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NOTE: The President spoke at 1:02 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of John D. Negroponte To Be Ambassador to Iraq
April 19, 2004

The President. Today I'm announcing my intention to nominate Ambassador John Negroponte as the Ambassador to Iraq. Ambassador Negroponte now serves our Nation at the United Nations as the Ambassador there. He has done a really good job of speaking for the United States to the world about our intentions to spread freedom and peace. John Negroponte is a man of enormous experience and skill. Therefore, I'm comfortable in asking him to serve in this very difficult assignment. No doubt in my mind he can handle it. No doubt in my mind he'll do a very good job. And there's no doubt in my mind that Iraq will be free and democratic and peaceful.

So, John, thank you for agreeing to serve your country yet once again. I'm proud of your service. Good luck to you. Thank you.

Ambassador Negroponte. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you.

The President. You bet.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:51 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks in Hershey, Pennsylvania
April 19, 2004

Thank you all very much. Thanks for letting me come. [*Laughter*] It's good to be here in Hershey, Pennsylvania. For a fellow who likes chocolate—[*laughter*]—this is a special place. I know that Milton Hershey, who was one of the country's great entrepreneurs, would be incredibly proud of the way this community has prospered and grown. I bet he'd be especially proud of the hospital that we saw coming in. The Senators with whom I was traveling pointed out the fantastic hospital facilities. I'm told that this is a community where people really care deeply about their neighbors and the quality of life in the community in which they live. And so I want to thank the citizens from Hershey for being so gracious and warm and setting such a good example.

I want to thank the community leaders who are here from around the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I appreciate your service to our country. It's a tough job to serve at the local level. [*Laughter*] When things go wrong, your name is right there in the phonebook. [*Laughter*] But we share a common calling, and that's public service, serving our Nation. I want to thank you for doing what you're doing. It's such an honor, isn't it, to serve the people of our respective communities and our Nation.

And you and I know what our first responsibility is. The first responsibility,

whether it be Washington, DC, or Washington Township, is the safety of our citizens. That's a solemn duty we have, to work together to make sure that our Nation is as secure as it can possibly be. The task, our mutual tasks, our joint obligation, changed dramatically on September the 11th, 2001. There's now an urgency to our duty. We have a urgent duty to do everything we can to fulfill our solemn obligation.

There are people here in this world who still want to hurt us. See, they can't stand America. They can't stand us because we love certain things and we're not going to change. We love our freedom. We love the fact that we can worship freely any way we see fit. We love the fact that we can speak our minds freely. We love our free political process. We love every aspect of freedom, and we refuse to change. These terrorists will not be stopped by their own conscience. They don't have a conscience. But they will be stopped. They will be stopped because our great Nation is resolute abroad, we're vigilant at home, and we are absolutely determined to prevail.

I appreciate Donna's invitation and her introduction. She handled it very well. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Keith Hite, the executive director, for having me here as well. Keith, thank you for your hospitality. I want to thank the boards of directors, the trustees, and the members of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors.

I appreciate the first-responders who are here today. Thank you for your service.

I've traveled in a small little limo from the airport with Senators Specter and Santorum, two really fine United States Senators from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I flew down from Washington with Congressman Todd Platts and Congressman Bill Shuster from Pennsylvania. Thank you both for traveling with me. I am grateful that Congressman Tim Holden has joined us today. Thank you for being here, Congressman. I appreciate you coming.

Attorney General Jerry Pappert is here with us. General, I appreciate you being here today. Charlie Dent, a member of the State house, is with us; Paul Semmel—actually, Dent is in the State senate. Semmel is in the State house. These are members of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committees. These are people in the State legislature with whom you work to make sure the State of Pennsylvania is properly prepared for anything that may come along.

I appreciate so very much the other State and local officials who are here. Thanks for taking time to come. I appreciate Mike Lutz, who is the president of the Fraternal Order of Police Pennsylvania State Lodge, for being here. Mike, thank you for your time, and thank you for coming.

