

carefully on today's proposals and to do everything in their power to make permanent the progress of the past 3 years by taking the next steps to implement the Good Friday agreement.

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 and 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 could 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 for 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 Education Progress. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Patients' Bill of Rights

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 protections 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.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting on the Administration's Agenda

August 3, 2001

Good afternoon. The Vice President and I are pleased to welcome the Cabinet to the Rose Garden. Together with Congress, we are proving that a new tone, a clear agenda, and active leadership can bring significant progress to the Nation's Capital. We are ending deadlock and drift and making our system work on behalf of the American people.

Six months ago I chose a distinguished Cabinet, took a solemn oath, and promised to fight for the things close to my heart. My administration pledged to bring stability and high standards to Washington and to lead for the sake of all Americans.

Six months later I'm proud of my Cabinet and the White House staff, who have worked with such energy and have brought integrity to their jobs. I'm grateful for the good will shown by Congress, and I am pleased with the progress we have made together, progress that touches every American family.