

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders on Education
Reform Legislation
August 2, 2001

Listen, thank you all for coming. It's my honor to meet with the Senate conferees and the chairman of the Education Committee in the House and, of course, the Secretary of Education to discuss the conference committee on education—on the education reform package and how best to—what I can do to help move the bill and to work with the Members to get a—to continue the spirit of reform that was a part of the Senate bill and the House bill.

Today one of the things that I hope the Nation notices is that the NAEP is out, the national assessment statistics. And one of the things—one of the powerful statistics is that States that use strong accountability systems, States that measure, States that say every child can matter, are the States that perform best when it comes to teaching children the basic skills—in this case, math. It so happened to be that one of those States was Texas; the other was North Carolina.

But it is a strong message to the advocates for reform who sit here in the Oval Office, strong message to the Members who doubt whether or not accountability is important, that accountability is crucial for reform. And after all, we're all united in making sure every child can learn in America and no child—not one child—is left behind.

So I want to thank the Members for coming. I'm hopeful that we can get a bill on my desk as soon as possible. I know that's the intent of the two chairmen. And when I do—when it is and when I sign it, it will be really good for the public education of the country.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:51 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to NAEP, the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Patients' Bill of Rights
Legislation
August 2, 2001

Today's action brings us an important step closer to ensuring that patients get the care they need and that HMOs are held accountable.

I appreciate the bold leadership and hard work of Speaker Hastert, Congressman Norwood, Congressman Fletcher, and others for their efforts to make patient protec-

tions a reality for all Americans after years of gridlock.

As this bill heads to the conference committee, I remain committed to extending the hand of cooperation to all who share a commitment to achieving real results for better health care for every American.