Two other people I want to mention before I get going. [*Laughter*] I had the honor of meeting Major Dick Winters. Dick Winters is a World War II veteran. There's an HBO miniseries called "The Band of Brothers." He led the platoon in World War II. I told him when I got off the airplane, it was such an honor to meet him. It's such a fine example that he and others have set for those brave souls who now wear our Nation's uniform. Major Winters, I'm glad you're here. And I also want to thank the other members of our military who joined us today as well. Thank you all for coming.

When I landed, I met a fellow at the airport named Patrick Leonard. Where are you, Pat? Oh there you are, sure. How quickly they forget. [*Laughter*] You're wondering why I mentioned Pat Leonard? I'll tell you why. The strength of America is in the hearts and souls of our citizens. That's our strength. Listen, people say America is strong because of our military. We got a strong military, and I intend to keep it that way. They say America is strong because we're the wealthiest nation. That's good. We need to keep it that way. But the real reason we're strong is because

of the hearts and souls of American citizens. That's why we're strong.

Pat Leonard volunteers. He takes time out of a busy life and a family life to volunteer at the fire department. That's what he does. He's a volunteer fireman. As a matter of fact, he is the chief of the Hershey Volunteer Fire Company. He has been doing this for 26 years. It's more than just volunteering for the fire department, though, see. He also volunteers to mentor children by being a coach at all kinds of different sports teams.

The reason I bring up Pat—and I want to thank his mom and dad for being here, by the way, and two brothers who happen to be volunteer firemen. The reason I bring him up is because I want our citizens to understand that if you really want to help America, take time out of your life and help save a soul. And you can do it all kinds of ways. You can mentor a child. You can help the elderly. You can volunteer at the fire department. You can be a Boy Scout or Girl Scout leader. There's all kinds of ways you can help. I bet most of you are doing this already. You represent the true strength of the country. We're a compassionate, decent nation, a nation of people who are willing to love their neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

As we gather this afternoon, we're 140 miles away from Shanksville, Pennsylvania. This is a place where many innocent lives ended. Shanksville is also the place where American citizens stood up to evil, charged their attackers, and began the first counter-offensive in the war on terror. Those passengers on Flight 93 showed that the spirit of America is strong and brave in the face of danger, and this Nation will always honor their memory.

The best way to secure our homeland, the best way for us to do our duty, is to stay on the offensive against the terrorist network. We began the offense shortly after September the 11th. We're carrying out a broad strategy, a worldwide strategy to bring the killers to justice. The best way to secure America is to bring them to justice before they hurt us again, which is precisely what the United States of America will continue to do.

Two-thirds of known Al Qaida leaders have been captured or killed. We're making progress. It's a different kind of war than the war that Major Winters fought in. This is a war against people who will hide in a cave, a war against people who hide in the shadows of remote cities or big cities, and then they strike and they kill. And they kill innocent people. They have no—as I said, they have no conscience. They have no sense of guilt. But they also know we're on their trail, and they will find out there is no cave or hole deep enough to hide from American justice.

We must be determined in this, and we've got a lot of really good people, a lot of good people on the move. We're also working with nations from around the world, sharing intelligence, making it clear that if you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist.

By the way, when the President of the United States says something, he better mean it. And when I said to the world, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist," I meant exactly what I said. And the Taliban found out. It wasn't all that long ago that Afghanistan was a training center for Al Qaida killers. It was a safe haven. It's a country, by the way, that was run by a brutal—brutal—dictatorship. The Taliban had a perverted view of the world. They hated—they must have hated women. Women were given no rights. Young girls did not go to school. It was a barbaric regime. So not only did we uphold doctrine that said, "If you harbor a terrorist or train a terrorist or feed a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist," but we liberated people as well in Afghanistan. People are free in that country. Young girls now go to school for the first time in their life, thanks to the incredible compassion of the United States of America.

There's another very important lesson about September the 11th that we must never forget, and that is, we can no longer take threats that may exist overseas for granted. In other words, when the President and/or anybody else in authority sees a threat, we must take it seriously. Now, that doesn't mean every threat must be dealt with by military option, but every threat must be viewed as a potential problem to America. See, September the 11th changed the equation. It used to be that oceans would protect us, that we saw a threat, we didn't have to worry about it because there was two vast oceans. And we could pick and choose as to how we deal with the threat. That changed on September the 11th.

