

Q. But do you—[inaudible]—decision because—[inaudible]—get through now?

The President. Well, we talked about it a little last night, but I wanted to—the staff stayed here quite late. I thought they ought to get a chance to get a little sleep and then think through it. So, as you know, there is virtual agreement on everything but one issue anyway. So, you are trying to figure out how this court case fits, that and whether it changes anything for either side.

So, we'll talk about it this morning and then try to resolve it soon.

Q. Are you concerned, Mr. President, that this controversy this week has given the Amer-

ican people the wrong idea of what your priorities are?

The President. Yes, I do. Of course, I didn't bring it up; people in the Senate did. I just tried—I have not, frankly, spent very much time on it compared to the time I'm spending on the economy, which is what I was elected to do. And we've been working on that hard. So, I'm just going to keep doing what I was elected to do and try to stick up for what I believe and see if we can work through this.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:37 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Teleconference Remarks on Family and Medical Leave Legislation January 29, 1993

The President. Thank you very much, Al. And hello, ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank you for agreeing to join us on this telephone call today and through this telephone call to speak to the people in your own State and throughout the United States.

One of the things that we are determined to do here in Washington is open the Government to you and never let people forget, who are here making decisions, that you and lives are at stake and that these matters that we discuss and vote upon here really do affect real people out in our country.

So with that, let me just now go from one person to the next and let each of you say something about how this family and medical leave act might affect your life in the future or could have affected your life in the past or the fact that we didn't have it affected you.

[At this point, the President took a series of telephone calls from people who described their personal experiences.]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, I know I speak for Vice President Gore when I thank all of you for your courage and your support

on behalf of your own children and your own families and working families all across this country. We believe that next week, the Congress and the leaders who have worked on this in both parties will help our Nation join the 72 other countries who already have family and medical leave. And if it happens, it will be because of people like you and for people like you.

I think a lot of you said this, but I just want to close with this: It's easy for people to talk about family values, but it's also important for us to value families. And your Government is going to be given a chance to value the American family next week. We hope and pray they'll do it. And if it does happen, you all can claim a lot of the credit.

Thank you so much for being with us today, and have a wonderful time. And keep those kids making that good noise. I like to hear it.

Bless you all. Goodbye.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 11:42 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. He was introduced by the Vice President.