

Statement on Congressional Action on Homeland Security Legislation *October 7, 2005*

I applaud the Congress for its work on the homeland security legislation. The resources provided by this bill will help us protect our borders, upgrade explosives detection technology in our airports, address

radiological and nuclear threats, and target security funding to areas with the greatest need. The legislation will help make our homeland more secure.

The President's Radio Address *October 8, 2005*

Good morning. This week I nominated an exceptional individual to replace retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor on the Supreme Court of the United States. Harriet Miers is a remarkable woman and an accomplished attorney. She has wide experience in the courtroom and at the highest levels of government, and she will be an outstanding addition to our Nation's highest Court.

Harriet Miers was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, where she attended the public schools. When illness struck her family, Harriet went to work to help pay for her own college education. She stayed close to home in Dallas to attend Southern Methodist University and received a bachelor's degree in mathematics.

She remained at SMU for law school and earned a place on the law review. After graduation, she was hired for a prestigious 2-year clerkship for a Federal trial judge. From there, she went on to an extraordinary career in private practice and public service and became a pioneer for women lawyers. She was the first woman to be hired at her law firm, the first woman to become president of that firm, the first woman to lead a large law firm in the State of Texas, the first woman head of the Dallas Bar Association, and the first woman elected as president of the State Bar of Texas.

In her law practice, Ms. Miers handled hundreds of cases in State and Federal courts, from massive commercial litigation to criminal cases to civil disputes. She served in local government on the Dallas City Council and later held office in State government as well.

As Ms. Miers rose through the legal ranks, she also put in long hours of volunteer legal work on behalf of the poor and underprivileged, and served as a leader for more than a dozen community groups and charities. Beginning in the 1990s, Harriet Miers was regularly rated one of the top 100 lawyers in America and one of the top 50 women lawyers in the country.

Because of her skill and record of remarkable achievement, in 2001, I asked her to work in my administration. For the past 5 years, Harriet Miers has served our Nation in critical roles, including White House Counsel, one of the most important legal positions in the country. As counsel, Ms. Miers addresses complex matters of constitutional law, serves as the chief legal advisor during regular meetings of the National Security Council, and handles sensitive issues of executive-congressional relations, among many other essential duties. She has led the effort to help nominate outstanding judges for the Federal judiciary. She was in charge of the process that

resulted in the appointment of Chief Justice John Roberts.

Harriet Miers would come to the Supreme Court with a background in private practice and high-government service, and this puts her in strong company. Indeed, since 1933, 10 of the 34 Justices came to the Supreme Court directly from positions in the executive branch, such as the one Ms. Miers now holds. And no Supreme Court nominee in the last 35 years has exceeded Harriet Miers's overall range of experience in courtroom litigation; service in Federal, State, and local government; leadership in local, State, and national bar associations; and pro bono and charitable activities.

Throughout her life, Ms. Miers has excelled at everything she has done. She's been a leader and a trailblazer for women lawyers, and her work has earned the respect of attorneys across the Nation. I chose Harriet Miers for the Court both because of her accomplishments and because I know her character and her judicial philosophy. Harriet Miers will be the type of judge I said I would nominate, a good, conservative judge.

She shares my belief that judges should strictly interpret the Constitution and laws, not legislate from the bench. She understands that the role of a judge is to inter-

pret the text of the Constitution and statutes as written, not as he or she might wish they were written. And she knows that judges should have a restrained and modest role in our constitutional democracy. Like Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Byron White, who were also nominated to the Supreme Court directly from legal positions in the executive branch, Harriet Miers will be prudent in exercising judicial power and firm in defending judicial independence.

When she goes before the Senate, I am confident that all Americans will see what I see every day: Harriet Miers is a woman of intelligence, strength, and conviction. And when she is confirmed by the Senate, I am confident that she will leave a lasting mark on the Supreme Court and will be a Justice who makes all Americans proud.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:35 a.m. on October 7 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 7 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Earthquake in Pakistan *October 8, 2005*

The people of the United States offer our deepest sympathies for the loss of life and destruction caused by the earthquake that struck outside of Islamabad. Our initial deployments of assistance are underway,

and we stand ready to provide additional assistance as needed. My thoughts and prayers are with those affected by this horrible tragedy.