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Welfare-Welfare to Work St. Louis

Event August 12, 1997

W₂ - St Louis event

August 11, 1997

WELFARE TO WORK EVENT

Missouri

DATE: August 12, 1997
LOCATION: Mid.Tec Warehouse, St. Louis,
BRIEFING TIME: 10:00 am - 10:30 am
EVENT TIME: 10:40 am - 12:00 am

FROM: Bruce Reed

I. PURPOSE

To celebrate the one year anniversary of the welfare law by announcing a new decline in welfare caseloads and highlighting the success of the Welfare to Work Partnership in mobilizing businesses within St. Louis to hire welfare recipients into the workforce.

II. BACKGROUND

You will be making remarks in an old warehouse building that Mid.Tec is currently renovating into a training facility that will train unemployed people in high-skilled manufacturing jobs. Mid.Tec recently moved from the suburbs to this inner-city site (in a federal enterprise community) to help rebuild an inner-city neighborhood and move closer to a pool of unemployed people who can be trained to fill job vacancies. Prior to your speech you will briefly tour the training facility.

At this event you will announce that welfare caseloads have dropped by 3.4 million since you took office (a 24% decline) and 1.4 million since you signed the welfare law last year. The 3.4 million drop is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history. While you have been President, 48 out of 50 states have seen their caseloads decline, and ten states have reduced their rolls by more than 40%. As a result, the percentage of the total population on the welfare rolls is the lowest since 1970.

You will also underscore the critical role of the private sector in welfare reform by praising the over 300 bi-state St. Louis region companies that are

committing to hire and retain welfare recipients without displacing current workers. St. Louis is the first of 12 "City to City" challenges the Welfare to Work Partnership is launching. Over the next year, the Partnership will work closely with community and business leaders in 12 high- poverty cities to help promote innovative and effective welfare to work initiatives. Nationally, the Welfare-to-Work Partnership, has received pledges from over 800 companies since it was founded in May.

Also at today's event, the Partnership will unveil several new tools to help companies that want to hire workers from the welfare rolls: a toll free hotline (1-888-USA-JOB1) and a web site (www.welfaretowork.org) to link companies to public and private sector welfare reform information; a guide for companies hiring welfare recipients, *Blueprint for Business: Reaching a New Work Force*, prepared with the National Alliance of Business; and radio and print public service announcements that highlight the benefits to companies of hiring welfare recipients and encourage companies to join the Partnership.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

Bruce Reed

Event Participants:

Mayor Clarence Harman

Representative Gephardt

Senator Bond

Governor Carnahan

Barry Corona, Chairman of Mid.Tec and owner of Production Products

Robert Shapiro, President and CEO of Monsanto

Also Seated on Stage:

Two former welfare recipients.

Eli Segal

County Executive

*Secretary Shalala, Secretary Herman, and Secretary Alvarez will be seated in the front row.

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Upon arrival, **you** will briefly tour the training facility.
- **You** will then meet and greet the stage participants in a holding room.
- Mayor Clarence Harmon will announce you and the participants onto the stage.
- Robert Shapiro, CEO of Monsanto will make brief remarks.
- Congressman Gephardt will make brief remarks.
- Senator Bond will make brief remarks.
- Governor Mel Carnahan will make brief remarks.
- Barry Corona will make brief remarks and introduce **you**.
- **You** will make remarks, work a ropeline, and then proceed into the holding room.
- **You** will briefly meet 25 representatives from St. Louis companies pledging to hire welfare recipients, and then depart.

VI. REMARKS

Remarks Provided by Terry Edmonds in Speechwriting.

W₂ - St. Louis speech

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(St. Louis, Missouri)For Immediate Release
12, 1997

August

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO TRAINEES AND LEADERS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITYFuture Training Facility of
MID.TEC
St. Louis, Missouri

11:25 A.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm glad to see you all here. I'm sorry it's so hot. I want to say to my longtime friend and former colleague as a governor, Senator Kitt Bond, that I was very glad to cross party lines and follow your lead to take my coat off. (Laughter and applause.) And now you owe me one and I will call you next time there's a vote that's real important to me in Congress. (Laughter.)

