

“Ed” McMahan; former Senator Lauch Faircloth of North Carolina; Jim Culbertson and Aldona Wos, North Carolina State finance chairs, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Ferrell

Blount, chairman, and Jim Cain, national committeeman, North Carolina Republican Party; and Teresa Earnhardt, chief executive officer and president, Dale Earnhardt, Inc.

Statement on Signing Legislation on Amendments to the Mexico-United States Agreement on the Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank

April 5, 2004

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 254, “To authorize the President of the United States to agree to certain amendments to the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States concerning the establishment of a Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank, and for other purposes.” The Act is intended to implement an agreement between the United States and Mexico to accelerate the delivery of environmental infrastructure projects on the border by improving the operations of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission and the North American Development Bank.

Section 546 of Public Law 103–182, as added by section 1 of the Act, purports to direct the President to instruct United States representatives on the Board of Directors of the North American Development Bank to take a particular position with respect to certain grant proposals. Under the Constitution, the President alone

is charged with developing the position of the United States in international fora. The executive branch will accordingly interpret this provision as a nonbinding recommendation from the Congress.

Sections 2(5) and 2(6) of the Act purport to require the annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury to include a description of discussions between the United States and Mexican governments. In order to avoid intrusion into the President’s negotiating authority and ability to maintain the confidentiality of diplomatic negotiations, the executive branch will not interpret this provision to require the disclosure of either the contents of diplomatic communications or specific plans for particular negotiations in the future.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
April 5, 2004.

NOTE: H.R. 254, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 108–215.

Message on the Observance of Passover, 5764

April 5, 2004

I send greetings to those observing Passover, beginning at sundown on April 5.

Freedom is God’s gift to every man and woman. During Passover, Jewish people

celebrate their historic liberation from slavery. This joyous eight-day observance is testimony to the power of good to overcome evil and is an opportunity for Jews to share

the message of God's mercy. By reading the Haggadah, which tells the story of the Exodus and explains the traditional Passover Seder, Jewish children learn about their proud heritage and the importance of faith, courage, endurance, and love.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a Happy Passover.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks in a Discussion on Job Training and the National Economy in El Dorado, Arkansas

April 6, 2004

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Thank you, Skinny. [Laughter] Gosh, thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be here. Huckabee told me I'm the first sitting President ever to come to El Dorado, Arkansas, and I'm glad I came. I'm really glad I came. Governor, thank you and Janet for meeting me at the airport. It's great to see you again. Thank you all for being here.

I really want to thank Kathy and her staff for putting up with us. It turns out it's not easy to welcome a President. You've got to have a stage; you've got to have this; you've got to have that. The entourages are huge. We're really glad to be here, because this is going to be an economics lesson coupled with a discussion about how to make sure everybody is educated for the jobs for the 21st century. That's what we're here to talk about. I think you're going to find it interesting.

The best news is, I'm not doing all the talking. I've got some of your fellow citizens here on stage with me that will help make the points necessary, make the points that say, "Look, this is a hopeful time; we've just got to make sure we educate people for the jobs which will exist." That's what we're here to talk about.

A community college is a great place to have this discussion, because the community colleges are very well adapted to meeting the needs of local employers. They're flexible. They're able to say to an employer,

"What do you need? And we'll educate the people for the kind of workers you need." That's why we're here at this community college. Thanks for receiving me.

Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller is with us. Win, I'm glad you're here. Thank you for coming. Congressman John Boozman—he's up from north Arkansas, but he's down here in south Arkansas. Thank you for coming, John, glad you're here. And Cathy is with him too.

I appreciate the mayor, Bobby Beard. Where are you, Bobby? Yes, Bobby. Bobby, you would think you would get a better seat. [Laughter] I appreciate you. Just pick up the garbage. [Laughter] Thanks for coming. Thanks for the hospitality. I appreciate your troopers out there, State—the city police helping us come into town. Thanks a lot. I want to thank all the local officials here from El Dorado, here with us as well, and the county officials. I appreciate the fact that you've allowed Lane Jean, who is the mayor of Magnolia, to be here. Mr. Mayor, appreciate you coming over from Magnolia, Arkansas.

When I landed out there, I met a fellow named Joe McFadden. [Applause] Joe brought his family. [Laughter] Where are you, Joe? Oh, there's Joe, right here, yes. Same guy I met at the airport. [Laughter] Here's the reason I want to talk about Joe right quick. People say America is strong because of our military. And we have a strong military, and I'm going to keep the