

to be done. And if it is done, we can make the country much safer.

So we'll keep pushing them. And I think most of the States, probably all of them, really want to do it. They know it's the right thing to do, and they just need to put somebody on it in each State capital and make it a priority. It can be done.

Legislative Initiatives

Q. Mr. President, there's a Republican proposal to pay for 100,000 new teachers. What do you think of that, and why haven't you proposed that yourself?

The President. Well, I have lots of proposals for the State of the Union that haven't been made yet. You don't know what I'm going to propose.

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*about raising the minimum wage?

The President. What I hope we will be able to do in this session of Congress is to make education a national issue. It would please me

if it could be a nonpartisan issue. We fought awfully hard and finally succeeded in getting the Congress to agree that we ought to go forward with national standards and testing to see whether our children are meeting those standards. I hope we can reenergize that movement and do a lot of other things in this coming session of Congress for education reform. And I'm looking forward to it.

I have, some weeks ago, signed off on a very ambitious agenda, only part of which has been revealed. We'll just keep working at it. And then I'll work with the Congress, and, whatever ideas they have, we'll be glad to get together and work with them.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:39 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry R. McCaffrey; Deputy Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr.; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Memorandum on Ending Drug Use and Drug Availability for Offenders January 12, 1998

Memorandum for the Attorney General

Subject: Zero Tolerance for Drug Use and Drug Availability for Offenders

Crime rates in this country have dropped significantly for 5 years, and the number of Americans who have used drugs is down nearly 50 percent from its peak 15 years ago. Also, drug-related murders have dropped to their lowest point in a decade, and recent drug use surveys indicate that—for the first time in years—teen drug use is leveling off, and in some instances, modestly decreasing. All of this news is encouraging.

Nonetheless, much more can and needs to be done to continue to bring down drug use and increase public safety. With more than half the offenders in our criminal justice system estimated to have a substance abuse problem, enforcing coerced abstinence within the criminal justice system is critical to breaking the cycle of crime and drugs. My Administration consistently has promoted testing offenders and requiring treatment as a means of reducing recidivism

and drug-related crime. We have worked to expand the number of Drug Courts throughout the country, increase the number of Federal arrestees and prisoners who are tested and treated for drugs, and launched an innovative "Breaking the Cycle" initiative, which is a rigorous program of testing, treatment, supervision, and sanctions for offenders at all stages of the criminal justice process. And under your leadership, the Federal Bureau of Prisons provides models of excellence in drug detection, inmate testing, and drug treatment.

We can do still more to enforce coerced abstinence among State prisoners, probationers, and parolees. When a drug user ends up in a State prison, we have a chance to break his or her addiction. Convicted offenders who undergo drug testing and treatment while incarcerated and after release are approximately twice as likely to stay drug- and crime-free as those offenders who do not receive testing and treatment. But when drug use inside prisons is ignored, the demand for drugs runs high. In this environment, correction officials struggle to keep their