Actually, you don't have to be suffering like this. The truth is this building is very well air-conditioned, but Barry Corona is such an entrepreneur, he thought there might be a market in St. Louis for a large sauna, and that's what we're testing out today. (Laughter.)

I'm delighted to be here. I want to, first of all, say my thanks to my good friend, Governor Carnahan; to my friend,

our Minority Leader, Dick Gephardt; to Kitt Bond and to Mayor Harman, who have spoken here today. I thank the other state officials who are here -- the Speaker of the House Steve Gaugh (phonetic) is here; Senator Elman (phonetic), the Senate Minority Leader, is here. Congressman Clay could not be here today, but we're glad Senator Clay is here with his most important possession. Thank you for coming. (Applause.) I thank State Treasurer Holden and Secretary of State Cooke for being here.

I want to say a special word of thanks -- and I'll say more about them later -- to the CEO of Monsanto, Bob Shapiro, and to my good friend Eli Segal, the president of the Welfare to Work Partnership, and to all the others who are here. And thanks again to Mid.TEC for hosting us.

It's great to be back in St. Louis, even on a hot August day. This city is very much alive. You can see it in the revived area and your record job growth, your commitment to education reform, and now to welfare reform. And I want to talk about finishing the job of welfare reform, moving people from welfare to work.

If we expect to be the country we want to be in the next century, we have to provide opportunity for everyone who's willing to work for it, we have to require responsibility from everyone who's capable of providing it, and we have to find a way to come together across all the lines that divide us to make one America.

Fixing our broken welfare system is an important part of that because it means more opportunity, more responsibility and a stronger, more united community. It's been a priority of my presidency. You've heard others mention -- I think the Governor talked about it -- that shortly after I took office we began giving people waivers from federal rules that undermined their reform experiments so they could try new and innovative ways that would work perhaps in one community but not another, perhaps in one state but not another, to facilitate the movement of people from welfare to work.

Then a year ago next week, I signed the welfare reform legislation which really did end welfare as we know it.

It was designed to make welfare a second chance, not a way of life. It gave the states far more responsibilities and opportunities to create new programs to move people from welfare to work. It guaranteed children their nutritional and health care benefits and provided several billion dollars more money to pay for child care for parents who otherwise could not afford to take jobs at entry levels if those were the only jobs they could get.

Now, a lot of people said that welfare reform would never work because the private economy wouldn't do its part or the government wouldn't do its part or we couldn't figure out how to get people from welfare to work or -- you know, I heard all the reasons that people said it wouldn't work. But a year later, I think it's fair to say the debate is over. We know now that welfare reform works.

Today I am proud to announce that just since I signed the law a year ago, there are now 1.4 million fewer people on welfare in the last year alone. (Applause.) In the four years and seven months or so, almost eight now, since I took office, the welfare rolls have declined by 3.4 million, 24 percent, the biggest decline in history. We now have the smallest percentage of Americans living on public assistance we have had since 1970. We can make this work if we all work together. (Applause.)

I come here to St. Louis and to this fine place and to these programs -- and let me again thank all of you who are part of all these programs -- to say that the job is not over. And the law requires us to do more, because the law says that able-bodied people, people who are able physically and mentally to do work, should be on welfare continuously no more than two years, and no more than five years in a lifetime. Now, if you say that to someone and you don't want to be cruel to them or their children, then you must acknowledge that we, the rest of us, have a moral obligation to make sure there is a job there, and that if they need training that they have the training they need for the job. (Applause.)

The national government is determined to do its part. Last week when I signed the first balanced budget law in a generation into law, we -- (applause) -- thank you. We had two provisions that I want to especially emphasize: one, \$3 billion

in a welfare-to-work challenge fund to help communities with higher unemployment rates move long-term welfare recipients into the work force; and two, an expanded and carefully targeted work opportunity tax credit which gives a significant incentive to private employers, including small business people who need to be brought into this equation, to move people from welfare to work.

