

### Statement of President Clinton on the Signing of H.R. 1553

Today, I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1553, which will amend the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992 to extend the authorization of the Assassination Records Review Board for one additional year.

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963 stands as one of the great tragedies in our Nation's history. The interest of the American public in the assassination has continued unabated for nearly 34 years. Openness in government and a public right to know about its government form an important part of the foundation for our country. It is critical that the public have confidence that its government is not keeping secrets, particularly regarding an event such as the assassination of a President.

With the enactment of this law, the Assassination Records Review Board will have the additional time it requires to complete its important job of making the record of the assassination of President Kennedy available to the American public. Their work is consistent with other efforts made by my Administration to open up government to the people. Through the work of this citizen board we seek to reassure our citizens that the federal government is no longer keeping secrets in its files about the assassination of President Kennedy.

I am pleased that the Congress acted quickly and with broad bipartisan support to pass this bill, demonstrating a commitment that I share to openness in government and a recognition of the opportunity to put closure on this sad chapter in our history.