AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

people from around the country, including Walter and Larry, have come to the Halls of Congress to help balance those scales. And fortunately, there are good Senators and fair Congressmen who understand that all we seek is balance. And now is the time for the United States Congress to balance the scales when it comes to class-action lawsuits, to do their duty to make this country as good a country as it can possibly be.

I want to thank our panelists for coming. I hope you've enjoyed this as much as I have. I'm honored that you would take time and stay over from getting back home to help explain the need for this country to act on this important issue.

Thank you for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:31 p.m. at the Department of Commerce.

Statement on a Supplemental Appropriations Request To Support the Areas Recovering From the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunamis

February 9, 2005

More than 6 weeks have passed since the tsunami took over 150,000 lives in one of the world's worst natural disasters. Thanks to the immediate and effective response of the U.S. military and the U.S. Agency for International Development, the United States, working with other members of the international community, was able to prevent additional loss of life and to deliver relief to those in need.

I will seek $950 million as part of the supplemental appropriations request to support the areas recovering from the tsunami and to cover the costs of relief efforts to date. This amount includes an additional $600 million above my initial commitment of $350 million. We will use these resources to provide assistance and to work with the affected nations on rebuilding vital infrastructure that reenergizes economies and strengthens societies.

I appreciate the efforts of former Presidents Bush and Clinton to raise private donations in the United States, and we are grateful to all of those who have donated money to help those in need.

Proclamation 7870—To Modify Rules of Origin Under the North American Free Trade Agreement

February 9, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Presidential Proclamation 6641 of December 15, 1993, implemented the North American Free Trade Agreement (the "NAFTA") with respect to the United States and, pursuant to the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (the "NAFTA Implementation Act"), incorporated in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (the "HTS") the tariff modifications and rules of origin necessary or appropriate to carry out the NAFTA.

2. Section 202 of the NAFTA Implementation Act provides rules for determining whether goods imported into the United States originate in the territory of a NAFTA party and thus are eligible for the tariff and other treatment contemplated under the NAFTA. Section 202(q) of the NAFTA Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3332(q)) authorizes the President to proclaim, as a part of the HTS, the rules of origin set out in the NAFTA and to proclaim modifications to such previously proclaimed rules of origin, subject to the consultation and layover requirements of section 103(a) of the NAFTA Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3313(a)).

3. I have determined that the modifications to the HTS set out in the Annex to this proclamation are appropriate. For goods of Mexico, I have decided that the effective date of the modifications shall be determined by the United States Trade Representative (USTR).

4. Section 604 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2483), authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of the relevant provisions of that Act, of other Acts affecting import treatment, and actions thereunder,

including the removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 604 of the 1974 Act, section 202 of the NAFTA Implementation Act, and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, do hereby proclaim:

(1) In order to modify the rules of origin under the NAFTA, general note 12 to the HTS is modified as provided in the Annex to this proclamation.

(2) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive Orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

(3) The modifications made by the Annex to this proclamation shall be effective with respect to goods of Canada that are entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after January 1, 2005. The modifications made by such Annex shall be effective with respect to goods of Mexico that are entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after a date that the USTR announces in the *Federal Register*.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:51 a.m., February 11, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 10, and it and its attached annex were published in the *Federal Register* on February 14.

Memorandum on Delegation of Reporting Authority

February 9, 2005

Memorandum for the Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board

Subject: Delegation of Reporting Authority

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby delegate to you the functions and authority conferred upon the President by section 7(b)(6) of the Railroad Retirement Act and section 12(l) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act to provide the specified report to the Congress.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:51 a.m., February 11, 2005]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 10, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on February 14.

Remarks in a Discussion on Strengthening Social Security in Raleigh, North Carolina

February 10, 2005

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for coming. Okay. Thanks for the warm welcome. We got a lot of work to do here. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Yes, thanks. Okay. Listen, we're here to talk about an important subject. And I want to thank some of our fellow citizens for agreeing to join me up here on the stage. It's not easy, frankly, to go from kind of a quiet civilian life to agree to sit up here with the President and all the cameras. [*Laughter*] But I think you're going to find