These are vital lessons for our citizens to understand what took place. See, we saw a threat, based upon intelligence, in Iraq. The intelligence said there's a threat. The very same intelligence looked at by the United States Congress caused them to reach the same conclusion. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence and said, "Saddam is a threat." And so, for about the—I can't remember how many times they said it, but they said, "Disarm. See, you're a threat. Disarm." There's a reason why a lot of people made the conclusion. It was not only based upon intelligence; it was based upon the fact that he hated America, that he was willing to pay suiciders to go kill people in Israel, that he actually used weapons of mass destruction on his own people. See, this is a guy who used it before.

And the equation changed after September the 11th. And so, you see, I was in a position where I either took the word of a madman or took the actions necessary to defend America. And given that choice, I will defend America every time.

We will defeat the enemy there so we don't have to face them here. And at the same time, we will work to see that Iraq is free, and that's really important for our long-term security. See, free nations are peaceful nations. Free nations are nations in which people can find hope and a chance to raise their families, just the way moms and dads want to raise their families here in America. That's why we love freedom, and that's why we think freedom is such an important part of a peaceful world. This is an historic mission, in my judgment. This is an historic opportunity.

I told the story, I think, at one of these endless press conferences I had last week—[*laughter*]—where—I love them, of course—where—[*laughter*]—where I had dinner with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. And it was at that dinner that we were talking about the situation in North Korea. And it dawned on me during the course of the conversation with my friend that, if we hadn't got it right after World War II, would I have been having this conversation with the Prime Minister about a common threat we share? And it probably wouldn't have. If we hadn't secured the peace in a proper way after World War II, I don't think—maybe I'll be wrong, but I don't think I would have been having the very kind of conversation I was having with Prime Minister Koizumi. And it dawned on me during that conversation, when we get it right in Iraq, some American President will be sitting down with a duly elected official from Iraq talking about how to keep the peace in that troubled part of the world. It's an historic opportunity to spread democracy and hope as an alternative to hatred and terror and violence for export.

And it's a difficult mission. It's tough work. It's incredibly hard, as we have seen on our television screens the last couple of weeks. There's a reason why. Freedom frightens people who are terrorists. The worst thing that can happen to a society, if you're a terrorist, is for the society to be free. And it scares them. Remember, I told you, they'll strike us because of our love for freedom. Well, they strike out because a free society is emerging in the

heart of a region that is desperate for freedom and democracy.

And we're facing supporters of the outlaw cleric, remnants of Saddam's regime that are still bitter that they don't have the position to run the torture chambers and rape rooms and get the special privileges they've had for all these years. Of course, there's foreign terrorists there, trying to prevent the rise of a free government in the heart of the Middle East. They will fail—they will fail. They will fail because they do not speak for the vast majority of Iraqis who do not want to replace one tyrant with another. They will fail because the will of our coalition is strong. They will fail because America leads a coalition full of the finest military men and women in the world.

Thousands of Pennsylvanians have given their service in the war on terror, including more than 6,000 National Guard and Reserve members on active duty today. I want to thank their families for enduring the long deployments and separations and sacrifices. I want to thank the men and women who wear the uniform. Our Nation is grateful for your sacrifice. We are grateful that you have volunteered to make America a more secure country and the world a more peaceful and free place.

The enemy is still active. Think about Bali and Istanbul. Or as we saw in the murder of 200 citizens in Madrid, the terrorists use violence to spread fear and disrupt elections. They want us to panic. That's their intent. Their intent is to say, "Let's create panic among the civilized world." They want nations to turn upon each other, civilized nations to argue and debate about the mission. You know, they're not going to shake our will. I'll say as plainly as I can to them: You'll never shake the will of the United States of America. We're not going to forget September the 11th. We are determined. We are resolute, and we will bring you to justice.

And in the process, we've made some fundamental changes in the way we defend ourself. We reorganized—or organized a new Department of Homeland Security to protect the country. It was hard work in the Senate. I want to thank Senator Specter and Senator Santorum and the Members of the House who are here. We had a big debate about it, but it was the right thing to do. It was the right thing to bring agencies involved with the protection of the homeland under one umbrella agency, so we can better coordinate and better communicate and better strategize as to how to protect the homeland.

