

Teleconference Remarks on the Goals 2000 Education Reform Legislation
in San Diego, California
March 31, 1994

The President. Hello.

Representative William Ford. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. How are you?

Representative Ford. Just fine.

The President. Senator Mitchell?

Senator George Mitchell. Yes, sir.

The President. Senator Kennedy, are you there?

Senator Edward Kennedy. Yes, sir.

The President. At the Mary Cunningham Elementary School in Milton, Massachusetts?

Senator Kennedy. That's exactly right.

The President. Chairman Ford?

Representative Ford. Yes, I'm here.

The President. Senator Jeffords?

Senator James Jeffords. Yes, I'm here.

The President. Congressman Kildee?

Representative Dale Kildee. Yes, I'm here, Mr. President.

The President. Congressman Goodling?

Representative William Goodling. I'm here in York.

The President. In York?

Representative Goodling. York, Pennsylvania.

The President. I've been there many times.

Representative Goodling. Yes, you have.

The President. It's nice to hear your voice. I just wanted to call you today. I'm here with Secretary Riley and with Congressman Filner, Congresswoman Schenk and a lot of other people who, like you, worked so hard on this Goals 2000 bill. I'm about to go out and sign the bill. I didn't want to do it without having the opportunity to call and thank you so much for all your hard work in getting this bipartisan, terrific education reform legislation through the Congress.

Speaker Thomas Foley. This is Tom Foley in Washington, Mr. President. Mr. President?

The President. Yes, sir, I'm listening.

Speaker Foley. The committees did a great job on this, and the Secretary did a great job. I think it's going to be great legislation for everyone.

The President. I'm elated. And of course, it passed the House by a vote of 307 to 120.

Speaker Foley. Right, a bipartisan vote.

The President. That's right. We need more of that.

Senator Kennedy. Yeah, we had a little tougher time in the Senate, Mr. President, as you know. But thanks to Jim Jeffords and a few of our other Republican friends who were able to break the filibuster early last Saturday morning and get it passed. And I think it's a tremendous tribute to you and Secretary Riley and all those who worked so hard for this bill.

Representative Kildee. Mr. President, this is Dale Kildee. And Bill Goodling and Mr. Gunderson just did a tremendous job on this bill and really made it bipartisan. We really appreciate their leadership.

The President. Yeah, I do want to thank Congressman Gunderson, too. I know he's not on the call today, but he worked hard and I thank him for that.

Representative Goodling. Yeah, his father's pretty critical right now.

The President. Mr. Goodling?

Representative Goodling. Yes, this is Congressman Goodling. We worked a long time and hard work, but I'm sure it's going to be very beneficial to excellence in education in the future, and that's what it's all about.

Senator Kennedy. Mr. President, Ted Kennedy. We came into the Cunningham School up here and had some of the first graders, and they said, "This is the most important day because Senator Clinton's coming." [Laughter] We're working—we're up with the fifth grade now, and they have—they're doing a lot of advanced mathematics. And there's the total immersion program up here, where the children in the first four grades, half the school, is totally immersed in French. And there's a lot of very exciting people here, teachers, parents, students. Ninety percent of them said they all love school. And I think that's what this bill is really all about. And I think all of us here are obviously grateful to all the great leadership in education and the priority placed on it—[inaudible]—Secretary Riley and all of our bipartisan friends. They really appreciate it out here in the Cunningham School.

Senator Jeffords. Mr. President, this is Jim Jeffords speaking.

The President. Yes, Jim.

Senator Jeffords. I certainly want to thank the Secretary also. And certainly this Goals 2000—it's beginning. It's unfortunate it's taken us a decade too long just to start the planning. And also, it won't be possible to reach the goals without additional resources, and the Federal Government, I think, must become an equal partner in financing education to reach these goals. And I think we've got to make that commitment pretty soon so that the States and local agencies can plan appropriately next year. And I just look forward to working with you and the Secretary, as I know you've made a significant effort to improving funding for education this year, and we've just got to keep on doing that.

The President. That's right. You know, in our 1995 budget, even though there's an overall reduction in Federal spending for discretionary programs, we have a \$1.7 billion increase in education funding. And I'm proud of that, and it's a good beginning. And I want to thank you again, Senator Jeffords, for helping us to break that filibuster by a vote of 62 to 23. And then the bill ultimately passed, I think, 63 to 22. You were a real moving force, and we're grateful to you.

Senator Jeffords. Thank you, Mr. President. I look forward to working with you to do better even next year.

Senator Kennedy. Mr. President, Ted Kennedy. I think some of the students have a quick word just to say to you if you have one more minute.

The President. Okay.

The Students. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Well, thank you. You all just do a good job in school, learn a lot, make the most of it. You were great.

Representative Ford. Mr. President, this is truly a bipartisan moment when we have people

of the stature of Jim Jeffords speaking for the Republican Party about spending more money for education. I think we ought to get to work with him right away and get all we can get. [Laughter]

The President. Thanks, Bill.

Representative Kildee. Mr. President, I think this ranks historically with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 under Lyndon Johnson. And Bill Ford was there at that time, passing that bill, too. And we're really grateful to Bill for it; we're going to miss him in the Congress.

The President. I'm certainly—

Speaker Foley. That's certainly true, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you Senator Mitchell, and thank all of you for everything you've done. Secretary Riley and I are going to go out here and try not to mess up this bill signing, and we'll be really celebrating what we said we'd do.

I also want to say that, as you know, we had to sign this bill before April 1st, and we're delighted to have the opportunity to sign it here in this wonderful school district, at this fine school. But we do want to have a very large celebration when we come back to Washington for all the people from all over the country and all the Members who worked so hard to get it passed. So we will do that and have an appropriate opportunity to have everyone thanked in person. But I thank you for being—

Speaker Foley. We'll look forward to it, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The teleconference began at 9:20 a.m. The President spoke from the Zamorano Fine Arts Academy.

Remarks on Signing the Goals 2000: Educate America Act in San Diego March 31, 1994

Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, and to the boys and girls here. Let me say first of all,

I've got a lot of people I want to recognize, but first I think we ought to give the students a big hand for being so well-behaved and so