And in that connection, let me say that we are committed to doing everything we can. As evidence of that, I would like to acknowledge the presence here today of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala; the Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman; the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, Aida Alvarez. They're here working with St. Louis, working with Missouri. We're going to do this with every major community in every state in our community. We want to do our part to help you meet the goals of the welfare reform law. And I thank you all for being here. (Applause.)

I have also asked the Vice President to head two other initiatives for me -- one, to bring civic and business groups together to mentor new employees. I had a friend from the Midwest call me the other day, and he said, you know, I just want

you to know I really am trying to do what you asked me to do -- I run a small business -- and we've been friends for many years. And he said, I'm trying to hire people from welfare to work, but because the economy is going so well, most of the people who can easily move into the work force already have, and the people I'm trying to hire, they're really having a hard time because they've actually never had to do this before. They've never even had to show up before at the same time. They don't understand how to find -- how to handle conflict in the work force. If they run up against something they can't do, they're uncomfortable asking how to do it.

We forget that if we're going to go all the way we have a lot of work to do to make some of these folks believe in their own capacities and understand them and understand that, hey, we all mess up at work. You know that, read my polls, right? (Laughter.) I mean, sometimes we all mess up at work. And we've got a lot of work to do to get people in the right frame of mind to understand that having a job and keeping a job is a continuous learning and growth experience. So we know we need to do that. We're trying to do our part with that.

And, finally, the Vice President is leading our effort to have the federal government, even in a time when we've downsized the overall government, fill as many new openings as possible with welfare recipients until we hire 10,000 welfare recipients on our part over the next couple of years.

Now, we know that the states, the communities, the private sector also have to do an awful lot. Believe it or not, 48 of the 50 states have seen their caseloads decline dramatically. Missouri has done better than the national average, at 27 percent decline in the last four years. Thirty-five states have now followed Missouri's lead. Missouri asked for one of these welfare waivers, so that in certain parts of the state you could authorize employers to receive the welfare check as a hiring and training supplement for a period of time -- which I thought was a great idea, a legitimate idea, particularly with people who are harder to place -- to give employers a premium to really work with those employees and train them and help them become full-time volunteers.

Since I came here, first in 1994 to Missouri to announce welfare reform efforts, then in 1996 to talk about getting the private sector involved, you might be interested to know that now 35 other states have allowed Missouri to show them that this is a good reform, and they are also doing it. I help all the rest of them will, too. (Applause.)

The most important thing we can do is get the private sector to hire people. That's why Barry and Chairman Shapiro are so important to us, because we've got to have the private sector hiring people. That's why the AmeriCorps project that I just visited downstairs, training young people for private sector jobs, is so important.

And last year when I came to Missouri, we announced that there would be a national effort involving in the beginning a number of Missouri corporations, and five corporations nationally to organize businesses of all sizes to commit to hire people from welfare to work. Since Monsanto and Sprint and Burger King and UPS and United Airlines agreed to start that effort, the Welfare to Work Partnership, which was founded by my good friend Eli Segal -- who also, by the way, was the first head of our national service program, AmeriCorps, which has done a

fabulous job, I believe, for young people in our country -- (applause) -- but since we started, we now have over 800 companies of all sized signed up to promise to hire people from welfare to work. What you should be proud of is that 300 of them have locations here in St. Louis. And you should be very proud of that. (Applause.)

Now, I want to challenge every employer in America to join this crusade. And we have a toll-free number, it's 1-888-USA-JOB1 -- 1-888-USA-JOB1. I want the employers in this country who get this number to call it and help a welfare recipient find a job. And, again, I'd like to thank Sprint for donating this number. This is quite a considerable financial investment to help people move from welfare to work, and I appreciate they're doing it. Remember that. I feel like I'm hawking something on one of those channels on television -- (laughter) -- 1-888-USA-JOB1 -- I can do this.

Let me close by putting a personal face on this. There's a woman on stage with us today who is an example of what someone who once was on welfare with serious obstacles to overcome can do to become a valuable and successful employee. Felicia Booker's success took courage, responsibility and a dream that she could make a better life for her young children, ages two and six. It also took an employer, A.G. Edwards, willing to take a chance on her, and people along the way who wanted to help her realize that dream. Felicia Booker has been working at A.G. Edwards for nearly a year and a half now. She's a computer programmer and she's already been promoted once. I'd like for her to stand and be recognized. Felicia? (Applause.)

