

therefore, we welcome his courage and consistency with which he persists his policies, in spite of any elements that interfere with that. And we expect that our interaction will have—will make a significant and decisive contribution to the elimination of terrorism worldwide.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:54 a.m. in the Delta Lodge at the Kananaskis Village resort. A reporter referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Cleveland's School Choice Program

June 27, 2002

This landmark ruling is a victory for parents and children throughout America. By upholding the constitutionality of Cleveland's school choice program, the Supreme Court has offered the hope of an excellent education to parents and children throughout our country. This decision clears the way for other innovative school choice programs, so that no child in America will be left behind.

School choice offers proven results of a better education, not only for children enrolled in the specific plan but also for children whose public schools benefit from the competition. The Milwaukee choice plan, begun in the early 1990s, has resulted in substantially improved reading and math scores for thousands of low-income children. The program has also had a positive impact on the entire public school system, which has responded to competition with better results.

The education reforms we enacted earlier this year give unprecedented new options to parents of children trapped in low-performing schools. My budget builds on this act by adding important new options to empower parents—particularly low-income families—to improve their children's education. I urge Congress to move quickly to build on the momentum generated from this decision to enact my education priorities.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Defense Appropriations Legislation

June 27, 2002

I commend the Members of the House for their strong, bipartisan show of unity in our war against terrorism with passage of the defense appropriations bill. I urge the Senate to work in a similar bipartisan fashion and pass the bill in July so that our men and women in the armed services have every resource they need to continue defending freedom. It is critical in this time of war that the defense appropriations bill be at the front, not the end, of the legislative line. Our troops deserve nothing less.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Representative Connie Morella

June 28, 2002

I hate to disagree with our distinguished honoree, but the reason people are here, Connie, is because they love you, they trust you, and like me, want you reelected to the United States Congress.

I appreciate so very much the Morella boys for being here. That, of course, is Tony, the husband, Mark, the son, and Michael, the grandson, who led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. It's good to be here with the Morellas. It's clear that they love each other. They value their family. They understand that in family you can find strength of purpose and love and compassion and comfort. And I want to thank the Morella men for allowing Connie to serve our Nation and encouraging her to serve our Nation. She makes an important contribution, and therefore, you do as well.

I regret that my wife wasn't here today. But I want you to know she's doing fine. I can't tell you how proud I am of the First Lady. She really wasn't interested in politics when I asked her to marry me and frankly didn't care for politicians, if the truth be known. [Laughter] But now the people of the country are figuring out why I asked her to marry me. She's calm and steady and a gracious lady. A lot of people wonder why