

They tell me they're pretty good. [Laughter] It's good to be with Bob Smith and John Sununu. Thank you both for being here as well. I want to thank all the students who are here. My advice is, listen to your mother. [Laughter] I'm still listening to mine. [Laughter]

I do want to—like Judd, I want to thank those of the National Guard who are here, those who serve in the guard and those families of guardspeople who have been called up to active duty. I want to tell you that your families are engaged in a noble and just cause. We will not let terrorists stand.

You know, the enemy made a big mistake. They didn't understand America. They thought, because of our richness, that we were soft, that we didn't believe in anything, that we weren't willing to stand up for what we think is right. And they're paying a dear price for messing with America.

I want the youngsters here to understand that this war is really about your future, that we fight not to seek revenge, but we fight to protect America and freedom, a system that is so fair, so optimistic, and so just, that this Nation is making sacrifices so that your children and your grandchildren can grow up in peace. I long for peace. But so long as there is terror and evil that want to do harm to the American people, I will not relent, and I will not tire until we bring them to justice.

We have an important mission overseas, and we've got an important mission at home. And we must never lose sight of this mission, and that's to make sure every single child—every child—receives a first-class education. The hope of the future for this country is not only to make sure that we're secure and we're safe, but the true hope for the country is to make sure everybody gets a good education.

This morning I signed a significant piece of legislation, a major piece of reform, and I did so in John Boehner's district in Ohio. Most of the time, you sign a piece of legislation at the White House. I chose to sign

it at one of our most precious assets that we have in America, and that was in a public school. I did so because I want the country to remember that we've got to battle illiteracy and hopelessness through quality education.

This was a significant work done by the Congress. My friend Judd Gregg had a lot to do with it, and that's why we've come to New Hampshire, to not only praise the legislation, but to praise his work. He's not a real chatty kind of guy. [Laughter] But when he talks, people actually pay attention. He did really good work, as did the other three leaders on this stage. I emphasize the word "leaders" because it would have been easy to quit on the process. It would have been easy to allow the process to dissipate into the same old, tired politics that dominates—sometimes dominate Washington. That's that attitude that said, "I can't work with anybody of a different political party." Folks, this bill I signed today shows what can happen when good people get together. It is more important to focus on our children than political parties in the country.

Big George Miller out of California came to the—

*Audience member.* What about the dead Afghani children, Mr. Bush? What about the dead Afghani children?

*Audience member.* We love you, President Bush!

*The President.* Big George is out of California. He came to the Governor's Mansion to talk about public education when I was still the Governor—heading to Washington. You know, he's from the different side of the political aisle and, frankly, the ideological spectrum than I am. And yet, he shares the same passion I have, and that is that we can't allow any systems and schools to exist that simply shuffle children through—that every person matters. We decided right then and there, we're going to put aside our differences and see if we couldn't work together, and we did. John Boehner from Ohio, he and George used to battle