standards within five years. The measure makes an exception for the Defense Department child care system, which is geared to the special needs of military families.

"This bill is a great first step in ensuring the high-quality care of our children," Gilman said.

The Gilman bill was approved by a House Government Reform and Oversight subcommittee last month.

Based on recommendations of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, GSA set its own health, safety and child development standards in 1992.

Susan Clampitt, the administrator for GSA's child care facilities, stressed that individual child care centers need both oversight from federal authorities and support from parents.

Child care centers are "a new industry and parents, administrators, regulators should all work together," Clampitt said.

Currently, more than 71 percent of GSA centers and 74 percent of Defense facilities are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Only five of the VA's 49 child care centers are nationally accredited, said Renee Bruce, the VA's national child care program manager.

Bruce defended that record, saying that "just because [VA child care centers] are not up to NAEYC standards does not mean they're substandard." But she said the VA will "continue to work to continue to upgrade our quality."

The VA is not the only federal agency with child care centers that have received mixed marks.

While handling children's policy for Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.), Grace Reef said she discovered child care problems exist on Capitol Hill. She had enrolled her son in the Little Scholars Child Development Center—which is overseen by the Library of Congress—in 1994, and felt relieved to find a safe, clean environment.

But later, Reef said, she became alarmed when her 10-month-old son, Jamie, hurt himself twice within two weeks.

"After the second incident, I said 'What's going on here—don't they have health and safety standards around here?'" said Reef, now direc-

tor of intergovernmental affairs at the Children's Defense Fund. She said found out that the center was exempt from the District's safety and health laws and was not accredited.

The House and Senate centers, as well as the one at the Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building, are accredited through the NAEYC.

Josie McGeorge, who heads the board of directors of the Little Scholars facility, said that Reef's complaints are not representative of the families with children in the center, which is run by a nonprofit group, the Library of Congress Child Care Association.

"We have approximately 70 families—some have been here since we opened the center [in 1994]—I think that speaks to our quality," McGeorge said.

McGeorge said she hopes to have the center accredited by summer.

While many child care groups applaud efforts to improve the quality of care in federal buildings, there can be drawbacks to relying on state standards.

"Traditionally, state standards vary tremendously," said Barbara Willer, director of public affairs at the NAEYC. She said Maryland, for example, allows no more than three children under age 2 to be cared for by one person, while Idaho allows each adult to care for six infants.

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 1998

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION

# Senate Campaign Probers Issue Final Report

By GUY GUGLIOTTA  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Senate committee investigating campaign finance finally agreed to disagree without partisan bombast, and yesterday quietly released findings detailing widespread abuses during the 1996 presidential contest.

Eight Governmental Affairs Committee Republicans approved the 1,100-page final report in a 15-minute meeting. Seven dissenting Democrats issued their minority report, to be attached to the larger document when it is presented to the full Senate Tuesday.

"It is clear we are going to have two reports," Committee Chairman Fred D. Thompson (R-Tenn.) said. "We could revisit all those old heartaches and throw some more stones if we choose to." But they didn't, and the short meeting put a subdued ending to an enterprise that began almost exactly one year ago as an investigation of serious fund-raising abuses by President Clinton's 1996 reelection campaign and hunched through 32 often vituperative and partisan public hearings at a cost of \$3.5 million.

"I thought I could pull everybody together," Thompson said, by getting Democrats to acknowledge the

sins of the Clinton campaign and getting Republicans to give ground on Democratic demands for campaign finance reform. "But I couldn't do it."

The issuance of the report, held up for more than a month while the Republicans negotiated its contents with the intelligence community and with each other, allowed neither Republicans nor Democrats to claim credit for substantial accomplishments.

The Republicans failed to put anyone in the administration in jail, and the Senate Republican leadership blocked campaign finance legislation a week before the committee report came out.

The Democrats, for their part, failed to find excuses for the Clinton campaign's election behavior and managed to get it to the back burner only when it was replaced by the fresher and far easier to understand Lewinsky affair.

"Whenever you stage a high profile congressional hearing, you have two purposes—to have a major public forum to focus on wrongdoing and to propose remedies," said the American Enterprise Institute's Norman J. Ornstein, an expert on campaign finance. "When the parties are at war, it's hard to do either."

The committee report, most of

which was leaked to news organizations three weeks ago, will be available on the Internet today at the Governmental Affairs Committee Web site. The panel's Republicans and Democrats yesterday provided only summaries of their findings.

These added little of note to what is currently known about John Huang, Roger Tamraz, the Hsi Lai Temple, Vice President Gore's phone calls and the other personalities, events and campaign finance phenomena that dominated the hearings that ended last Oct. 31.

