

Statement on the Georgia Legislature's Passage of Criminal Justice Reform Legislation

April 27, 2016

I applaud Georgia, and Governor Nathan Deal, for demonstrating that making our criminal justice system more fair is a bipartisan idea. Georgia's latest reform bill touches on school discipline, correctional education for youth, the accuracy of criminal records, fees and fines,

and occupational licensing. From the community to the cell block to the courtroom, this bill will both enhance justice and promote safety, serving as an example for the Nation. I hope Georgia's progress will encourage Congress to send me a significant criminal justice bill soon.

Remarks to College Reporters and a Question-and-Answer Session

April 28, 2016

[*The President joined White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest's briefing with college reporters in progress.*]

The President. Hey!

Press Secretary Earnest. Oh, well——

The President. I hear there's some hotshot journalists here.

Press Secretary Earnest. Here, let me move this—[*inaudible*].

The President. Josh was speaking for me, and I wanted to make sure he was getting it right. How's it going, everybody?

Audience members. Good!

The President. Are you guys having an interesting time here?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Was Josh thorough in his briefing?

Audience member. Yes.

The President. Well, I heard you guys were around today, so I wanted to stop by and say hello. I also have a bit of breaking news for you, and then I might take some questions.

I heard—overheard Josh talking about student loans, and I know that's a big priority for a lot of your listeners and readers. And that's one of the reasons why my administration has spent a lot of time focused on college affordability. So we expanded Pell grants to make sure that more young people could access it. We created the "Pay As You Earn" program that ensures that people can cap the amount that they're repaying on their loans each month, and—so that

young people who want to go into jobs that don't—aren't as lucrative are still able to pursue their passions and their dreams while managing their debt load.

Today I want to announce that we're aiming to enroll 2 million more people in "Pay As You Earn" by this time next year, and you can find out how at studentloans.gov/repay. That's studentloans.gov/repay. And we're also going to be making some additional announcements about how we're going to get our agencies coordinating so that, as young people are managing their student loan debt, there's one-stop shopping, they can figure out how to do it, and they can make sure that there are consumer protections in terms of how they're being treated in the repayment process.

While I have you here, I might as well mention a couple other things. [*Laughter*] You may have heard that there is a Supreme Court vacancy. For those of you who have been studying our system of government, we have three branches, and one of the most important is the judiciary. And right now our Supreme Court is absent one sitting member, with the passing of Justice Scalia. I've nominated an individual named Merrick Garland, who's currently the Chief Judge on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, which is the second most important court in the land. By all accounts, he's extremely well qualified.

And traditionally, what's happened is, is that the Senate then, exercising its constitutional duties of advise and consent, will meet with the