

history, Afghans have observed Nowruz. But the Taliban had forbidden Afghans from following this treasured part of their heritage. Next week, for the first time in many years, Afghans will be free once more to celebrate this time-honored tradition.

Afghanistan's observance of the traditional New Year honors an ancient and sto-

ried history and marks a time of renewal. As the season changes, may the observance of Nowruz serve as a special time for Afghans to enjoy their newfound freedom and the company of family and friends.

Best wishes for a memorable Nowruz.

Statement on Senate Action on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation *March 20, 2002*

Like many Republicans and Democrats in the Congress, I support commonsense reforms to end abuses in our campaign finance system. The reforms passed today, while flawed in some areas, still improve the current system overall, and I will sign them into law.

The legislation makes some important progress on the timeliness of disclosure, individual contribution limits, and banning soft money from corporations and labor unions, but it does present some legitimate constitutional questions. I continue to believe the best reform is full and timely disclosure of campaign contributions.

Statement on Proposed Housing Affordability Legislation *March 20, 2002*

I commend Chairman Oxley, Housing Subcommittee Chairwoman Roukema, and Congressman Green for introducing H.R. 3995, the "Housing Affordability for America Act of 2002," and look forward to working with them on the bill in the legislative process. Increasing housing opportunities for all Americans is a high priority for my administration. In particular, I am committed to increasing the opportunities for minority families to become homeowners.

The purchase of a home is a unique commitment that benefits the homeowner and the community and ultimately the Nation. My budget contains proposals designed to increase homeownership and affordable housing opportunities. Through their hard work on the "Housing Affordability for America Act of 2002," Chairman Oxley, Chairwoman Roukema, and Congressman Green have joined in this worthy effort.