Again, let me say, if this is really going to be a country where everyone has an opportunity, then we have to prove that the young women I just met in that job-training program downstairs are going to be given the opportunity to make the most of their own lives. Ultimately, that's what welfare reform is about. It's not primarily about saving the government money -- we're going to balance the budget regardless. It's about empowering every single person in this country to be a part of this country in a new century, in a new era.

Thank you. And God bless you all. (Applause.)

The Welfare to Work Partnership

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Welfare to Work Partnership Launches First Regional Event in St. Louis -- More than 300 Area Businesses Pledge to Hire Welfare Recipients

St. Louis, MO, August 12, 1997 -- The Welfare to Work Partnership launched its first of several regional events at Mid.Tec Corporation today as more than 300 businesses in the bi-state St. Louis region joined the Partnership by pledging to hire, train and retain former welfare recipients.

President Clinton, Governor Mel Carnahan (D-MO), Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond (R-MO), St. Louis Mayor Clarence Harmon, East St. Louis Mayor Gordon Bush and Congressman Richard Gephardt (D-MO) joined the participating businesses in downtown St. Louis to celebrate the Partnership's mission and spotlight established welfare to work initiatives.

The Partnership is an independent, nonpartisan, national effort of the American business community to help move those on public assistance into jobs in the private sector. Its founding companies are Monsanto Company, United Airlines, Burger King, Sprint Corporation and United Parcel Services of America. United Airlines CEO Gerald Greenwald is the chairman of the board while Eli Segal, a successful entrepreneur and former CEO of the Corporation for National Service, is the Partnership's President and CEO.

"There are more than 42,000 welfare recipients in the bi-state St. Louis region," said Robert Shapiro, president of Monsanto and founding board member of the Partnership. "Welfare recipients are people with hopes and aspirations and dreams, and many of them are ready to be great employees if given the chance."

-more-

The St. Louis event was the first of several regional events organized by the Partnership to challenge the local business community to commit to hire people off public assistance without displacing existing workers. The Partnership worked closely with Monsanto, a founding board member, the Regional Commerce and Growth Association, Civic Progress, Mid.Tec Corporation and other members of the business community. The Partnership also worked with Governor Carnahan's office, the mayor's office of St. Louis and East St. Louis and the Department of Social Services as well as community organizations, such as East-West Gateway, the St. Louis Regional Jobs Initiatives, and the St. Louis Community Partnership

Nearly 300 business leaders answered the challenge and are committed to the Partnership. Some of these business leaders already have established welfare to work programs, or are beginning to implement programs while others have pledged to hire and will soon be recruiting former welfare recipients.

The Partnership is providing participating businesses with several information resources, including a Blueprint for Business hiring guide, a toll-free number (1-888-USA-JOB1), a web-page (www.welfaretowork.org), a national database of companies and service providers involved with welfare to work efforts, a quarterly newsletter, a Public Service Announcement campaign, regional and state seminars and conferences and awards ceremonies.

"Businesses of all sizes and from all industries are learning the welfare to work is a smart solution for business," said Segal. "At a time when many businesses are facing a critical shortage of workers, a new, non-traditional source of employees is being discovered in communities across the country."

The St. Louis event is the first in a series of events sponsored by the Partnership to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Welfare Reform Law. The celebration will move to Washington, D.C. on August 14th when the Partnership will join with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Administration to celebrate and promote the role that small businesses can play in making welfare to work a success. Finally, on August 22nd, exactly one year after the passage of the Welfare Reform Law, the Partnership will spotlight the successful welfare reform programs in State of Wisconsin and salute Governor Tommy Thompson (R-WI), a leader in welfare reform and a co-chair of the Partnership's advisory council.

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Ammirati Puris Lintas

Welfare to Work Partnership

Radio Commercial :60
August 8, 1997

Announcer VO:

Does this country's welfare system make you angry?
Then you must be an American.

And like most Americans, you don't care that the government has struggled
with this problem for 60 years. You want answers.

What about moving people off welfare and into jobs?

