THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 18, 2004

I send greetings to those observing National Runaway Prevention Month, sponsored by the National Runaway Switchboard and the National Network for Youth.

Children are a precious gift and a source of great hope for our future. As a Nation, we must come to the defense of all children and continue working together to create a society that is safe for our young people. National Runaway Prevention Month provides an opportunity to recognize the dedicated work of all those who strive to create a protective environment for our children.

My Administration has taken several steps to promote the safety and well-being of America's children. Last year I signed the PROTECT Act of 2003 to assist law enforcement in tracking criminals who would harm children, and we have expanded the AMBER Alert system to help recover abducted children. We are also working to support and strengthen families so that our Nation's youth will grow up in safe surroundings.

I applaud all those dedicated to helping prevent youth from running away from home. Laura joins me in sending our best wishes.

