

### **D.C. TO GET \$5.6 MILLION TO REDUCE CLASS SIZE**

In his weekly radio address, President Clinton will urge Congress to work in a bipartisan spirit to continue his plan to reduce class size in early grades to 18 students per teacher. He will also announce that the U.S. Department of Education is releasing new guidelines to help states and local school districts use the funds they will receive this summer to begin hiring well-qualified teachers to reduce class size in early grades. As the U.S. Senate considers the Education Flexibility Act, it is more important than ever that the Murray-Kennedy amendment to continue the President's class size reduction plan is passed as well.

Studies show that smaller class sizes help teachers provide more personal attention to students and spend less time on discipline; as a result students learn more and get a stronger foundation in the basic skills. In 1998, President Clinton proposed to help local schools hire 100,000 well-prepared teachers in order to reduce class size in grades 1-3 to a national average of 18, and make sure that every child gets a solid foundation in the basics. Last year, the President signed into law the first installment of his seven-year, \$12.4 billion proposal to hire 100,000 new teachers nationwide. For the first year, \$1.2 billion was provided to help local communities hire 30,000 teachers. The funds will be available to school districts in July. Local school boards will be incorporating these funds into the budgets they are developing right now for the next school year. To give communities the certainty they need to effectively plan and phase in a seven-year reduction in class size, Congress must act now.

In July, the District of Columbia will receive \$5.6 million as its first installment of funds to hire teachers to reduce class size in early grades. For D.C.'s largest school districts, that means: