

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

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Thank you. I am so glad to be with all of you tonight, and I apologize that the hour is a little later than had been planned, but we've had such an amazing day first in Austin and then in Houston that uh there were just so many people and it was impossible as much as I wanted to try to do so to stay exactly on schedule. But I am so pleased to be here, and I wanna start by thanking my friend B.A. Benson. First, for being my friend. Secondly, for that much too kind introduction, but for being herself such an example for many of us. Uh, both she and her husband became people who we felt very close to during the time that he was Secretary of the Treasury, and we had a chance to see up close what the people of Texas have always known. That with B.A. and Lloyd Benson, you sent two of the best people you could've ever sent to Washington for all those years. And I don't know how to thank Ann Richards. Uh, I um I've had such a great time with her today and uh B.A. and I were sitting there and, you know, Ann was really going and going and uh just got so fired up that I think she could probably fly on her own power uh home tonight. I know you've heard from Carol Penske who explained what it is that has been accomplished by the Women's Leadership Forum and Network '96, and all of you are a part of that now. Uh, by your commitment and concern, uh you are part of making a statement on behalf of yourselves, on behalf of other women, on behalf of citizens who want to participate in the political process. It is a very exciting time to be a woman in America because we have so many opportunities and choices available to us, and I am particularly pleased when women come together as we are doing through the Women's Leadership Forum to make a statement of support for one another and for goals that we share in common. This is a watershed election. It is the last Presidential Election of the twentieth century and the first of the twenty-first century. I think that poses an additional responsibility on all of us who care about our communities and our country, who care about our future. And in the next sixty days, the outcome of this election will depend upon the literally millions of efforts that are undertaken by people like us, talking to our friends and neighbors and co-workers and fellow voters. Women in the United States have always been on the front lines of meeting the challenges. We may not have always been in the headlines, but we were always there on the front lines. If you go back through history and you read about women, they were there in the Revolutionary War period. They were there as abolitionists. They were there settling families across the frontier. Building philanthropic and religious institutions. Starting schools. Being part of the great progressive movement at the end of the last century. Worrying about issues like child labor and fair working standards when they saw like Jane Adams saw the conditions that so many women and children and men were living in. Women whose names we know like Jane Adams or Eleanor Roosevelt or Lady Bird Johnson who made a difference to all of us, and women whose names we don't know, but who are remembered with affection and love by those whose lives they touched. So women have always... *{End of first side of tape}*. ...is appreciated and recognized because it is important as we move toward this new century for women's concerns and voices to be heard. It's especially important because it matters. It matters for much of what we hold dear who sits in the White House and who sits in the Congress. I believe what we have a chance to do in this election is to re-elect a

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President who understands the day to day concerns that most of us live with. His economic policies have made a difference in the lives of men and women, creating ten million more jobs makes a difference to people. Cutting the deficit by more than half makes a difference not only to us but to the kind of future our children can have. And it is an accomplishment for us now thanks to the economic policies that Secretary Benson helped to shape and that the President fought so hard for, that we have the lowest combined rates of inflation and unemployment and home mortgage rates in twenty-eight years. That's good news. When the President at the convention talked about building a bridge to the future, he was talking about building it on the basis of economic policies that work. That work for average working people. That work for small business owners who have started small businesses in record numbers, and I'm so pleased that so many women and minority members of our communities across this country have started their own small businesses. Many of you in this audience are entrepreneurs and small business owners. It makes a difference economically that the minimum wage was raised so that many people who rely on that have more income. It makes a difference that we have a President who understands the strains of what it is to be challenged both at home and at work to do your very best. Being a parent is a twenty-four hour a day job. When you add that with an eight hour or ten hour or twelve hour job or shift, that is a huge burden, and most women whom I know, who balance work inside the home with work outside the home, are constantly struggling to be responsible to all their obligations. It makes a difference that we finally had a President who would sign the Family and Medical Leave Law so that families could have some protection. More than twelve million Americans have taken advantage of that law, and a bi-partisan Congressional study found there have been no economic disadvantages. We are letting people know that their obligations as parents are important not only to them and their children, but to all of us as members of this society. Building that bridge requires strong families, and it requires an opportunity for all of us to feel that we are fulfilling our responsibilities. It makes a difference that we have a President who believes that educational opportunity should be available for all boys and girls and men and women in America. Education is the key to how successful we will be individually and together in the next century. And when we think about what it takes for a child to be well educated, we know it starts in the home where parents are a child's first teacher, and one of the reasons that the President has proposed an extension of the Family and Medical Leave Law is to give working parents a few hours a year off to do things like go to Parent/Teacher Conferences. To be involved in their children's education. It also takes schools that set high standards, and it takes a concerted effort to make sure every child can learn to read by the age of eight. And the President's new literacy initiative is aimed at doing just that by the year 2000. It also is important that every classroom in America, from the most rural school in Texas to the richest school district in this state, is hooked up to the information super highway so every child has access to the same information. I was at the University of Texas earlier today, and I spoke to this large crowd primarily of young people, students from the University, and I told them what I know the President believes, which is that any student who works hard in school and takes

