

And the decisions that we make, not just in the Congress and the White House, but as a people, about whether we're willing to take on the challenge of securing Social Security for the 21st century, whether we're willing to do the same thing for Medicare, and whether we're willing to save a substantial part of this surplus to do those things and to pay this debt down, will shape, in large measure, what America is like for the young people in this audience and their counterparts throughout the United States.

This is a wonderful time to be in the United States. We can all be grateful, because the truth is that no one, not even the President, could have predicted that the results of our attempts to reduce the deficit, to bring interest rates down, would have produced these results. And no one can claim sole credit for it. This is a shared achievement of the American people. And we should be proud of it.

So as we go back to Washington and we go back to work, I ask you here—and I ask you to talk to your friends and neighbors in Arizona—when you're on your phone with your friends and family members throughout the

country, I want you to tell them about this meeting today. And if you don't remember anything else, just remember, if we save about three-quarters of this surplus for Medicare and Social Security and if we pay the debt down with the surplus and then if we have the courage to make some decisions that may sound a little tough—to save Social Security for 75 years, fix Medicare for 20 years, and get the debt down to where it's virtually nonexistent—America is going to be a stronger, better place.

These programs will be there. These programs will be there for the next generation of Americans, but America will be there—America will be there—brighter, better, stronger than ever before.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the Music Hall at the Tucson Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to senior citizen Esther Don Tang, who introduced the President; Mayor George Miller and his wife, Roslyn; Verma Pastor, wife of Representative Ed Pastor; and entertainers Linda Ronstadt and CeCe Peniston.

Radio Remarks on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

February 25, 1999

This year, we have a remarkable opportunity to work together across party lines to bring true progress to America's public schools. I welcome the idea of greater flexibility for States and school districts, and I urge the Senate to pass the so-called ed-flex legislation, because it provides for greater flexibility and greater accountability. But we must do more to give our children a world-class education. That's why I also strongly support the amendment to the legislation proposed by Senators Kennedy and Murray to continue the national commitment we began last year: to hire 100,000 new teachers and to reduce class size all across America. Studies con-

firm what every parent already knows: smaller classes make a big difference, from improved test scores to improved discipline. The Senate should pass the Kennedy-Murray amendment and give our Nation's children the individual attention they deserve in the classroom and the better future only a good education can bring.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 2 p.m. in the Tucson Convention Center in Tucson, AZ, for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.