The Republican report summary concludes that the Democrats' 1996 presidential campaign "eviscerated federal fund-raising laws," "debased the White House and the presidency itself" and showed that "nothing was sacred in the President's search for campaign funds." It excused the possible sins of former Republican National Committee Chairman Haley Barbour, who is under investigation by the Justice Department, in a paragraph.

The Democrats managed to avoid florid language but took pains to find a Republican transgression to match every Clinton misstep, complain again of Republican insensitivity to minority demands for subpoenas, witnesses and hearing time, and accuse Barbour of orchestrating "the

most elaborate scheme" to funnel foreign money illegally into U.S. elections.

The two reports also renewed, but did not resolve, the dispute between Thompson and Glenn over interpretation of the mainland Chinese government's intention to interfere with U.S. elections.

The Thompson report discusses evidence of a China "plan" and documents links between several key figures in the investigation and the Chinese government.

The minority critique takes the Thompson report to task for making "a series of speculative assertions," and suggests the China connection was "a conclusion looking for supporting information that was not available."

Despite the dueling reports, however, some experts saw more in the investigation than a litany of partisan complaints:

"The most important legacy is that the investigation documented the extraordinary campaign finance abuses that occurred in 1996, and the overwhelming case that the system is totally broken and needs to be fundamentally reformed," said Fred Wertheimer, president of the Democracy 21 political reform group. "You have the chronicle, and you have the remedy."

PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 1998

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 9, 1998

**CHILD CARE EVENT: TOUR OF CENTER AND SPEECH**

**DATE:** Tuesday, March 10, 1998  
**LOCATION:** Housatonic Community-Technical  
College  
Bridgeport, Connecticut  
**TIME:** 10:50 to 11:40 am  
**FROM:** Bruce Reed

**I. PURPOSE**

To underscore your commitment to making child care better, safer, and more affordable for America's working families by: (1) issuing an executive memorandum to improve federally-sponsored child care, and (2) releasing a new HHS report that reveals a pressing need for greater child care investment.

**II. BACKGROUND**

In Bridgeport, Connecticut, you will tour a model child care center at Housatonic Community-Technical College and then give a speech to a group of child care advocates, community leaders, elected officials, and students. Connecticut is the home of many congressional sponsors of child care legislation, including Senator Chris Dodd, and Reps. Barbara Kennelly, Nancy Johnson, and Rosa DeLauro. In addition, Connecticut recently passed bipartisan state legislation to promote early learning and improve child care quality.

Executive Memorandum to Improve Federally-Sponsored Child Care

You will direct executive agencies to take the following new steps to improve the quality of federally-sponsored child care:

- (1) Ensure proper thorough and timely background checks on child care workers in federally-sponsored child care.
- (2) Achieve 100 percent national accreditation of federally-sponsored child care by the year 2000. Accreditation is done by nonprofit, non-governmental professional organizations to validate safety and quality. Currently, 76 percent of military child care centers are accredited and 35 percent of non-military federal child care are accredited, as compared to an estimated 7 percent nationally.

(3) Explore opportunities for collaboration both within government and with the private sector to improve the quality and affordability of federally sponsored child care.

(4) Ensure that all federal workers have full information on child care benefits and options available to them.

#### Release of New HHS Report on Child Care

HHS' new report, *The Child Care and Development Block Grant - A Report of State Plans*, outlines the strategies that states have developed to administer the Child Care and Development Block Grant. The report contains two key findings:

- States need more resources to help working families afford child care. The welfare law allows states to use the Child Care and Development Block Grant to provide child care subsidies to lower-income working families -- defined as families with less than 85 percent of state median income. This new report shows that because of resource constraints, some states set eligibility levels far below what is allowed by federal law. For example, in 10 states, a family of three with as little as \$20,000 of income is not eligible for any help with child care costs. In as many as 37 states, a family of three with \$28,000 of income is not eligible for any help with child care subsidy. Further, most states have insufficient funds even to subsidize all families meeting their eligibility requirements.
- States have innovative strategies to improve child care quality, such as scholarships and basic training for child care providers, tax credits for businesses that offer child care services, initiatives to link the child care and health care communities, support for resource and referral services, and initiatives to expand school-age care.

#### New Report by the Children's Defense Fund

On Tuesday morning, the Children's Defense Fund will issue a report of state expenditures of the child care block grant. The report, titled *Locked Doors: States Struggling to meet the Child Care Needs of Low-Income Working Families*, makes the following findings, which are generally consistent with those of the HHS report:

- State child care subsidy programs are so underfunded that they cut off eligibility at family income levels far below what is allowed by federal law and what is needed by families.
- Even those low-income working families that do meet state income guidelines frequently cannot get the help they need. As of January 1998, about half the states had to turn away eligible low-income working families or put them on lengthy waiting lists for help.

