

and gratitude to God. Americans who practice the Islamic faith enrich our society and help our Nation build a better future.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The President's Radio Address

October 16, 2004

Good morning. Over the past 4 years, I have brought a straightforward approach to the Presidency. I tell you what I'm going to do, and I keep my word. When I came into office 4 years ago, the economy was sliding into recession. Then terrorist attacks cost our Nation nearly a million jobs in 3 months. To help families and to get this economy growing again, I pledged to reduce taxes, and I kept my word. Now the results are clear. Over the last 3 years, America's economy has grown at the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation. The homeownership rate is at an alltime high, and we have added more than 1.9 million new jobs in the past 13 months.

My opponent has a different approach. Over the last 20 years, he has voted to raise taxes 98 times. Now he is promising over \$2.2 trillion in new spending, and paying for it would require broad tax increases on small businesses and the middle class. I have a better plan. I will continue to be wise with taxpayers' money, and I will keep your taxes low.

When I came into office, too many of our children were shuffled through school without learning the basics. I pledged to restore accountability and end the soft bigotry of low expectations, and I kept my word. Now our children are making sustained progress in reading and math, and we are closing the achievement gap for minority students.

My opponent has pledged to weaken the No Child Left Behind Act. His proposals

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

would undermine the accountability we worked so hard to pass. I have a better plan. We will keep demanding results for all our children, and we will leave no child behind.

When I came into office, Medicare wasn't paying for the prescription drugs that can reduce health costs and save a lot of lives. I pledged to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors, and I kept my word. Now seniors are saving money with drug discount cards. And in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage.

On health care, my opponent has a history of opposing needed reforms. He voted against the Medicare bill even though it was supported by the AARP and other seniors groups. He has voted 10 times against medical liability reform, and now his health care proposal calls for bigger, more intrusive Government. Eight out of ten people who get health care under his plan would be placed on a Government program. I have a better plan. I will protect doctors and patients from junk lawsuits, help employees in small businesses afford health coverage, make sure every poor county has a community health center. And I will make sure health decisions are always made by patients and doctors, not by officials in Washington, DC.

In this time of change, some things do not change. Those are the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. I stand for a culture

of life in which every person matters and every being counts. I stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. I stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent says he supports the institution of marriage, but he voted against the Defense of Marriage Act, which Congress passed by an overwhelming majority and my predecessor into law. My opponent has voted against sensible bipartisan measures like parental notification laws. He voted against the ban on partial-birth abortion.

On issues that are vital to this Nation's future, all Americans know where I stand. I'm a compassionate conservative. I believe

in policies that empower people to improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe in helping men and women find the skills and tools to prosper in a changing world. I have worked to help all Americans build a future of dignity and independence. And that is how I will continue to lead this Nation for 4 more years.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:45 a.m. on October 15 at the Jacksonville Inn in Jacksonville, OR, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in Sunrise, Florida October 16, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Nothing like spending a Saturday morning in Florida. Thank you. I'm proud you all are here. Thanks for coming.

I'm really proud of my brother Jeb. Your State has been tested recently—not one hurricane but four hurricanes. Jeb was a strong leader during these times. I had the honor of visiting Florida's families with him, those who hurt with him. I had an honor of traveling your State and seeing the great compassion of Florida arise as people hurt and suffered. You know, when times are tough is when you see where strong leaders emerge. Strong leadership emerged not only in your Governor, but strong leadership emerged all throughout your great State. We'll continue to help Florida rebuild. But one thing about this State you never have to worry about is the spirit of the people.

Listen, Laura and I are here to ask for the vote. We're traveling in Florida, and

we're here to ask for your help. Make sure you get people to the polls. Starting Monday, people can vote. Listen, don't overlook discerning Democrats when you get them headed to the polls, people like Zell Miller. Remind people that if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

And one reason you need to put me back in office is so that Laura will have 4 more years as the First Lady. When I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, I'll marry you, just so long as I never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you've got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that deal. When people see her speak, they see a compassionate, strong, warm First Lady. I am really proud of her.

And I am really proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. Now, look, I admit he doesn't have the waviest hair in