And I picked a good man to run—become the first Secretary of Homeland Security. Looks like I don't even have to say his name. [*Laughter*] You trained him well. [*Laughter*] No, Ridge is doing a great job.

Since 2001, we've tripled funding for homeland security. That's important. We've trained and deployed screeners at airports, put thousands of air marshals on flights. We're now fingerprinting visitors when they come to America and compare the prints to those of suspected terrorists and violent criminals. In other words, we've made prevention of terror an important priority of our Government—just doing everything we can to make sure that we're as safe as we possibly can be.

The FBI now has the prevention of terrorist attacks as their number one priority. They'll still chase down criminals and make a case, but since we're at war and since this is a big, free country, the priority of the Federal Government is now the prevention of another attack. And we're making sure they got the resources necessary to do their job.

We're standing behind our first-responders. Since the moment our country was attacked, our Nation's police and firefighters and emergency service personnel have played a critical role in the defense of America against any threat of terror. They really have. It was a—we saw the incredible bravery of the first-responders in New York

City. I think it—I think those who are firefighters and police and emergency personnel gained a new degree of respect on the streets of the cities throughout our country, when they witnessed the great courage of their brothers who rushed into collapsing buildings. We appreciate the fact that these men and women understand they could be on the frontline against terror at any moment, that they have accepted great responsibilities. And we have responsibilities to you as well.

I've proposed an additional $3.6 billion for terrorism preparedness grants. This is a way to help our first-responders get ready. The money needs to make sure we don't get it stuck in the process, stuck from going from the Federal Government to the State government to the local government. This money needs to get the local communities in a timely fashion so you can put it to good work.

After September the 11th, we took another vital step to fight terror, and that's what I want to talk about today. I want to talk about the PATRIOT Act. It's a law that I signed into law. It's a law that was overwhelmingly passed in the House and the Senate. It's a law that is making America safer. It's an important piece of legislation.

First, before September the 11th, law enforcement, intelligence, and national security officials were prevented by legal and bureaucratic restrictions from sharing critical information with each other and with State and local police departments. We had—one group of the FBI knows something, but they couldn't talk to the other group in the FBI because of law and bureaucratic interpretation. You cannot fight the war on terror unless all bodies of your government at the Federal, State, and local level are capable of sharing intelligence on a real-time basis. We could not get a complete picture of terrorist threats, therefore. People had—different people had a piece of the puzzle, but because of law, they couldn't get all the pieces in the same place.

And so we removed those barriers, removed the walls. You hear the talk about the walls that separated certain aspects of Government. They have been removed by the PATRIOT Act, and now, law enforcement and intelligence communities are working together to share information to better prevent an attack on America.

And let me give you an interesting story. In late 2001, in Portland, Oregon—and today, I was briefed on this story by the—the Federal prosecutor up there in Oregon—or over there. I'm used to Texas, still. [*Laughter*] Everything was "up there." [*Laughter*]

Police in Portland, Oregon, turned up evidence about a local man who was planning attacks on Jewish schools and synagogues and on American troops overseas. The initial information was passed to the FBI and to intelligence services—quickly passed—who analyzed the threat and took action. See, the PATRIOT Act allowed for unprecedented cooperation, and because of the surveillance tools enacted by the PATRIOT Act, the FBI learned that this guy was a part of a seven-man terrorist cell. In other words, the PATRIOT Act gave local—Federal law enforcement officials, in this case—the capacity to better understand the intelligence and to better understand the nature of the terrorist cell. And now the cell has been disrupted.

I'll tell you another good thing that happened. Before September the 11th, investigators had better tools to fight organized crime than to fight international terrorism. That was the reality. For years, law enforcement used so-called roving wiretaps to investigate organized crime. You see, what that meant is if you got a wiretap by court order—and by the way, everything you hear about requires court order, requires there to be permission from a FISA court, for example. So the crime boss, he'd be on the cell phone, maybe thinking somebody is listening to him, would toss the cell

phone and get on another cell phone. And the law allowed for our drug-busters to follow the person making the calls, not just a single phone number. So it made it more difficult for a drug lord to evade the net that we were trying to throw on him to capture him with.