### Congressional Legislation on the Hill

Several Congressional leaders on child care are from Connecticut, including Senator Dodd, and Reps. Kennelly, Johnson, and DeLauro. All of their bills contain several elements included in your initiative, but most also include an initiative targeted to stay-at-home parents as well. In particular, Senator Dodd's bill, which is co-sponsored by 25 Senate Democrats, includes many of the elements of your initiative, such as a significant expansion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant, an expansion of the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, a tax credit for businesses that provide child care, an increase in the investment in after-school programs, and a fund targeted to early learning and quality improvements; it also includes a provision to assist stay-at-home parents.

### Recent Action on Child Care in Connecticut

Connecticut passed landmark child care/school readiness legislation in the 1997 session, on a bipartisan basis. The legislation provides full access to child care for three and four years olds, with emphasis on quality, parent involvement, family literacy, transition to school, and health linkages. Programs must be accredited to receive state dollars. Health care is linked to the legislation by requiring child care providers to ensure that children have had necessary and timely health screens. The legislation invested \$60 million in this area.

### Housatonic Community-Technical College's Early Childhood Laboratory School

Housatonic Community-Technical College enrolls 3,300 students and offers generalized two-year degree programs. The student body is 66% female and the average age is 29. The college's Early Childhood Laboratory School is a nationally-accredited center serving 40 children, in two classes of twenty. The ratio of teachers to children is roughly one to six. The staff ranges from those with Masters in Early Childhood Education to two former welfare recipients. Also, community college students serve as externs in the center to gain experience towards their degrees in early childhood education.

## **III. PARTICIPANTS**

### Speech Participants:

Mayor Joseph Ganim

Representative Chris Shays.

Senator Chris Dodd

Pamela Price, who is a parent of a five-year old daughter enrolled at the School. She is a former welfare recipient who is now attending the Technical College assisted by Pell Grants, and she is studying Early Childhood Education. She recently started working in an after-school program at a nearby elementary school.

**You**

Members of Congress Confirmed to Attend

Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT)  
Rep. Chris Shays (R-CT)  
Rep. Barbara Kennelly (D-CT)  
Rep. Sam Gejdenson (D-CT)  
Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)

\* The audience is made up of 150 leaders in child care policy in the state, including child care providers, business leaders, and parents.

**VI. PRESS PLAN**

Open Press.

**V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

- Upon arrival, **you** will be greeted by elected officials and Dr. Janis Wurtz, President, Housatonic Community - Technical College and Marie Nulty, Director, Early Childhood Laboratory School.
- **You**, accompanied by Marie Nulty, Mayor Ganim, Representative Chris Shays and Representative Chris Dodd, will tour the classroom of the Early Childhood Laboratory School at Housatonic Community-Technical College.
- **You**, accompanied by Mayor Joseph Ganim, Representative Chris Shays, Senator Chris Dodd and Pamela Price, are announced onto stage to "Hail to the Chief" and "Ruffles and Flourishes."
- Mayor Joseph Ganim gives welcoming remarks and introduces Representative Chris Shays.
- Representative Chris Shays gives remarks and introduces Senator Chris Dodd.
- Senator Chris Dodd will make remarks and introduces Pamela Price.
- Pamela Price will make remarks and introduce **You**.
- **You** give remarks, work a ropeline, and depart.

**VI. REMARKS**

To be provided by June Shih.

THE WHITE HOUSE /  
WASHINGTON

March 10, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Steps to Improve Federally Sponsored Child Care

Now more than ever, America's working parents are struggling to balance their obligations to be good workers -- and their more important obligations to be good parents. By choice or by financial necessity, millions of Americans rely on child care to care for their children for part of each day. Parents deserve to know that their children are safe and nurtured in child care.

One of my highest priorities is to make child care better, safer, and more affordable. That is why my balanced budget includes the most significant investment in child care in our Nation's history, and proposes specific measures to improve child care quality.

As a supplier of child care and as an employer that must recruit and retain a strong workforce, the Federal Government should lead the way in improving child care. I am proud that our military has developed one of the finest child care delivery systems in the world, and that the Department of Defense, at my request, is sharing its expertise with the public and private sectors. Still, we need to do more. The executive branch of the Federal Government has responsibility for over a thousand child care centers -- 788 through the military, 109 through the General Services Administration, and 127 through other Federal departments. In addition, the military oversees nearly 10,000 professional family child care providers. In total, approximately 215,000 children are in our care.