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responsibility should be able to attend college and not be stopped by any financial obstacle. We've already seen progress because of changes that Secretary Benson worked on and that the President put into his economic plan that we've made more college loans available at lower interest rates, but now the President wants to make sure that the first two years of college are just as universally available as school through high school is. And in order to make that happen, he has proposed a \$1500 a year tuition tax credit so that every person can afford to go the vast majority of community colleges in America. He's calling it the Hope Scholarship. It would revolutionize college going. And in addition to that, he has proposed a tax deduction of up to ten thousand dollars for every year of education after that. We wanna make it possible for every family to seek college in their child's future. It is also important to build a bridge of healthy Americans. That's why I was so pleased when the President signed the Kennedy Castlebom Bill into law, which will enable twenty-five million Americans to have access to insurance even though they lose or change jobs or have someone in their family who is sick. It is that kind of sensible progress that will really enable more Americans to have what all of us should have, which is access to affordable health care. Today in Florida, the President announced that he will be asking a commission to look into any changes that are needed to make sure that HMOs do not stand in the way of the doctor/patient relationship, and every American who is a patient and every American doctor should be able to have a conversation about every aspect of your treatment, and no one should tell any doctor, "Don't tell your patient that." That is not good medicine or good health care for Americans. So we need to build a bridge that has a strong economic base, has a strong educational base, enables people to be healthy when they walk across it in the twenty-first century, protects our environment, gives people the opportunity they need to choose their own futures. I hope you will talk with people about all of the positive accomplishments that we can point to after four years. And also remind them what the President has said he will do in the next four years. Important changes like eliminating the capital gains on home sales so that you can always sell your home without any tax. Also, remind everyone that every single promise that the President has made is paid for in his proposed balanced budget. It is absolutely paid for line by line and dime by dime as he said at the convention because he knows how important it is to continue to reduce the deficit to zero to make it possible for us to free up even more capital for business and individuals. So he intends to go forward with the kind of sensible balanced budget proposal that he has already presented. So there are many reasons why people should vote that are positive. Reasons that all of us can say to one another - It does make a difference. And for the many millions of Americans who sometimes get turned off by politics, to remind them that maybe their lives have been touched by the minimum wage increase or the Family and Medical Leave Act or perhaps they are eligible for one of the new small business tax incentives that were in the minimum wage bill. There is a positive story to be told. But sometimes people may or may not think that that's enough and so there's another side about what this President has said no to. He is, by nature, a positive and optimistic person so he likes being able to talk about what works and how to make life better, but he's also stood up and said no. He

