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education beyond partisanship," Keating said. "It's too bad some of our more liberal education figures can't take that advice to heart. They continue to resist or ignore any ideas that aren't part of their own agenda."

In his speech, the president also endorsed more rigorous academic standards to be established by the states, rather than the federal government, and suggested that schools trim administrative costs to devote more funds to the classroom. Both are traditional Republican themes.

"When I proposed the most rigorous academic graduation standards in the nation, most people noticed that the OEA leaders were absolutely silent," Keating said. The governor's plan calls for a required high school core curriculum of four years each of math, science, English and social studies. "I'm still waiting for them to either endorse or oppose this very important idea, but I guess they don't have an opinion. That's too bad. They act as if only their tiny handful of leaders have valid positions on education, but that's definitely not what we heard from President Clinton on Wednesday."

INSURANCE DEPARTMENT TO GET NEW OFFICE SPACE

From The Oklahoma Insurance Department

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Insurance Commissioner John P. Crawford will be officed in a different location thanks to the help of Lt. Governor Mary Fallin and Senate and House leadership.

In December of last year, the State Insurance Fund, Crawford's office landlord, evicted the Insurance Department from its current location at 1901 North Walnut in order to move the Fund's office back to that location.

"Finding a new place to office was not a problem except for the fact that state law was very specific as where the Insurance Commissioner's office can be located," Crawford said. "The law said that our office had to be either in a state owned building or be located in the Capitol itself. There just wasn't adequate space to meet that criteria, so the law had to be changed.

After working closely with the House and Senate leadership, Crawford's 'move bill' (HB 1817) was sent to the Lt. Governor's office for signature. Having been signed by Fallin on Tuesday, her first of this legislative session, the Insurance Department is free to locate their new home.

"I want to thank everybody that made this move possible, especially Lt. Governor Fallin for signing the bill in the Governor's absence," Crawford said. "She has shown great leadership initiative, and I am grateful."

When asked where the new location for the Insurance Department will be, Crawford stated: "It is down to two different locations, both of which beat the heck out of moving to the Capitol's parking lot, which would have been our only alternative if it were not for our friends across the street."

NICKLES PRAISES PASSAGE OF FARM BILL CONFERENCE REPORT

From U.S. Senator Don Nickles, R-Oklahoma

■(WASHINGTON) Oklahoma Senator Don Nickles Thursday praised final passage of the 1996 Farm Bill, saying farmers would benefit from greater flexibility, simplicity and opportunity.

"This bill represents a long-term plan to get the government out of the farming business — an idea I strongly support," Nickles said. "No longer will the government tell farmers which crops to plant and no longer will the government tell farmers to leave productive land idle in exchange for a federal handout."

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