Today I am directing my Cabinet to take significant new steps to improve the quality of Federally sponsored child care in the executive branch by (1) ensuring proper background checks of child care workers; (2) achieving 100-percent independent accreditation of all eligible centers; (3) exploring partnerships among Federal agencies and with the private sector to improve child care quality and affordability; and (4) ensuring that all Federal workers become better informed of child care benefits and the options available to them.

First, all child care workers in Federally sponsored centers should undergo thorough background checks to make sure that our children are safe. The vast majority of child care workers are caring people who have dedicated their lives to teaching and nurturing children. But one tragedy in child care is too many, and criminal and civil background checks are necessary to determine whether the people caring for our children are fit for this responsibility. The military already has a model system to conduct background checks of child care workers. I now want to guarantee that workers at all nonmilitary, Federal child care facilities undergo such background checks in a thorough and timely fashion.

I therefore direct the Administrator of General Services ("Administrator") to report to me, within 90 days, with a plan to ensure complete and timely background checks, to the fullest extent possible, for all child care workers in nonmilitary, Federally sponsored child care settings. Agencies with oversight of nonmilitary child care settings will report to the Administrator within 60 days on this matter.

Second, all Federally sponsored child care centers should receive nationally recognized, independent accreditation as soon as they are eligible to do so. Currently, only 76 percent of military centers, and 35 percent of other Federally sponsored centers, are accredited. By the year 2000, 100 percent should be accredited. I therefore direct the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator to provide me, within 90 days, with a plan to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, independent, nationally recognized accreditation of all eligible, Federally sponsored child care by the year 2000. Agencies with oversight of nonmilitary child care settings shall report to the Administrator within 60 days on this matter.

Third, partnerships among Federal agencies and with the private sector are an increasingly important way to maximize existing resources and improve child care. I therefore direct the Administrator to work with the heads of all Federal departments and agencies to explore opportunities for collaboration both within Government and with the private sector to improve child care quality and affordability in Federally sponsored settings.

Finally, employers have a responsibility to make sure that their workers are better informed on child care and the options available to them at the national, State, and local levels. I therefore direct the Director of the Office of Personnel Management ("Director") to ensure that, to the fullest extent possible, all Federal workers receive full information about

child care benefits available to them on the Federal, State, and local levels, including information on resource and referral networks, available tax credits such as the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, as well as public subsidies. The Director shall also host a nationwide summit designed to showcase model public and private sector solutions to child care needs.

## PRESIDENT CLINTON CALLS FOR CHILD CARE THAT STRENGTHENS AMERICA'S FAMILIES

March 10, 1998

Today, President Clinton renewed his call to make child care better, safer, and more affordable for America's working families. In a speech in Connecticut, the President issued an executive directive to improve federally-sponsored child care, and announced the release of a new report by HHS which reveals a pressing need for greater child care investment.

**ENSURING THE QUALITY OF THE FEDERAL CHILD CARE SYSTEM.** The President believes that the federal government should lead the way in improving the child care it sponsors for its employees. The executive directive President Clinton issued today instructs all executive agencies to: (1) reach 100 percent national accreditation of federally-sponsored child care by the year 2000 (accreditation is done by nonprofit, non-governmental professional organizations to validate safety and quality; criteria include developmental programming, staff training, appropriate staff-to-child ratios, as well as health, safety and facility standards); (2) ensure proper background checks on child care workers in federally-sponsored child care; (3) explore public-private partnerships to improve child care quality and affordability; and (4) ensure that all federal workers have full information on child care benefits and options available to them. The executive branch of the federal government operates 1,024 child care centers -- 788 by the military, 109 by the General Services Administration, and 127 by other federal departments -- and the military sponsors nearly 10,000 professional family child care providers. In total, about 215,000 children are in federally-sponsored child care.

**NEW REPORT POINTS TO INNOVATION BUT LIMITED RESOURCES IN THE STATES.** *The Child Care and Development Block Grant: Report of State Plans* outlines strategies that the states have developed to administer the Child Care and Development Block Grant and meet the pressing child care needs of working families. The report reveals:

- **States need more resources to help working families afford child care.** The welfare law allows states to use the Child Care and Development Block Grant to provide child care subsidies to lower-income working families -- defined as families with less than 85 percent of state median income. This new report shows that because of resource constraints, some states set eligibility levels far below what is allowed by federal law. For example, in 10 states, a family of three with as little as \$20,000 of income is not eligible for any help with child care costs. In as many as 37 states, a family of three with \$28,000 of income is not eligible for a child care subsidy. Further, most states have insufficient funds even to subsidize all families meeting their eligibility requirements.
- **States have innovative strategies to improve child care quality,** such as scholarships and basic training for child care providers, tax credits for businesses that offer child care services, initiatives to link the child care and health care communities, support for resource and referral services, and initiatives to expand school-age care.

