

because of me, it was because the doctors and the citizens understand the cost of a trial system gone awry, and they got themselves a law. And they got a medical liability law. They put caps, real caps. Guess what happened? In some counties, the malpractice claims rose dramatically before the law came into effect. [Laughter] Now, what does that tell you about the system? It tells you the system is less about justice and more about something that looks like the lottery, is what it looks like to me. And with the plaintiffs bar getting as much as 40 percent of any verdict, sometimes there's only one winner in the lottery.

We need reform. You need reform in Pennsylvania, and we need reform all across America, and we need a law coming out of the United States Congress. It's a law that recognizes the centerpiece of good health care is to worry about your patient, the American people. It's a law that will recognize that an affordable and accessible health care system can best be had if we limit the caps—put caps on non-economic and punitive damages. That's what it understands.

Congress needs to act on this law. Congress needs to listen to the people and not make excuses as to why they can't get something done. I believe we'll get something out of the House. I believe we'll get us a good law out of the House, and then the Senate must not fail its responsibilities to the American people again.

And you can help. Every State's got them a couple of Senators—[laughter]—and they need to hear from you. I consider your two Senators allies, but they need to hear

from you. Every State—people who are concerned in every State about whether or not they're going to have affordable health care or health care at all need to contact the people that represent them. See, democracy can work. Democracy makes a difference. When the people speak, the folks in Washington, DC, listen. And I'm here to ask you to join in this important cause, for the sake of people you care about, your loved ones and your neighbors and the people in your communities.

No, we've got a lot of problems facing America. We've got the responsibility to make the world more peaceful. We have the responsibility to make sure our homeland is secure. We've got the responsibility to make sure every child is educated. We have a responsibility to make sure our health care systems work. We've got a lot of problems. But I'm going to tell you something about this country. In my mind, there is no doubt that we won't solve these problems, because this is the greatest nation, full of the finest people, on the face of the Earth.

Thank you for coming. May God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon in the William J. Byron Recreation Center. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph M. McShane, S.J., president, University of Scranton; Pennsylvania State Representative John Perzel; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.