We couldn't use roving wiretaps for terrorists. In other words, terrorists could switch phones, and we couldn't follow them. The PATRIOT Act changed that, and now we have the essential tool. See, with court approval, we have long used roving wiretaps to lock up monsters—mobsters. Now we have a chance to lock up monsters, terrorist monsters. [*Laughter*]

The PATRIOT Act authorizes what are called delayed notification search warrants. I'm not a lawyer, either. [*Laughter*] These allow law enforcement personnel, with court approval, to carry out a lawful search without tipping off suspects and giving them a chance to flee or destroy evidence. It is an important part of conducting operations against organized groups.

Before September the 11th, the standards for these kind of warrants were different around the country. It made it hard to have kind of a national strategy to chase down what might be a terrorist group. The PATRIOT Act provided a clear national standard and now allows these warrants to be used in terrorism cases. And they're an important tool for those who are on the frontline of using necessary means, with court order, to find these terrorists before they hurt us. Look, what I'm telling you is, is that the PATRIOT Act made it easier for people we've tasked to protect America. That's what we want. We want people to have the tools necessary to do the job we expect them to do.

Before September the 11th, law enforcement could more easily obtain business and financial records of white-collar criminals than of suspected terrorists. See, part of the way to make sure that we catch terrorists is we chase money trails. And yet it was easier to chase a money trail with a white-collar criminal than it was a terrorist. The PATRIOT Act ended this double standard, and it made it easier for investigators to catch suspected terrorists by following paper trails here in America.

And finally, before September the 11th, Federal judges could often impose tougher prison terms on drug traffickers than they could on terrorists. The PATRIOT Act strengthened the penalties for crimes committed by terrorists, such as arsons or attacks on powerplants and mass transit systems. In other words, we needed to get—we needed to send the signal, at the very minimum, that our laws are going to be tough on you. When we catch you, you've got a problem, in America. See, that's part of prevention.

I just outlined five reasons why the PATRIOT Act made sense. These are practical reasons. These are ways to give our law enforcement officers the tools necessary to do their job so that we can better protect America, and we're making progress.

The last 2½ years, we've dismantled terrorist cells in Oregon and New York and North Carolina and Virginia. We prosecuted terrorist operatives and supportives in California, Ohio, Texas, and Florida. In other words, we're using these tools to do the best we can possibly do to protect our fellow citizens. We've frozen or seized about $200 million in terrorist assets around the world. When I say "we," this is now not only the United States but friends and allies. We're cutting off their money. We're following—what was that movie?—"Follow the Money." That's what we're doing, to make sure that we do our job.

I want you to keep in mind what I've just told you about the PATRIOT Act the next time you hear somebody attacking the PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act defends our liberty. The PATRIOT Act makes it able for those of us in positions of responsibility to defend the liberty of the American people. It's essential law.

The reason I bring it up is because many of the PATRIOT Act's antiterrorism tools are set to expire next year, including key provisions that allow our intelligence and law enforcement agencies to share information. In other words, Congress passed it and said, "Well, maybe the war on terror won't go on very long," and therefore, these tools are set to expire. The problem is, the war on terror continues. And yet some Senators and Congressmen not only want to let the provisions expire, but they want to roll back some of the act's permanent features. And it doesn't make any sense. We can't return to the days of false hope. The terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and the Congress must give law enforcement all the tools necessary to protect the American people.

So I'm starting today to call on the United States Congress to renew the PATRIOT Act and to make all of its provisions permanent. And not only that, there are some additional things that Congress should do—must do, in my judgment—to strengthen authorities and penalties to defend our homeland.

There's something called administrative subpoenas. This is the authority to request certain types of time-sensitive records without the delay of going through a judge or a grand jury. These are critical for many types of investigations. For example, today they're used for health care fraud cases. In other words, those who investigate can use an administrative subpoena to run down somebody cheating the health care system. Yet, in terrorism cases, where speed is of the essence, officials are barred from using administrative subpoenas. That doesn't seem to make much sense to me. The American people expect us to do our jobs. It seems like we ought to have the very same tool necessary to run down a bad doc as to run down a terrorist. And so when Congress considers the PATRIOT Act, they ought to be thinking about ways to make sure that we've got the capacity of catching terrorists.

