

last year round. I think that would be helpful. I want to work with the Members of Congress to see if we can't get that done. That recognizes the realities for Pell grant recipients.

The bill also helps ease the burden on men and women in uniform who have taken out loans for higher education. We believe that when you're wearing the uniform, we need to help you; that you're making a sacrifice, and it's okay for the Government to help you in dealing with your loans when it comes to higher education. And so those on active duty will now have new flexibility to defer payments on their loans.

These are important steps. This bill does, however, create new and duplicative programs that divert resources from the Pell grants. This bill makes some spending commitments that aren't paid for yet, and I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure Pell grant increases that are not fully funded in this bill are paid for with offsets in other areas. And we're going to continue working with Congress to make sure the Pell grants stay strong.

I also want to make—do want to mention No Child Left Behind, if you don't mind, Mr. Chairman. *[Laughter]* Chairman Miller was one of the main reasons why this bill got off the House floor in the first place. He's one of the main leaders to make sure the bill got to my desk.

And the reason I bring it up is, in order to make sure we've got more children ready for college, the No Child Left Behind Act

needs to be reauthorized and strengthened. Just this week, we saw what happens when you have high standards and you measure, measure for results. Those results were reported out through the Nation's Report Card. About 700,000 people were tested nationwide to determine whether or not standards are being met. Eighth graders achieved their highest scores ever in math, while fourth graders set records in both reading and math. African American and Hispanic students posted alltime highs in a number of categories. In other words, that achievement gap is beginning to close in America. It's something that we all want to see happen.

There is nothing more important than making sure our children get a good education. Today we've taken an important step in that direction. I'm hoping we can get the No Child Left Behind Act reauthorized and strengthened. I appreciate the Members being here today. I thank you for your hard work on this. I'm honored to sign this piece of legislation, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act.

Thanks for coming.

*[At this point, the President signed the bill.]*

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. H.R. 2669, approved September 27, was assigned Public Law No. 110-84.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters and Federal Aviation Administration Acting Administrator Robert A. Sturgell

*September 27, 2007*

*The President.* Today I'm joined by Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters and the Acting Administrator of the FAA,

Bobby Sturgell. I want to thank you all for coming.

We've been having a discussion about the fact that a lot of our air travelers are not only inconvenienced, they're—in some cases, they're just not being treated fairly. And there's a lot of anger amongst our citizens about the fact that, you know, they're just not being treated right.

And the Secretary and I have been talking about what to do about it, and I've instructed her to report back to me as quickly as possible on two matters: one, to make sure that consumers are treated fairly and complaints are listened to, and that we address some of the egregious behavior that our consumers have been subjected to. Endless hours sitting in an airplane on a runway, and there's no communication between the pilot and the airport, it's just not right. And so Mary is going to work very hard to make sure the system is much more responsive.

The other issue, of course, is dealing with congestion. And one of the reasons

why our consumers on airlines, airline passengers are being so inconvenienced is because the skies are too crowded. And there's some short-term things we're going to do, and Mary is going to report back to me about what those will be.

Now, also, Congress needs to look at this FAA reauthorization—I call it modernization—and work with this Department and work with Bobby bringing our FAA into the 21st century, so that our consumers and passengers and citizens won't be inconvenienced the way they are.

Now, we've got a problem; we understand there's a problem; and we're going to address the problem. Madam Secretary, I appreciate your willingness to do so.

*Secretary Peters.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

## Statement on the Situation in Burma *September 27, 2007*

The world is watching the people of Burma take to the streets to demand their freedom, and the American people stand in solidarity with these brave individuals. We feel admiration and compassion for the monks and peaceful protesters calling for democracy. Every civilized nation has a responsibility to stand up for people suffering under a brutal military regime like the one that has ruled Burma for too long. I call on all nations that have influence with the regime to join us in supporting the aspirations of the Burmese people and to tell

the Burmese junta to cease using force on its own people, who are peacefully expressing their desire for change. By its own account, the junta has already killed at least nine nonviolent demonstrators, and many others have been injured and arrested as they seek to express their views peacefully. I urge the Burmese soldiers and police not to use force on their fellow citizens. I call on those who embrace the values of human rights and freedom to support the legitimate demands of the Burmese people.