

of legislation because it sets clear priorities, it encourages accountability so that no child is quit on, that people—we focus on each individual child. It also provides States more flexibility than ever before, and it's got some money in it. It's got more Title—\$1 billion in more Title I money. It's got a substantial increase for the reading initiative. It is a good piece of legislation.

And now, obviously, it depends upon its implementation. And so we're working closely with Rod Paige and the Department of Education to make sure that the intent of the law is now implemented fully. And we look forward to working with you on that. Obviously—I used to say that education is to a Governor what national defense is to the President. It is by far the most important priority for a Governor. And I know that, and I understand that. And this bill is—it reflects that. And we'll make sure the implementation of it reflects that as well.

And then welfare reform, welfare authorization is coming up. I start with the idea that the '96 bill was a really good piece of legislation. And it changed welfare for the better, primarily because it relied upon Governors. It had a substantial local control element in it. And so as we reauthorize welfare, we want to make sure that there is substantial authority at the local level.

We'll talk about funding. The budget I laid out for welfare reform holds the grants constant. Actually, it increases the—as a result of the supplemental and the contingency fund, it increases funding by—let's see, 3.2 billion over the next 5 years, on top of the grants that are already in place.

And so the fundamental question is: Will there be enough local authority, enough flexibility at the local level to meet what I hope Congress passes, which are new work requirements? See, I think work ought to be the core of welfare reform. I think in order to make sure that welfare reform works, that there's flexibility at the States, that there's recognition people need training or drug rehabilitation, but work ought to be the centerpiece of a good welfare law.

And the bill I'm going to outline tomorrow, with Tommy at my side—where are you, Tommy? There he is—is going to take the positive pieces of the '96 welfare law, changing welfare as we know it, and we're going to make it better. There's more to do, and we look forward to working with you on that as well.

And so those are the things that are on my mind. I know you've got things on your mind, and I look forward to hearing them. And we can have a good discussion today.

I want to welcome you back. I recognize I'm not exactly Bernadette Peters—[laughter]—but she did a fabulous job last night to fill this hall. It was such a joyous night, and it's particularly joyous for me and Laura to be with our old friends the Governors.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:12 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. John Engler of Michigan; Gov. Paul E. Patton of Kentucky; and entertainer Bernadette Peters.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus February 25, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I am providing a re-

port prepared by my Administration on progress toward a negotiated solution of the

Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 2001, through January 31, 2002. The previous submission covered October 1 through November 30, 2001.

On January 16, Greek Cypriot leader Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash began direct talks on the island under the auspices of the United Nations. As in past reporting periods, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas G. Weston and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald K. Bandler continued to provide diplomatic

support to the process. The United States remains committed to the United Nations effort to find a just and lasting settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Reallocation of Emergency Response Funds *February 25, 2002*

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In furtherance of the provisions of Public Law 107-38, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States, FY 2001, today I am notifying the Congress of my intent to reallocate funds previously transferred from the Emergency Response Fund to the Department of Defense. This reallocation reflects revised requirements in light of changing security needs in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

As provided in Public Law 107-38, \$33 million will be made available 15 days from

the date of this transmittal for continued deployment of the National Guard at our Nation's airports through the end of March.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26.

Remarks During a Visit to the East Capitol Center for Change and an Exchange With Reporters *February 26, 2002*

[The President's remarks are joined in progress.]

The President. —with healers, people of great and deep faith, who have come from some of the toughest circumstances known, to be leaders in their communities;

people—one-time crack addicts, a heroin user, both of whom now are a good mom and dad; people who are helping others to learn that there's a better way.

And I just want to thank you all for sharing with me your experiences and your