People charged with certain crimes today, including some drug offenses, are eligible for bail only in limited circumstances, but terrorist-related crimes are not on that list. Think about what that means. Suspected terrorists could be released, free to leave the country or worse, before their trial. And that doesn't make any sense. The disparity makes no sense. If a dangerous drug dealer can be held without bail, the Congress should allow the same treatment for terrorists. If we want to protect our homeland, let's make sure these good people have got the tools necessary to do so.

And there's another example I want to share with you. Under existing law, the death penalty applies to many serious crimes that result in death, including sexual abuse and certain drug-related offenses. Some terrorist crimes that result in death do not qualify for capital punishment. That makes no sense to me. We ought to be sending a strong signal: If you sabotage a defense installation or nuclear facility in a way that takes an innocent life, you ought to get the death penalty, the Federal death penalty.

The reason why Congress must act is because we have a difficult job protecting America. The reason why is because we're an open society that values freedom. We stand for the—we're a beacon of freedom, and we say you can—our country is an open country. And yet that makes us vulnerable—in itself, makes us vulnerable. We got a lot of borders to protect. We got to be right 100 percent of the time, at the Federal level and the State level and the local level. We've got to be right 100 percent of the time to protect America, and the terrorists have only got to be right one time, as 168 innocent men, women, and children found out in Oklahoma City. Different forms of terror—we've got to be vigilant against terror at all costs.

And there's only one path to safety, and that's the path of action. Congress must

act with the PATRIOT Act. We must continue to stay on the offense when it comes to chasing these killers down and bringing them to justice, and we will. We've got to be strong and resolute and determined. We will never show weakness in the face of these people who have no soul, who have no conscience, who care less about the life of a man or a woman or a child. We've got to do everything we can here at home, and there's no doubt in my mind that, with the Almighty's blessings and hard work, that we will succeed in our mission.

The reason I say that is because I have seen the spirit of this country. I've seen the resolve of our Nation. I know the nature of the men and women who proudly call themselves Americans, people who can rise to any challenge, people who are tough, people who are determined, people who are resolute, and people, at the same time, who are compassionate and decent and honorable. And it is my honor to be the President of a country full of such people.

May God bless your work. May God continue to bless our country. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:20 p.m. at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Donna L. Mindek, president, and R. Keith Hite, executive director, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors; Pennsylvania State Attorney General Jerry Pappert; State Senator Charles W. Dent and State Representative Paul W. Semmel of Pennsylvania; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Muqtada Al Sadr, Iraqi Shiite cleric whose militia engaged in an uprising in Iraq in early April. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Dinner for Senator Arlen Specter in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
April 19, 2004

The President. Thanks for coming. I'm here to say it as plainly as I can: Arlen Specter is the right man for the United States Senate.

Thank you all for coming out. It's good to be back in "Knowledge City." [*Laughter*] The last time I was here, Jerome Bettis was in the crowd. [*Laughter*] Remember "Bettis the Bus"? He said, "Keep it short, President." [*Laughter*] I listened.

I do have some things I want to say. I first of all appreciate my friendship with Arlen Specter. He's been a friend for quite a while. I'm proud to campaign for him. We've got a good, frank relationship. The last time—one of the last times we flew here to the great State of Pennsylvania, as we were coming down the stairs together, I took a look at a pretty ratty looking coat he was wearing. [*Laughter*] I said, "Senator, if we're going to keep company, I'd advise you to upgrade your wardrobe." [*Laughter*] He's a frugal man. [*Laughter*] He was telling me he wore that coat back in the Korean war. [*Laughter*] Turns out, his family got the word and bought him a new coat, and you're looking awfully sharp today. [*Laughter*]

I'm proud to tell you I think he's earned another term as a United States Senator. He is a tough and principled legislator. He can get things done for the people of Pennsylvania. He's a little bit independent-minded sometimes. [*Laughter*] There's nothing wrong with that. He is dedicated to the people of this State. He truly is. We spend a lot of time together. He's always talking about what he can do for the people here.

I—let me tell you what, I can count on this man. See, that's important. He's a firm