**THE PRESIDENT'S CHILD CARE INITIATIVE ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR MORE RESOURCES AND BUILDS ON INNOVATION IN THE STATES.** The President's balanced budget calls for an historic investment -- more than \$20 billion over five years -- to help working families pay for child care, build the supply of after-school programs, improve child care safety and quality, and promote early learning.

**CONNECTICUT IS IMPROVING CHILD CARE QUALITY.** Connecticut recently passed bipartisan School Readiness Legislation to improve child care quality and promote early learning.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON'S PROPOSAL:  
CHILD CARE THAT STRENGTHENS AMERICAN FAMILIES**

*"Not a single American family should ever have to choose between the job they need and the child they love."*

President Bill Clinton  
State of the Union Address, January 27, 1998

President Clinton's balanced budget includes an historic initiative to improve child care for America's working families. The initiative proposes over \$20 billion over five years for child care -- to help working families pay for child care, build a good supply of after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning.

**ENSURING AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, SAFE CHILD CARE.** The President's child care initiative responds to the struggles our nation's working parents face in finding child care they can afford, trust and rely on. The new initiative:

- **Makes child care more affordable for working families.** To help working families struggling to meet the costs of child care, the initiative invests \$7.5 billion over five years to double the number of children receiving child care subsidies to more than two million by the year 2003. The initiative also invests \$4.8 billion over five years to increase tax credits for child care for three million families and provides a new tax credit for businesses that offer child care services to their employees at a cost of \$500 million over five years.
- **Increases access to and promotes early learning and healthy child development.** To improve early learning, the initiative includes \$3 billion over five years to establish an Early Learning Fund that helps local communities improve the quality and safety of child care for children ages zero to five. The initiative also increases investment in Head Start and doubles the number of children served by Early Head Start to 80,000.
- **Improves the safety and quality of child care.** To help ensure safe, quality child care, the initiative: steps up enforcement of state health and safety standards in child care settings, facilitates background checks on child care providers, increases scholarships and training for child care providers, and invests in child care research and evaluation.
- **Expands access to safe after-school care.** To help create safe, positive learning environments for American school-age children who lack adult supervision during a typical week, the initiative increases the 21st Century Learning Center Program by \$800 million over five years to provide after-school care for up to half a million children a year.

**CHILD CARE EVENT IN CONNECTICUT**  
**March 10, 1998**

**INTERNAL Q&A**

**Directive to Improve Federally-Sponsored Child Care**

**Q: Why is the President issuing a directive to improve federally-sponsored child care? Is it in bad shape?**

A: Federally-sponsored child care is not in bad shape, but it is not uniformly excellent in quality. The directive that the President issued today will help ensure that the federal Government is a model child care provider. The President believes that the federal government -- both as a supplier of child care and as an employer that must recruit and retain a strong workforce -- should lead the way in improving the child care it sponsors for its employees. The directive calls for several steps to be taken: (1) ensuring proper background checks of child care workers in federally-sponsored child care; (2) achieving 100 percent national accreditation of federally-sponsored child care; (3) exploring partnerships among federal agencies and with the private sectors to improve child care quality and affordability; and (4) ensuring that all federal workers have full information on child care benefits and options available to them.

**Q: Isn't the biggest problem with federally-sponsored child care that it's not affordable? Won't improving its quality just make it even more expensive?**

A: It is true that today, many lower-income government workers cannot afford the care sponsored by the federal government. The President is committed to making child care more affordable for all Americans. His child care initiative has several components aimed at improving child care costs: (1) \$7.5 billion over five years to double, by the year 2003, the number of children currently served with child care subsidies; (2) \$4.8 billion over five years to provide greater tax relief to working parents paying for child care; and (3) a new tax credit to businesses that offer child care services to their workers. Government workers will benefit from these measures, as will all Americans. In addition, the President's directive instructs the Office of Personnel Management to ensure that federal workers know about the child care options and benefits, including subsidies available to them, and asks that his Cabinet explore public-private partnerships to improve child care affordability.

**Q: How are background checks currently administered in federally-sponsored child care? Is there a big problem there?**

A: The President believes that background checks are necessary to ensure that children in child care are safe. The Administration wants to be assured that this is happening in a

Careful and systematic way in federally-sponsored child care -- and that monitoring of this process is vigilant. The military has developed a model system to do background checks of child care workers in the centers and family day-care homes it sponsors. The President's directive is aimed at bring a similar level of excellence to the non-military federally-sponsored child care. The President's directive requires that the Administrator of the General Services Administration review this issue and submit a plan to the President to ensure complete and timely criminal and civil background checks in all federally-sponsored child care.

