

The President. —that’s not a bad idea, thank you. What I want you to know is that the leadership of the House is trying to keep these good people from having a vote on school construction. They don’t want their Members to have to vote against it for the obvious reasons that you might notice, but they don’t want it to pass.

We have too many bills where we’ve got a majority for it, like the Patients’ Bill of Rights, that we can’t get up. So I am asking you, by your voices today, over the media, to the American people, and every day from now on as long as the Congress is here, by your support for your Representatives to say, “Hey, we love this school, but it’s not enough. And we love our kids, and you have our money. Spend it on their future. Spend it on their future.”

Again, I say, this is not complicated. It’s about political will and vision. And I want you to know, folks, I get really frustrated when Washington plays politics just because they think times are good and there are no consequences. But these kids will grow up before you know it.

My little girl just got home from college—going to be a senior next year. I remember when she was that size. It doesn’t take long for a child to live a childhood. And we don’t have a child to waste. And you’ve got all these dedicated teachers and all these dedicated parents and all these dedicated school people out there, and we keep trying to put them in smaller and smaller and smaller boxes. This is wrong.

Now, we have genuine philosophical differences over some things in Washington, but this shouldn’t be a philosophical issue. Are we going to build these buildings or not? We’ve got the money. Some people say, let them do it at the local level. Well, you know as well as I do that we’ve got more kids in schools than ever before, but we’ve got a smaller percentage of property taxpayers with kids in schools than ever before, and it’s hard, if not impossible, to raise the money to build and repair the schools only at the local level. The National Government has the resources. This is a limited program. These children deserve it.

So I implore you all, by your voices today, and every day, say, “Thank you, Nita Lowey.

Thank you, Greg Meeks. Thank you, Joe Crowley. Thank you, Charlie Rangel. Congress, give our kids the future they deserve. The whole country’s riding on it, we can afford it, and we owe it to them, and we’ll be awful glad we did.”

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:12 p.m. in the school courtyard. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Minnick, teacher, Abigail Adams Elementary School (Public School 131); Harold O. Levy, chancellor, New York City Public Schools; and Michael A. Johnson, district administrator, Community School District No. 29.

Statement on Senate Action on Electronic Signatures Legislation

June 16, 2000

I am pleased that the Senate today adopted the electronic signatures conference report by an overwhelming bipartisan vote. I look forward to signing this important legislation into law as soon as possible.

This landmark legislation will ensure that consumer protections remain strong in the technology age. It will help create new rules of the road for America’s hi-tech economy. E-commerce helps strengthen our economy by lowering inflation, raising productivity, and spurring new research and development. By marrying one of our oldest values—our commitment to consumer protection—with the newest technologies, we can achieve the full measure of the benefits that E-commerce has to offer.

My congratulations to the Democratic and Republican leaders of the conference committee for their hard work on this legislation.

Proclamation 7323—Father’s Day, 2000

June 16, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Each year, Americans set aside the third Sunday in June to pay special tribute to our fathers, who for many of us are the first and most important men in our lives. The role