This is not just a lovely sentiment. It's a logical solution. Because it
takes guts to get off welfare -- to learn real skills and land real jobs.

But it also takes guts for companies to hire off welfare -- to discover
workers, determined to prove themselves, motivated beyond belief to replace
a welfare check with a paycheck.

A lot of big companies are already doing it. So are a lot of small ones. Call
the Welfare to Work Partnership at 1-888-USA-JOB1. Or visit
www.welfaretowork.org to learn how your company can benefit by solving the
welfare problem one job at a time.

The Welfare to Work Partnership

Announces our upcoming

FOCUS ON WELFARE TO WORK

August 12 – 22, 1997

On August 22, 1996, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act was signed, ending welfare as we know it. With the help of hundreds of businesses across the country, The Welfare to Work Partnership (The Partnership) is working to move those on public assistance into jobs in the private sector. From August 12 to August 22, The Partnership is organizing a series of events to highlight existing initiatives and to energize the business community.

August 12

CITY TO CITY LAUNCH – ST. LOUIS

This regional event will be the first of several planned by The Welfare to Work Partnership. Not only will this event serve as a catalyst for more innovation and involvement in the bi-state St. Louis region, but it also will focus the spotlight on welfare to work efforts nationwide. This event will:

- Highlight welfare to work initiatives in the bi-state St. Louis region;
- Enhance relationships between the business community, service providers, and government agencies; and
- Motivate the bi-state St. Louis region around welfare to work efforts.

Anticipated event attendees include: President Bill Clinton, Governor Mel Carnahan (D-MO), Governor Jim Edgar (R-IL), Senator Kit Bond (R-MO), Representative Bill Clay (D-MO), Representative Richard Gephardt (D-MO).

August 14

WELFARE TO WORK – A SMALL BUSINESS STRATEGY

Sponsored by The Welfare to Work Partnership, the US Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Administration, this event will announce the results of an extensive survey showing that a majority of CEOs from America's fastest growing companies are interested in joining forces with other businesses to help transition welfare recipients into the labor market. The role that small businesses can play in making welfare to work a success will be celebrated and promoted.

August 22

SPOTLIGHT ON WISCONSIN

Exactly one year after the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, The Partnership will spotlight the success of the State of Wisconsin and Governor Tommy Thompson (R-WI), a leader in welfare reform, in moving individuals from dependence on welfare checks into lives of work and independence.

These events are the first of many planned by The Partnership.

We invite you to consider ways in which we can help you:

- Encourage businesses in your state to hire and retain former welfare recipients; and
 - Highlight the efforts being made in your state.

For more information on these events or other activities of The Welfare to Work Partnership, please call Gary Karton at 202-955-3005 x323

The Welfare to Work Partnership is a not-for-profit corporation organized under the laws of the District of Columbia

**St. Louis Welfare to Work Partnership Event
Questions and Answers**

About the President's Speech

Question: What announcements did the President make today?

Answer: Today, the President highlighted the success of welfare reform nearly one year after signing the welfare law, announcing that caseloads have declined by almost 3.4 million or 24 percent since he took office. The President also noted the continuing success of the Welfare to Work Partnership, which now includes over 800 businesses and today launched a toll-free hotline and web page to help companies all across the nation hire people off welfare. Finally, the President praised the public-private partnership growing in St. Louis, where over 300 companies have accepted his challenge to hire welfare recipients.

Question: How many people are now on the welfare rolls nationwide?

Answer: 10.7 million people were on the rolls in May 1997, down from 14.1 million in January 1993, a drop of 3.4 million or 24 percent. This is the largest caseload decline in history: in no other comparable time period have as many people come off the rolls. The 10.7 million people on the rolls represent 4 percent of the population -- the smallest percentage of welfare recipients in the population since 1970.

Question: The President often uses the decline in welfare caseloads as a measure of the success of welfare reform. Isn't the decline due mainly to the good economy?