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stood up and said no to a budget plan that would've undermined Medicare and Medicaid, education, and the environment. He was able to say no in the face of tremendous pressure that even included shutting the government down because he felt so strongly about protecting what people should be able to rely on. He was able to say no the National Rifle Association and that instead instead to fight for the Brady Bill which has already kept sixty-thousand felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns. To say yes we need to take assault weapons off the streets and no that will not interfere with the lawful rights of Americans and hunters. I said earlier today that we've now had more than two years of experience with both the Brady Bill and the Assault Weapons Ban, and so far as I know, not a single hunter in Texas or Arkansas or anywhere else has missed a deer, a duck, a dove or any other season. So it's important that law abiding Americans who wish to hunt and own guns know that this is not what we are aiming at when we try to lower the crime rate, and the President's strategy is working. The crime rate is going down. It is now where it needs to be by any measure, but at least we are finally heading in the right direction because we had a President who didn't just talk tough but took tough action and that made the critical difference. We've also had a President who has said no to the Tobacco Lobby. You cannot advertise to our children. So there are many reasons for all of us to be able to go out in the next two months to persuade voters that yes, elections do matter. That yes, it does make a difference in their life. Forget the big figures. The ten million jobs or any of the other items that make the headlines. Instead, think about what has affected or could affect their own lives. Both positively and what the President said no to as well. This election will certainly turn on the millions of interactions that people have with each other. I know that that's not the conventional view. That the conventional view is all that matters is what you see on television, what ads are run, the horse race about whose ahead and whose behind, but I don't really buy that. I think that is important and significant, but really matters is what is going on in the lives of individuals Americans. When my husband took that train trip to Chicago and when he and I and the Gores went off on the bus trip after the convention, we looked into the faces of literally thousands of Americans. We had conversations at the stops we made as people grabbed our hands and said don't forget all that you have promised or I'm still worried about this problem or what about that? What will you do? It was that kind of personal interaction that really matters to us because the reason my husband wanted to be President, the reason I have seen him get up every single day and go to work filled with energy because of what he wanted to do for this country, is because he remembers and he knows what life is like for the rest of us. He hasn't forgotten the mother who raised him, often alone and against great odds, so when he talks about setting up programs to combat domestic violence, extending the Brady Bill so that it applies to anyone convicted of domestic abuse, he's talking from his own personal experience. When he talks about extending family leave for something like parent/teacher conferences or doctor's appointments, he's talking from the experience that he and I have shared of sitting in those little tiny chairs in front of those teachers who are gonna tell you about your child and knowing how scared you are about that. But how important it is to be involved like that and how many people who love

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their children dearly basically can't be because they aren't given that kind of opportunity. When he talks about what it means to own a home, I think about the very first house we lived in. Costs \$17,000 and what it was like for us to feel the pride that only homeownership can give you. He remembers and he thinks about and he reaches across as often as he can to hold somebody's hand, to listen to their story because being President for him is not just filling the job. It is being involved in the every day life and concerns of Americans from one end of this country to the other. And what I hope we can do in the next two months, is to ask everybody to be a bridge builder. To ask them to help build that bridge to the future. We can't go back to the past. I know that change is scary. It scares me. I don't understand half of what my daughter is studying at school anymore. I certainly can't figure out the computer the way she can. I get a little worried about where the world's going, but as I said in Chicago, the one thing we know is that change is certain. Progress, though, is not. Whether progress occurs so that all of us help build that bridge and then walk across it together depends upon each of us, and if we meet the challenges that my husband has outlined for more than four years now, to provide opportunity for people, to demand responsibility from people, and to build a community where everyone is included, if we meet those challenges, then I have, despite my reticence sometimes about what I see changing around me, I have a lot of confidence and optimism because I do believe that if we do what we should in this election and moving forward, then the future for my daughter and for all children will be one of optimism and confidence because we will have met our challenges, and there's no greater legacy than we can leave as Americans to know that we've done our part to make this country as strong and good as it can be. And to move from one century to the next with the kind of belief in ourselves and in progress that we should be committed to. Thank you so much for being part of that effort.

End of Hillary's Speech