



## SOCIAL SECURITY

Office of the Commissioner

January 11, 2001

The Honorable William J. Clinton  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

When my statutory term as Commissioner expires on January 19th, I will be leaving the Social Security Administration for a position at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, Austin. It has been both a deeply felt personal honor and a great pleasure to serve as Commissioner during most of your second term as President.

The eight years of your Administration have seen the accomplishment of important and historic achievements involving Social Security programs, providing a legacy to the American people of which you can be justly proud.

When you signed into law the "Social Security Independence and Program Improvements Act" in August 1994, establishing the Social Security Administration as an independent agency, your personal commitment to maintain the confidence of the American people in the strength and security of its Social Security programs was clearly manifested. As a result of this action, the Social Security Administration was able to move aggressively forward with important programs and strategies to better serve the needs of America's citizens.

Your signing the "Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act of 2000" was yet another significant milestone. As a result of this legislation, the large number of Americans between 65 and 69 that hold at least part time employment will now be able to enjoy the full income they derive from their employment, as well as the personal fulfillment that comes from being active participants in the workforce, without being penalized by the retirement earnings test.

"No country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources." Quoting these words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, you signed into law the "Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999," setting in place provisions designed to unleash the untapped potential of people with disabilities all across America. Signing this Act represents your commitment to enable every American to fully and actively participate in our society, to enjoy the fruits of their labors, and the improvement in the quality of living which accompanies that participation. This legislation will have a profound affect on people with disabilities who will now be able to re-enter the workforce as active participants and contributors.

Finally, and potentially the most significant achievement of your Administration with regard to Social Security, was your personal commitment to opening and sustaining public dialogue on long-term Social Security solvency. Social Security is at an historic juncture. You have opened a discussion that represents substantive, honest and worthy debate, laying the foundation for informed decision making about the course of the Social Security programs through the entire 21st century.

Among the many accomplishments of your Administration, these four great achievements involving Social Security represent a deep and far-reaching legacy, which will be no doubt acknowledged by scholars and historians in the decades ahead. We at the Social Security Administration, and I personally, are proud to have been a part of these efforts and to have supported you.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve the American people under your leadership. It has been the experience of a lifetime.

Sincerely,



Kenneth S. Apfel  
Commissioner  
of Social Security

*Thank you for  
all you have done  
for Social Security  
and for improving  
economic security for  
all Americans.*