Answer: Welfare caseloads are the best measure we have right now of the success of welfare reform. According to a May report by the Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) over 40 percent of the reduction in the welfare rolls can be attributed to the strong economic growth during the Clinton Administration, nearly one-third can be attributed to waivers granted to states to test innovative strategies to move people from welfare to work, and the rest is attributed to other factors -- such as the Clinton Administration's decisions to increase the Earned Income Tax Credit, strengthen child support enforcement, and increase funding for child care.

Question: How does today's caseload announcement differ from ones made in the past?

Answer:

August 12th St. Louis Speech

Caseload down almost 3.4 million or 24% since President Clinton took office, a decline of 1.4 million since he signed the new welfare reform into law (1/93-5/97)

July 4th Radio Address

"3 million fewer people on welfare than there were the day I took office -- a remarkable 1.2 million fewer since I signed welfare reform into law" (1/93-4/97)

April 10 Cabinet meeting on Welfare Hiring

Down 2.755 million (1/93-1/97)

	Baseline Recipients (Jan. 93)	Recipients (in month noted)	Percentage Drop	Decline since Jan. 93	Decline since Aug. 96
May 96 (data we had when law was signed)	14.115	12.499	11%	1.616	
Aug. 96* (when law was signed)	14.115	12.202	14%	1.913	
Jan. 97	14.115	11.360	20%	2.755	
Feb. 97	14.115	11.262	20%	2.853	
Mar. 97	14.115	11.156	21%	2.959	
Apr. 97	14.115	10.969	22%	3.146	1.233
May 97	14.115	10.748	24%	3.367	1.454

*Note that when the welfare law was signed in August 1996, we only had caseload data through the month of May 1996. Our public statements at that time were therefore based on that May 1996 data.

Question: The President said in his speech that ten states have cut their rolls by over 40% in the last 4 years. Which states are these?

Answer: The ten states that the President was referring to are Indiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Wyoming's caseload has declined by 68% and Wisconsin's by 54%. (See attached state-by-state table and map.)

Question: How much caseload reduction has occurred in Missouri?

Answer: The welfare rolls have declined by 27 percent in Missouri since January 1993, slightly higher than the national average of 24 percent.

Question: Only 2 of the 50 states have had increases in their welfare caseloads. Alaska has had a small increase, but Hawaii has had a very significant one. Why?

Answer: This is a complex question to answer because of conditions unique to each state, including the local economy and different population and demographic trends. Both Alaska and Hawaii are states where economic recovery from a recession lags behind the nation as a whole. They are also unique in that they are geographically remote from the rest of the country, making their economies more contained. In Hawaii, eligibility changes since 1995 have brought additional families into the system, but state officials report that they have simultaneously increased their emphasis on work for those on the welfare rolls. Finally, Hawaii reports that they had an influx of welfare recipients from other U.S. Pacific territories -- Guam and the Mariana Islands -- in 1994.

[Note: According to HHS, Guam and the Mariana Islands, which have had welfare block grants for years, did not manage their block grant well in 1994, spending too much of the money early in the year. As a result, they were forced to cut or eliminate benefits later in the year, prompting an emigration of recipients to Hawaii. However, although ACF has been reporting this as a significant reason for Hawaii's caseload increase, it does not appear to explain more than a small portion of it.]

Question: The President said that the balanced budget he signed into law last week fixed what he promised to fix when he signed the welfare reform law last August. What did he mean?

Answer: When the President signed welfare reform into law last August, he said he thought the cuts in programs for legal immigrants and nutritional assistance -- cuts which "have nothing to do with the fundamental purposes of welfare reform" -- were "too deep" and he pledged to fix them. The new budget does that, by restoring \$1.5 billion in health and disability benefits for legal immigrants who were in the U.S. as of last August and are receiving benefits or become disabled in the future. The new budget restores \$1.5 billion in food stamps cuts, providing 235,000 work slots for able-bodied childless recipients who must work under the new law. The budget also ensures that 30,000 children losing SSI because of the stricter new eligibility rules will keep their Medicaid coverage.

About Today's Program

Question: How many St. Louis area companies have pledged to hire welfare recipients?

Answer: More than 300.

Question: What is Mid.Tec? Why is the program being held there?