NOTE: The Department of Defense conducts background checks -- using both the FBI and an internal clearance system -- on all child care workers in the child care centers and family child care homes it sponsors. Non-military federal agencies that sponsor child care are required by law to conduct criminal background checks -- through the FBI and through the state criminal history repositories -- on child care providers, as well as to comply with state and local requirements.

**Q: Aren't non-military federally-sponsored child care centers already required by law to do background checks? What is the point of the directive?**

A: Non-military federal agencies that sponsor child care are required by law to do background checks on child care providers, but there is no oversight mechanism to ensure that these checks are being done thoroughly and in a timely fashion. Although some centers do thorough and timely checks, others appear to comply with their statutory obligations in only a perfunctory manner. The President's directive instructs the Administrator of the General Services Administration to report to him on the thoroughness and timeliness of background checks of child care providers in all non-military federally-sponsored child care. The result should be a uniformly high level of care and accuracy in conducting background checks.

**Q: What about background checks for child care workers nationwide?**

The President has taken action to help improve background checks on child care workers nationwide. Last year, the President transmitted the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact to Congress, which will facilitate effective background checks on child care providers by eliminating state law barriers to the sharing of criminal history information for purposes other than ongoing criminal investigations. The President has urged enactment of this Compact so that child care agencies or parents wanting to do background checks can gain access to ratifying states' complete criminal records.

**Q: What is accreditation? Why is President calling for all federally-sponsored child care center in the Executive Branch to be accredited?**

A: Accreditation for child care is done by nonprofit, non-governmental professional

organizations to validate safety and quality. Criteria include developmental programming, staff training, appropriate staff-to-child ratios, as well as health, safety and facility standards. Currently, 76 percent of military child care centers are accredited and 35 percent of other federally-sponsored child care centers in the executive branch are accredited -- as compared to an estimated 7 percent nationally. The President believes all eligible, federally-sponsored child care should achieve nationally-recognized, independent accreditation to ensure and maintain quality.

**Q: How is the President's Directive different from the legislation sponsored by Senator Jeffords and Congressman Gilman to improve federally-sponsored child care?**

A: Both the President's directive and legislation proposed by Senators Dodd and Jeffords and Rep. Gilman aim to improve federally-sponsored child care. Both require federally-sponsored child care centers to be accredited by independent, nationally-recognized organizations. The congressional legislation would require that these child care centers achieve accreditation, to the fullest extent possible, within five years of enactment of the legislation. The President's executive memorandum sets a quicker time frame for accreditation and directs his Cabinet to ensure accreditation, to the fullest extent possible, by the year 2000.

The President's directive also addresses other issues not in the Jeffords/Gilman legislation, including: (1) ensuring proper background checks of child care workers in federally-sponsored child care; and (2) ensuring that all federal workers have full information on child care benefits and options available to them.

The pending legislation does one thing that cannot be done by executive action: it would require that all non-military federally-sponsored child care adopt health and safety standards developed by the General Services Administration.

**Q: Does the Administration support the Jeffords/Gilman legislation?**

A: While the Administration has not taken a formal position on the legislation, we have provided significant technical assistance to congressional staff as it has developed and support its essential elements. We look forward to continuing to work with Senators Dodd and Jeffords, Rep. Gilman and other Members of Congress to meet our mutual goals of improving child care in federally-sponsored facilities, and to making child care better, safer, and more affordable for all American parents who rely on it. Of course, some of this legislation will be rendered unnecessary by the President's executive directive.

**Q: What does federally-sponsored child care look like?**

A: The executive branch of the federal government operates 1,024 child care centers -- 788 by the military, 109 by the General Services Administration, and 127 by other federal

departments. In addition, the military sponsors nearly 10,000 professional family child care providers. In total, approximately 215,000 children are in the care of federally-sponsored child care in the executive branch. In addition, the judicial and legislative branches sponsor 5 child care centers, caring for 338 children.

**Q: How does the military operate its child care system? Isn't it a good program because it spends so much money?**

A: The Department of Defense's Child Care System serves approximately 200,000 children (aged zero to 12) daily, making it the largest employer-sponsored child care program in the nation. Through this system, the military offers full-day, part-day, and hourly child care, part-day preschools, before- and after-school programs for school age children, and extended hour care. Because of the Department of Defense's commitment to excellence in child care, since 1992, the number of military child care facilities that are accredited by the independent National Association for the Education of Young Children has risen from 55 to 353. Currently, over 75% of military child care programs are accredited, as compared to only 7% of other child care facilities nationwide.

