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NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

IT IS A PLEASURE FOR ME TO ADDRESS THIS GATHERING OF
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY. I ONLY REGRET
THAT A TIGHT SCHEDULE HAS FORCED ME TO APPEAR ON FILM INSTEAD
OF IN PERSON.

IN A YEAR WHEN WE AS A NATION HAVE BEGUN TO PAY
LONG-OVERDUE ATTENTION TO CONSERVING OUR ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES, IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT WE HAVE ALSO TAKEN A MAJOR
STRIDE FORWARD IN PRESERVING OUR GREATEST RESOURCE OF ALL --
OUR NATION'S YOUTH.

IT WAS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT, ON SEPTEMBER 7TH, I
SIGNED S. 281, THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION
ACT OF 1974, INTO LAW.

WHILE NOT AGREEING WITH ALL THE PROVISIONS OF THE
ACT, I STRONGLY BELIEVE IN ITS OVER-ALL PURPOSE. WE MUST SAVE
AS MANY OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AS WE CAN BEFORE THEY BECOME TRAPPED
IN A LIFE OF CRIME. AND WE OWE EVERY JUVENILE THE FULL
PROTECTION OF HIS OR HER CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS.

IN SIGNING THIS BILL, I SAID THAT IT REPRESENTS
A CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT TO CONSOLIDATE AND MAKE MORE EFFICIENT
THE VARIOUS FEDERAL PROGRAMS TO ASSIST STATES AND LOCALITIES
IN DEALING WITH JUVENILE DELINQUENCY. THE DIRECTION OF OUR
FEDERAL PROGRAMS HAS BEEN FRAGMENTED FOR TOO LONG.

THIS RESTRUCTURING WILL BETTER ASSIST STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
TO CARRY OUT THE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS FIELD -- A RESPONSIBILITY
WHICH SHOULD REMAIN AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. I ALSO EXPRESSED
THE HOPE THAT THE RESULT WILL BE GREATER SECURITY FOR ALL CITIZENS
AND MORE PURPOSE, SENSE, AND HAPPINESS IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG
AMERICANS.

NO GROUP WORKED LONGER OR HARDER FOR THE PASSAGE
OF THIS MILESTONE LEGISLATION THAN YOU HAVE. NO GROUP DESERVES
GREATER CREDIT FOR TRANSFORMING IT FROM A GOAL TO A REALITY.

I AM PROUD THAT THE SIGNING OF THIS MEASURE WAS ONE
OF MY EARLIEST OFFICIAL ACTS AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES --
AND I SALUTE YOU FOR YOUR MAGNIFICENT WORK IN MAKING IT POSSIBLE.

AGAIN, I ONLY REGRET THAT I CANNOT BE WITH YOU IN
PERSON THIS AFTERNOON, SPEAKING FROM THE SAME ROSTRUM AS
FRANCIS DALE AND ELLIOT RICHARDSON.

THE MORE ALL OF US DO TO PREVENT JUVENILE CRIME, THE
MORE WE PROTECT ITS POTENTIAL VICTIMS -- BEFORE, RATHER THAN
AFTER, THE DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE.

YOU HAVE MY PERSONAL ASSURANCE THAT I AM FULLY
COMMITTED TO MEETING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S FAIR AND ATTA INABLE
SHARE OF THIS RESPONSIBILITY. WORKING TOGETHER WITH THE
GENERAL PUBLIC AND STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, WE CAN MAKE THE
YEAR AHEAD ANOTHER YEAR OF PROGRESS -- OF MAKING AMERICA A BETTER,
SAFER COUNTRY FOR YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE.

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