Answer: Mid.Tec is a consortium of 250 small-to medium sized manufacturers that provides machine training for specific jobs needed by the members to retain their global competitiveness. The training program targets low-income individuals and welfare recipients to train them for specific jobs on the plant floor. Mid.Tec symbolizes how hiring and training welfare recipients is good for business. Barry Corona, the chairman of the board of Mid.Tec, is an example of a small business owner making a difference in St. Louis' welfare to work effort.

Question: What has Monsanto done to help the welfare to work effort? Has the company hired any welfare recipients?

Answer: As one of the five founding board member of the Welfare to Work Partnership, Monsanto CEO Robert Shapiro is helping lead the national business effort to help move people on public assistance to jobs in the private sector. We do not have information about how many welfare recipients Monsanto has itself hired; you'll have to ask the company representatives that question.

Question: Does the fact the Congressman Gephardt is appearing with the President mean he's reconsidered his vote last year against the welfare reform bill the President signed into law last August?

Answer: You'll have to ask the Congressman about his view of welfare reform, but we have no indication that Congressman Gephardt has decided to endorse the welfare reform law.

About the Welfare to Work Partnership

Question: What is the Welfare to Work Partnership?

Answer: The Partnership is a national, independent, nonpartisan effort of the business community launched in May 1997 to help move people on public assistance to jobs in the private sector. The Partnership concentrates on energizing the business community to hire and retain welfare recipients without displacing existing workers. The Partnership provides information, technical assistance and support for businesses of all sizes and sectors, from all industries and from all areas of the country.

Question: How many companies across the nation have joined the Partnership?

Answer: Approximately 800.

Question: What do the companies that join the Partnership pledge to do?

Answer: In order to join the Welfare to Work Partnership, companies must either have hired or must pledge to hire individuals from public assistance without displacing current employees.

Question: Isn't UPS one of the companies represented on the Partnership board? What effect does the strike have on their participation?

Answer: We understand UPS representatives are not involved in today's event -- but we worked with the company long before this strike and plan to work with them long after it's settled.

Question: Why should businesses get involved in the Partnership or any type of welfare to work effort?

Answer: Welfare to work is a solution that's smart for business. Many companies find it difficult to locate entry-level workers. By recruiting welfare recipients, companies can greatly enlarge their pool of potential entry-level workers. This is a non-traditional source of workers that companies have not actively recruited. Tax credits are available. In addition, companies hiring individuals from public assistance will promote the strengthening of families and the improvement of children's lives within their local communities.

Question: What did the Partnership announce today?

Answer: Companies can sign up with the Partnership and/or get more information by calling the Partnership's toll-free hotline (1-888-USA-JOB1) or visiting its web site (www.welfaretowork.org), which are both being launched today. The Partnership will send any interested business its new guide to hiring and retaining welfare recipients, *Blueprint for Business: Reaching a New Work Force*. The Partnership today also began running print and radio public service announcements encouraging businesses to hire from the welfare rolls.

The Partnership is launching its city to city challenge in St. Louis. Because jobs are created and filled at the community level, the Welfare to Work Partnership is pledging to visit 12 high poverty cities over the next 6 months to strengthen each city's welfare to work infrastructure. In every city, the Partnership will recruit businesses to hire and retain welfare recipients and give them the technical assistance to do so. They will help city service providers improve the way they operate so they can provide businesses with work-ready welfare recipients. Finally, the Partnership will work with elected and appointed state and local officials to celebrate the city's efforts and ensure long-term changes.

Question: How many other cities have been targeted and what are they?

Answer: The Partnership has targeted 13 additional cities as potential sites for their activities. Each has a high concentration of poverty and welfare receipt. Each also has some existing infrastructure to support welfare to work efforts yet could benefit from additional resources. Finally, each city has an identifiable champion that has a track record for innovative welfare to work practices. Possible cities include: Indianapolis, Baltimore, Columbus or Cleveland, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, Seattle, New York City, Detroit, San Antonio, Philadelphia, Denver, and Atlanta.

Other Welfare Reform Issues

Fair Labor Standards Act and Worker Protections

Question: Why is the Administration undermining welfare reform by insisting that participants in workfare programs get the protections of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and other employment laws?

