

Earll; Pennsylvania State Senator Tim Murphy; Christine J. Toretti, national committee-woman and co-finance chair, Pennsylvania

Republican Party; and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines.

Remarks on Signing the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act of 2002 in Pittsburgh

August 5, 2002

Well, thank you all very much for this bill signing ceremony. I'm pleased to sign it in the great city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The history of our country is the story of a promise, a promise of life and liberty made at our founding and fulfilled over the centuries in our laws. It is a story of expanding inclusion and protection for the ignored and the weak and the powerless. And now we extend the promise and protection to the most vulnerable members of our society.

Today I sign the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act. This important legislation ensures that every infant born alive, including an infant who survives an abortion procedure, is considered a person under Federal law. This reform was passed with the overwhelming support of both political parties, and it is about to become the law of the land.

I appreciate so very much Senator Rick Santorum and Congressman Steve Chabot from Ohio for sponsoring this important piece of legislation. I also appreciate Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania and Congresswoman Melissa Hart for coming as well.

I want to thank the bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Bishop Wuerl, for being here. It's good to see you again, Bishop. I appreciate Hadley Arkes, the professor of jurisprudence and American institutions at Amherst University. I want to thank Jill Stanek, registered nurse, labor and delivery unit, Christ Hospital and Medical Center, for being here as well. I appreciate Gianna Jessen, who is an abortion survivor and a

pro-life advocate. I want to thank Dr. Watson Bowes, who is a professor emeritus of gynecology and obstetrics, School of Medicine, University of North Carolina.

I want to thank you all for coming. It's important that you're here to send a signal that you're dedicated to the protection of human life. The issue of abortion divides Americans, no question about it. Yet, today we stand on common ground. The Born-Alive Infants Protection Act establishes a principle in America law and American conscience: There is no right to destroy a child who has been born alive. A child who is born has intrinsic worth and must have the full protection of our laws.

Today, through sonograms and other technology, we can clearly—see clearly that unborn children are members of the human family as well. They reflect our image, and they were created in God's own image.

The Born-Alive Infants Protection Act is a step toward the day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law. It is a step toward the day when the promises of the Declaration of Independence will apply to everyone, not just those with the voice and power to defend their rights. This law is a step toward the day when America fully becomes, in the words of Pope John Paul II, "a hospitable, a welcoming culture."

Our society has enough compassion and wealth and love to care for mothers and their children and to seek the promise and potential of every life. In protecting the vulnerable and the weak, the imperfect and

the unwanted, you are affirming a culture of life.

I'm grateful for your perseverance on behalf of this noble cause. I want to thank you for your hard work. I appreciate your care for every member of the human family. Thank you for coming today.

It's now my honor and pleasure to sign into law the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:58 p.m. in Ballroom 3 at the Hilton Pittsburgh. In his remarks, he referred to Bishop Donald W. Wuerl, Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh. H.R. 2175, approved August 5, was assigned Public Law No. 107-207.

Remarks Announcing the White House Conference on Missing, Exploited, and Runaway Children

August 6, 2002

Good morning. We're gathered here today because we share a profound concern for the safety of the most precious and important people in our own lives and the life of our country, our children.

After the terror of September the 11th, many parents throughout America found themselves holding their children more closely. Unfortunately, as we work to help our children feel safer by fighting terror, America's children and parents are also facing a wave of horrible violence from twisted criminals in our own communities. During recent months, we have prayed and worried with parents as their children have been kidnaped and, in some cases, murdered. The kidnaping or murder of a child is every parent's worst nightmare.

Today I call on all Federal and State and local law enforcement agencies and our communities and our citizens to work together to do everything in our power to better protect our children.

I appreciate so very much the Attorney General, John Ashcroft, for his work on this issue. I appreciate Secretary Rod Paige at the Department of Education, who is working with us on this issue. The FBI has provided investigators, agents to the scenes of these horrible crimes as quickly

as humanly possible, so I appreciate Director Mueller and his agents.

I want to thank Ernie Allen, who is the president and chief executive officer of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. As well I want to thank Carolyn Atwell-Davis, who is the government relations liaison for the Center. These are two fine human beings who care deeply about our children and are making a positive difference in the lives for a lot of families and a lot of communities around America.

The most recent statistics available tell a terrible story. More than 58,000 children are abducted by non-family-members annually. Many of these children are returned home quickly, but some are not. Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies work every day to find these missing children and to punish severely those who have committed crimes against them.

Today we're taking steps to focus on preventing crimes against children before they happen. The Department of Justice will release a handbook of simple and practical steps that parents can take to make their children safer.

One of the most important things that a mom or dad can do is talk to your children very specifically and rehearse what