While the military does invest significant resources into their child care system, it also finds ways to increase quality without large investments -- by setting and enforcing high quality standards (including unannounced inspections), supporting family day care networks, offering a strong resource and referral system, and providing a wide variety of care options, all of which increase quality without large investments.

**Q: How does non-military, federally-sponsored child care operate?**

A: Non-military federal agencies sponsor over 240 child care centers across the country in federally-owned and leased buildings. The centers are operated by profit and non-profit child care providers. Once a need is established, the General Services Administration or the agencies that occupy the building can supply space to establish a child care center. The sponsoring agency or agencies may continue to support the center by providing free rent, utilities, telephone services, and general maintenance, but may not provide subsidies for salaries, training for child care staff or tuition assistance.

All children of federal employees families are eligible to send their children to federally-sponsored child care centers. Under present law, fifty percent of the children attending the child care centers must be children of federal employees. Families in the community may use any slots not filled by children of federal workers, who are given priority for admission.

The centers are overseen by boards that contract with vendors for services or operate the centers themselves. Because federal child care is not uniform in operation, quality, or the amount of support the center gets from its sponsoring agency, there are many variations

among the centers operated by the non-military federal agencies.

**Q: Are there federally-sponsored child care facilities in Connecticut? Are they accredited?**

A: There are four child care centers sponsored by the federal government in Connecticut -- one by the General Services Administration, one by the Department of Transportation and the Coast Guard, one by the Department of Veteran's Affairs, and one by the Navy. All four require background checks; two are accredited (the GSA and Navy centers).

**Q: What are the child care options for parents who work at the White House?**

Employees of the Executive Office of the President (EOP) can enroll their children in the nearby U.S. Kids Child Development Center, a center accredited by the independent National Association for the Education of Young Children. Additionally, White House parents may enroll their children in any of the 26 other federal child care centers in the greater Washington, D.C. area.

### **New HHS Report**

**Q: What does the new HHS report tell us?**

A: This report -- called *The Child Care and Development Block Grant: A Report of State Plans* -- outlines the strategies that the states have developed to administer the block grant and meet the pressing child care needs of working families. There are two important findings to the report. First, the report indicates that states could use more resources to help working families afford child care. With the current block grant funding level, states are not able to serve everyone that could be eligible under federal law with a child care subsidy. For example, in 10 states, a family of three with as little as \$20,000 of income does not have a chance for help with child care costs. And in as many as 37 states, a family of three with \$28,000 of income is not eligible for a child care subsidy. Further, most states have insufficient funds even to subsidize all families meeting their eligibility requirements. Second, the report tells us that states have designed innovative strategies to improve child care quality, such as scholarships and basic training for child care providers, tax credits for businesses that offer child care services, initiatives to link the child care and health care communities, support for resource and referral services, and initiatives to expand school-age care.

The President's child care initiative addresses the need for greater resources to the states for child care subsidies and builds on the innovative activities that states are employing to improve child care quality and build the supply of good care for the families who rely on it.

**Q: How will the President's child care initiative respond to the issues raised in the**

report?

- A: President Clinton's child care initiative responds to the need to help more hardworking Americans with the costs of child care by investing \$7.5 billion over five years in the Child Care and Development Block Grant -- an investment that would enable us to double the number of children currently served by the block grant.

In addition, the President's initiative builds on the promising efforts to improve child care quality underway in the states, such as those designed to improve consumer education, provide scholarships to child care providers, offer tax credits to employers that provide child care services to their workers, and to enforce state health and safety standards. The President's child care initiative builds on these state-level efforts by: (1) creating a Standards Enforcement Fund; (2) establishing a Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund; (3) offering a national tax credit to employers that offer child care services; (4) establishing an Early Learning Fund for activities to improve child care quality and promote early childhood development; and (5) providing after-school opportunities for 500,000 more children each year.

- Q: The Children's Defense Fund today released a state-by-state report on child care? Why is some of CDF's information different from that in the HHS report?**

- A: The two reports collected data for different periods of time using different approaches. For example, the HHS data reflect information submitted in the CCDBG plans prepared last summer as dictated by law, while the CDF data were collected through interviews with administrators in January 1998. But in general CDF's report and HHS's report are consistent in that they point to the insufficient funds available to states through the block grant to provide child care subsidies for working parents.