Answer: We believe that worker protection laws, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act, should apply to workfare participants in the same way they apply to other workers. If a workfare participant counts as an "employee" under these laws, then she should get protection. No one doing real work should be paid a subminimum wage.

And we believe that paying working welfare recipients the minimum wage and giving them other worker protections will promote, not undermine, the goals of welfare reform, because it will give them the ability to support their families and break the cycle of dependency.

We will work with states to ensure that they can comply with this policy, without undue financial burden, while still meeting the welfare law's work requirements. Of course, if states place welfare recipients in private jobs, then the minimum wage already applies. And we are working to minimize costs associated with the application of employment laws to workfare participants in other ways.

White House Hiring

Question: In April, the White House pledged to hire six welfare recipients. Have any been hired?

Answer: Yes. The Executive Office of the President has already hired six welfare recipients. [Note that the original commitment that the "White House" would hire six people actually reflected the full Executive Office of the President, including OMB and the Office of Administration. To date, the White House has hired 3 people, OMB has hired 2, and the Office of Administration has hired 1.]

**PRESIDENT CLINTON HAILS SUCCESS OF WELFARE REFORM
ONE YEAR AFTER SIGNING REFORM BILL INTO LAW
August 12, 1997**

Today, the President highlighted the success of welfare reform nearly one year after signing the welfare law, announcing that caseloads have declined by almost 3.4 million or 24 percent since he took office and showing how the new balanced budget will continue this progress. The President also noted the continuing success of the Welfare to Work Partnership, which now includes over 800 businesses and which today launched a toll-free hotline, web page, and public service announcements to help companies all across the nation hire people off welfare. Finally, the President praised the public-private partnership growing in St. Louis region, where over 300 companies have accepted his challenge to hire welfare recipients.

One Year Later: Welfare Reform is Working

Today, one year after signing the welfare law, the President announced new statistics showing that the welfare caseload has fallen by 1.4 million recipients since then and by almost 3.4 million recipients since January 1993. The decline from 14.1 million recipients in January 1993 to 10.7 million in May 1997, a drop of 24%, is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history, resulting in the lowest percentage of the population on welfare since 1970. Forty-eight out of fifty states have seen their caseloads decline, with ten states reducing their rolls by 40% or more in the last four years. This progress started even before President Clinton signed the welfare bill, with the waivers he granted to 43 states to require work, time-limit assistance, make work pay, improve child support enforcement, and encourage parental responsibility.

The New Balanced Budget Will Help Us Do More

Because of President Clinton's leadership, the balanced budget includes a \$3 billion Welfare to Work Jobs Challenge and an expanded Work Opportunity Tax Credit to help move long-term welfare recipients into jobs and meet the President's goal of moving a million more people from welfare to work by the year 2000. The new balanced budget also makes good on the President's promise to restore disability and health benefits to legal immigrants, continue Medicaid coverage for disabled children, and provide funds for workslots for unemployed food stamp recipients -- thereby reversing the provisions of the welfare law that had nothing to do with real welfare reform.

New Tools to Help Companies Hiring Welfare Recipients

At today's event, the Partnership will unveil several new tools to help companies that want to hire workers from the welfare rolls: a toll free hotline (1-888-USA-JOB1) and a web site (www.welfaretowork.org) to link companies to public and private sector welfare reform information; a guide for companies hiring welfare recipients, *Blueprint for Business: Reaching a New Work Force*, prepared with the National Alliance of Business; and a public service campaign that highlights the benefits to companies of hiring welfare recipients and encourages companies to join the Partnership. The Welfare to Work Partnership is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization leading the national business effort to hire people from the welfare rolls. Now more than 800 companies strong, the Partnership was formed in May 1997 at the urging of the President.

St. Louis: An Example of the Critical Role of the Private Sector

Today in St. Louis, President Clinton will underscore the critical role of the private sector in welfare reform, praising over 300 bi-state St. Louis region companies that are committing to hire and retain welfare recipients without displacing current workers. Today's event in St. Louis launches the Partnership's city to city challenge, in which the Partnership will work closely with community and business leaders in 12 high poverty cities during the next year to help promote innovative and effective welfare to work initiatives.