Extent

5 folders, approximately 320 pages

Summary

This collection contains records concerning the North American Free Trade Agreement that were processed in commemoration of the agreement’s 30th anniversary. Originally negotiated during the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, the task of seeking the agreement’s ratification in Congress fell to newly elected President Clinton in 1993. The files contain briefing materials and memos regarding NAFTA and the ratification process.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of records concerning the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that were processed in commemoration of the 30th anniversary in 2023. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. The idea for a North American free trade zone between the United States, Canada, and Mexico began under the administration of President Ronald Reagan. Negotiations continued throughout the administration of President George H.W. Bush, and the leaders of the three nations signed the resulting agreement on December 17, 1992. The agreement then needed to be ratified by the legislative body of each country. In the United States, President Bush, who had lost his reelection campaign, passed the task off to newly elected President William Jefferson Clinton. President Clinton, who also supported NAFTA, worked with Congress throughout his first year in office to complete the ratification process. The treaty cleared the House and the Senate in November of that year. President Clinton signed it into law on December 8, 1993. The agreement went into effect in January. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) replaced NAFTA in 2020. The collection contains several briefing materials and memos regarding NAFTA and the ratification effort in the United States. There is a sample briefing book on NAFTA for elected officials and

business leaders in the files of Counselor to the President David Gergen. Samuel Berger's transition files contain briefing materials for an early January 1993 meeting between President-elect Clinton and Mexican President Carlos Salinas concerning NAFTA. In the NSC Records Management System numbered documents, there are memos from the spring and summer of 1993 discussing building public and Congressional support for the ratification of the agreement.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas— Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity. Staff and Office files are processed at the folder level, that is, individual documents are not selected and removed from a folder for processing. While this method maintains folder integrity, it frequently results in the incidental processing of documents that are not wholly responsive to the subject area.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22, as amended) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA). This collection also contains pre-Presidential material that is not subject to the PRA but has been included to provide historical context.

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2025. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2025-11-24

Container List

The following is a list of processed NAFTA documents and folders:
Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
Counselor to the President
Gergen, David
NAFTA Briefing Book [Binder] [1] [OA/ID CF 133]
NAFTA Briefing Book [Binder] [2] [OA/ID CF 133]
National Security Council
Transition

Berger, Samuel (Sandy)
NAFTA Briefing Book/President-Elect January 1993 Meeting with Salinas [Binder]
[OA/ID 1541]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Records Management System
[NAFTA]
9301716 [OA/ID 144]
9302966 [OA/ID 148]