- Q: Do you agree with CDF's finding that we need to invest an additional \$20 billion over five years in the block grant? Why has the President proposed so much less than that?**

- A: The Administration believes that states need significant additional resources to enable them to make child care better, safer, and more affordable for the hardworking Americans who rely on it. We know that today states are able to serve far less than those eligible for child care subsidies under federal law, and that, more than ever, parents struggle to meet the high costs of child care. That is why the President has proposed an additional \$7.5 billion over five years for the Child and Development Block Grant -- an investment that would allow us to double by the year 2003 the number of children currently served with child care subsidies by the block grant. The President has also proposed other child care investments -- including greater tax relief for working families and for employers that offer child care services for their workers, scholarships for child care providers, and funds for standards enforcement and early learning activities. The President's child care initiative --

totaling over \$20 billion over five years -- represents the largest single child care investment in our nation's history.

## General

**Q: What is the President's child care initiative?**

A: President Clinton's historic initiative to improve child care for America's working families represents the largest single investment in child care in the nation's history -- over \$20 billion over five years. President Clinton's initiative responds to the struggles our nation's working parents face in finding child care that they can afford, trust, and rely on. The President's proposal will help working families pay for child care, build the supply of good after-school programs, improve the safety and quality of care, and promote early learning.

- **Doubles the number of children receiving child care subsidies** to more than two million by the year 2003 by increasing funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant by \$7.5 billion over 5 years.
- **Increases tax credits for three million working families to help them pay for child care** by investing \$4.8 billion over 5 years in the Child and Dependent Tax Credit. The President's proposal also provides a new tax credit for businesses that offer child care services for their employees.
- **Provides after-school care for 500,000 children per year** by expanding the 21st Century Community Learning Center program by \$800 million over 5 years to provide funds to school-community partnerships to establish or expand programs for school-age children.
- **Improves child care safety and quality and enhances early childhood development** by establishing a new Early Learning Fund as well as supporting enforcement of state child care health and safety standards, providing scholarships to up to 50,000 child care providers per year, and investing in research and consumer education.

**Q: Are states spending the child care money in the new welfare reform law?**

A: We are very encouraged by the state reports which show they have obligated over 99 percent of the child care funds available under the new welfare law for FY 1997. This demonstrates the tremendous need states have for child care, and President Clinton has continued to urge states to invest their dollars into helping working families. Several states, such as Illinois and Delaware, are committing substantial state dollars to ensure that low income families -- both working families and those transitioning from welfare to work -- have available child care. But let's be clear -- the President's initiative is not aimed at mothers on welfare. It is aimed at working parents. We know that working parents with annual incomes under \$14,400 that paid for child care for

children under five spent 25 percent of their income on child care -- and even then it is difficult to find accessible, quality care.

**Q: Child Care has not been made a clear priority by the Congressional leadership. Do you really think you have a chance of getting anything done?**

A: Since the President announced his child care initiative in January, legislation has been introduced by Republicans and Democrats that include proposals similar to the President's proposed initiative. Senators Chafee and Dodd each have introduced promising legislation in the Senate, and Representatives Johnson and Kennelly have introduced legislation in the House. The Administration believes that making child care better, safer and more affordable for the hardworking American families that rely on it has strong Congressional and public support. We will be working hard with Congress on a bipartisan basis to enact child care legislation this year that is right for America's children and families.

**Q: Since much of the funding of this proposal is based on the tobacco settlement, aren't you counting your chickens before they've hatched? What will you do if the tobacco settlement does not go through?**

A: First, the initiative is paid for in a number of ways -- only one part comes from tobacco revenues. Second, and more important, we believe that a national tobacco settlement will pass. The President supports strong tobacco legislation, and many Republicans and Democrats alike are working vigorously to craft comprehensive legislation. Of course, no offset proposed in a budget is guaranteed; the Congress can reject any proposed way of financing a program. If Congress does not pass comprehensive tobacco legislation, we will work with Congress to find other offsets. This is a high Administration priority, and we will find an effective funding mechanism.

**Q: What's the Administration's position on proposals to support stay-at-home parents?**

A: There are a number of proposals on the Hill to help stay-at-home parents, and we are working hard to evaluate their costs and effects. The President believes that we should respect and support parents in whatever choices they make, whether they work or stay at home. He has supported that choice in the past through a variety of actions to increase family income, such as expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, increasing the minimum wage, and passing the \$500 per-child tax credit. These actions targeted to help families will cost approximately \$250 billion over the next five years. The President believes that by continuing to work together on a bipartisan basis and by taking the best proposals from both sides of the aisle, we will achieve legislation that benefits all America's families and children.

**Q: Some conservatives claim that this is a big government proposal, which promotes institutionalized day care. Is this true?**

**A:** No. The Administration is committed to helping parents make the choices that are right for their families, whatever child care arrangements they choose for their children. Most of the funding in the President's proposal goes directly to parents -- whether through tax cuts or through vouchers issued by states with child care block grant funding. The President's child care initiative is designed to provide maximum flexibility to parents so that all their child care choices are supported.