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changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, just go ahead and do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education in your community, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. You and I are living in a period where the stakes are high, where the challenges are difficult, a time when firm resolve is needed.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. Workers in hardhats chanted, "Whatever it takes." A fireman or a policeman—I don't know which one—grabbed me and said, "Do not let me down." As we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend the security of our country, whatever it takes.

In these times, I've also been witness to the character of our Nation. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. And we've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most. We will need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win, and the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity to every corner of our country. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our blessed land, the best days lie ahead.

Thanks for coming. May God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:17 p.m. in the Resch Center at the Brown County Veterans Memorial Complex. In his remarks, he referred to comedian Dennis Miller; entertainer Wayne Newton; and Brian Noble, head coach, arenafootball2's Green Bay Blizzard.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments

July 14, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2005 budget amendments for the Departments of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor. In addition, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed FY 2004 language proposal for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Overall, the discretionary budget authority proposed in my FY 2005 budget would not be increased by these requests.

The details of these proposals are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 15.

Remarks on Signing the Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act

July 15, 2004

The President. Thanks for coming. Welcome to the White House.

[*At this point, the lights in the room flickered.*]

The President. Thanks for coming. [*Laughter*] Welcome to the White House. [*Laughter*]

We're taking an important step today to combat the problem of identity theft, one of

the fastest growing financial crimes in our Nation. Last year alone, nearly 10 million Americans had their identities stolen by criminals who robbed them and the Nation's businesses of nearly $50 billion through fraudulent transactions. The bill I'm about to sign sends a clear message that a person who violates another's financial privacy will be punished.

The Identity Theft Penalty Enhancement Act also prescribes prison sentences for those who use identity theft to commit other crimes, including terrorism. It reflects our Government's resolve to answer serious offenses with serious penalties.

I appreciate the members of my administration who worked on this important piece of legislation, particularly Cabinet members John Snow and John Ashcroft. I appreciate the Members of the Congress who worked hard on this legislation: Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Jon Kyl, Senator Dianne Feinstein; and Members of the House, Chairman Senator Jim Sensenbrenner and John Carter from the great State of Texas. I want to thank the other Members of Congress who are here, members of both political parties. Thank you for coming. I thank those who are on their staffs who have worked hard.

The crime of identity theft undermines the basic trust on which our economy depends. When a person takes out an insurance policy or makes an online purchase or opens a savings account, he or she must have confidence that personal financial information will be protected and treated with care. Identity theft harms not only its direct victims but also many businesses and customers whose confidence is shaken. Like other forms of stealing, identity theft leaves the victim poor and feeling terribly violated.

But the losses are not measured only in dollars. An identity theft—thief can steal the victim's financial reputation. Running up bills on credit card accounts that the victim never knew existed, the criminal can quickly damage a person's lifelong efforts to build and maintain a good credit rating. Repairing the damage can take months or years.

Government has a responsibility to protect citizens from these crimes and the grief and hassle they cause. It's a solemn responsibility of our Government. I want to thank the Members of Congress for recognizing that responsibility.

This good law is part of a broader effort we've waged in recent years. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the FBI, and Secret Service are working with local and State officials to crack down on the criminal networks that are responsible for much of the identity theft that occurs in this Nation. The Federal Trade Commission is training local law enforcement in the detection of identity theft. The Commission has set up the ID Theft Data Clearinghouse, which keeps track of complaints across the country and provides those records to prosecutors seeking to take down organized rings.

Last December, I signed the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, which established a national system of fraud detection so that identity thieves can be stopped before they run up tens of thousands of dollars in illegal purchases. Thanks to this law, victims can make one phone call to alert all three major credit rating agencies to report the crime and to protect their credit ratings.

The law I sign today will dramatically strengthen the fight against identity theft and fraud. Prosecutors across the country report that sentences for these crimes do not reflect the damage done to the victim. Too often, those convicted have been sentenced to little or no time in prison. This changes today. This new law establishes in the Federal criminal court the offense of aggravated identity theft. And someone convicted of that crime can expect to go to jail for stealing a person's good name.

These punishments will come on top of any punishment for crimes that proceed from identity theft. For example, when someone is convicted of mail fraud in a case involving stolen personal information, judges will now impose two sentences, one for mail fraud and one for aggravated identity theft. Those convicted of aggravated identity theft must serve an additional mandatory 2-year prison term. Someone convicted of aggravated identity theft, such as using a false passport in connection with a terrorism case, would receive an additional prison sentence of 5 years. In addition, judges will not be allowed to let those convicted of aggravated identity theft serve their sentence on probation.

This law also raises the standard of conduct for people who have access to personal records through their work at banks, government agencies, insurance companies, and other storehouses of financial data. The law directs the United States Sentencing Commission to make sure those convicted of abusing and stealing from their customers serve a sentence equal to their crimes.

What I'm telling you is, this is a good law. And I appreciate you working hard to see to it that it made it to my desk. Because of this act of Congress I sign today, the guilty will be certain to be punished. That's good for our consumers. It's good for our economy. And it's good for the cause of justice.

Welcome to the White House.

[*The President signed the bill.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:52 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. H.R. 1731, approved July 15, was assigned Public Law 108–275.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and Mongolia

July 15, 2004

President Bush and President Bagabandi today declared a new era of cooperation and comprehensive partnership between their two democratic countries based on shared values and common strategic interests. They welcomed the progress in implementing the Joint Statement of January 31, 2004 and looked ahead to future consultations and collaboration. The two sides agreed to work towards maintaining regular consultations at all levels. They also expressed satisfaction that the relationship between their two countries continues to grow and strengthen. President Bagabandi's visit illustrates the important progress we have made in our bilateral relationship and in our mutual participation in the larger community of democracies.

The United States welcomed the recent free and fair elections in Mongolia as another manifestation of Mongolia's strong and abiding commitment to democracy.

President Bush expressed the United States' strong support for Mongolia's democratic and economic transition and reforms and welcomed Mongolia's progress toward becoming a mature and stable democracy and a private sector-led free market economy. He congratulated President Bagabandi and the Mongolian people for qualifying for eligibility for the Millennium Challenge Account, a new approach to achieving sustainable economic growth that rewards countries for past performance and provides incentives for continuing dynamic policy reforms. President Bush congratulated the Mongolian people on their commitment to democracy as expressed in their recent elections and noted confidence that the election process would be successfully completed in a free, fair and transparent manner consistent with Mongolia's constitution.

The two Presidents agreed that a democratic, secure, and prosperous Mongolia that promotes friendly relations with its neighbors and is an active participant in regional and international economic, political, and security forums is essential to ensuring peace and stability in Asia. The United States supports Mongolia's efforts to integrate itself into regional and international economic and financial structures.

President Bush and President Bagabandi also noted their common support for the permanent, thorough, and transparent dismantlement of nuclear programs on the Korean Peninsula. The United States acknowledges Mongolia's efforts to gain internationally recognized and legally binding nuclear weapon-free status to further enhance confidence-building measures in North East Asia.

President Bush welcomed Mongolia's commitment to combat international terrorism and applauded Mongolia's participation in the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq, including its peacekeeping commitment to the Multinational Force in Iraq. The United States and Mongolia agreed to continue working to advance Mongolia's contribution to international peacekeeping efforts. President Bush reaffirmed the U.S. willingness to continue bilateral programs of technical assistance consistent with Mongolia's long-term developmental goals. President Bagabandi expressed Mongolia's deep appreciation to the United