



## Radically Changing Government

Excerpts from recent speeches by Governor Bill Clinton

Too many Washington insiders of both parties think the only way to provide more services is to spend more on programs already on the books in education, housing, and health care. But if we reinvent government to deliver new services, in different ways, eliminate unnecessary layers of management, and offer people more choices, we really can give taxpayers more services with fewer bureaucrats for the same or less money.

The Republicans have been in charge of the government for 12 years. They've brought the country to the brink of bankruptcy. Democrats who want the government to do more -- and I'm one of them -- have a heavy responsibility to show that we're going to spend the taxpayer's money wisely and with discipline.

Every successful major corporation in America had to restructure itself to compete in the last decade, to decentralize, become more entrepreneurial, give workers more authority to make decisions, and offer customers more choices and better products. Governments need to do the same.

I want to make government more efficient and more effective by eliminating unnecessary layers of bureaucracy and cutting administrative costs, and by giving people more choices in the services they get, and empowering them to make those choices. That's what we've tried to do in Arkansas -- balancing our budget every year, improving services, and treating taxpayers like our customers and our bosses, giving them more choices in public schools, child care centers, and services for the elderly. Arkansas was the first state to initiate a statewide total quality management program. We've dramatically reduced the number of reports the Department of Education requires of school districts, slashed bureaucratic costs in the Department of Human Services and put the money into direct services that help real people, and speeded up customer services in the Revenue Department. We measure the job placement rate of graduates from vocational-technical programs, and if a program can't show results, we shut it down.

So I know it can be done. But let us be clear: Serious restructuring of government for greater productivity is very different from the traditional top-down reorganization plans that have been offered over the last 20 years, including in this campaign. Those require a lot of time and energy and generally leave us with more of the same government, not less.

P.O. Box 615 • Little Rock, Arkansas 72203  
Telephone (501) 372-1992 • FAX (501) 372-2292

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bureaucratic costs in the Department of Human Services and put the money into direct services. What I am proposing is hard, unglamorous work. It will require us to re-examine every dollar of the taxpayers' money we spend and every minute of time that the government puts in on business. It will require us to enlist the energies of front-line public servants who are often as frustrated as the rest of us with bureaucracy. And if we do it in Arkansas, which has among the lowest taxes in the country, imagine how much more important and productive it will be at the federal level. In a Clinton Administration, we'll make government more effective by holding ourselves to the same standard of productivity growth as business and insisting on a 3% across-the-board cuts in the administrative costs of the federal bureaucracy every year.