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worked to rally America's armies of compassion and bring together individuals and organizations committed to volunteer service. More than 65 million people volunteered in 2005, an increase of 6.5 million since 2002. As we celebrate the fourth anniversary of USA Freedom Corps, we recognize the many Americans who have stepped forward to help others, and we underscore our commitment to serving our Nation and people around the world.

USA Freedom Corps was created to build on the countless acts of service, sacrifice, and generosity that followed the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In the wake of the devastating tsunami of 2004 and hurricanes of 2005, Americans have continued to demonstrate that the true strength of our Nation lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. By reaching out to aid the victims of these tragedies, people across our country helped rebuild shattered lives and communities. Their acts of service again demonstrated that by loving our neighbors as ourselves, we can offer hope and healing to those who suffer.

USA Freedom Corps is dedicated to expanding volunteer service and extending the goodwill of the American people. To help support our communities, respond to crises at home, and spread compassion around the globe, USA Freedom Corps works to strengthen public service programs such as the Peace Corps, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Citizen Corps. USA Freedom Corps encourages and promotes the good work of non-profit, faith-based, and community organizations. Through the President's Greeter Program and the President's Volunteer Service Award, USA Freedom Corps and the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation recognize Americans who have made serving their neighbors a central part of their lives. USA Freedom Corps has also created a comprehensive network of volunteer opportunities to help more Americans find ways to get involved in serving their communities.

Through USA Freedom Corps, my Administration will continue to build a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility in our country. To learn more about opportunities for volunteering, citizens can visit the USA Freedom Corps website at www.volunteer.gov. By working together for a cause greater than self, we can strengthen our Nation, one person, one neighborhood, and one community at a time.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the Fourth Anniversary of USA Freedom Corps. I call upon the citizens of this great country to find ways to volunteer and help their fellow Americans. I commend the efforts of USA Freedom Corps and all those who have already answered the call to serve, and I encourage all Americans to donate their time, energy, and talents to the work ahead.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 1, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 2.

Statement on the Death of Coretta Scott King

January 31, 2006

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the death of Coretta Scott King. Mrs. King was a remarkable and courageous woman and a great civil rights leader. She carried on the legacy of her husband, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., including through her extraordinary work at the King Center. Mrs. King's lasting contributions to freedom and equality have made America a better and more compassionate nation. Laura and I were fortunate to have known Mrs. King, and we will always treasure the time we spent with her. We send our condolences and prayers to the entire King family.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Samuel A. Alito, Jr., To Be an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court

January 31, 2006

I am pleased that the Senate has voted to confirm Judge Sam Alito as the 110th Justice of the Supreme Court. Sam Alito is a brilliant and fair-minded judge who strictly interprets the Constitution and laws and does not legislate from the bench. He is a man of deep character and integrity, and he will make all Americans proud as a Justice on our highest Court. The son of an Italian immigrant, Judge Alito's appointment to the Supreme Court is the realization of the American dream for this good man and his family. I congratulate Judge Alito, his wife, Martha, the Alito children, and Judge Alito's mother, Rose, on this historic achievement and momentous day in the life of our country.

Judge Alito replaces Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Justice O'Connor was the first woman ever to sit on the Supreme Court, and she is one of the most admired Americans of our time or any time. Our Nation is grateful to Justice O'Connor for her extraordinary and dedicated public service, and Laura and I wish her and John all the best.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Ben S. Bernanke To Be Chairman of the Federal Reserve System

January 31, 2006

I am pleased that the Senate has voted to confirm Ben Bernanke to be the next Chairman of the Federal Reserve. Ben is a man of impeccable credentials, sound policy judgment, and strong character—and he will make an outstanding Chairman. Ben has provided wise counsel and good advice as a member of my economic team, and he will serve our Nation with great distinction at the Federal Reserve.

America's economy is strong for a lot of reasons, and one reason is the excellent work done by the men and women of the Federal Reserve. Under the leadership of Chairman Ben Bernanke, the Federal Reserve will continue to help provide Americans with a high quality of living.

Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union

January 31, 2006

Thank you all. Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, Members of Congress, members of the Supreme Court and diplomatic corps, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens: Today our Nation lost a beloved, graceful, courageous woman who called America to its founding ideals and carried on a noble dream. Tonight we are comforted by the hope of a glad reunion with the husband who was taken so long ago, and we are grateful for the good life of Coretta Scott King.

Every time I'm invited to this rostrum, I'm humbled by the privilege and mindful of the history we've seen together. We have gathered under this Capitol dome in moments of national mourning and national achievement. We have served America through one of the most consequential periods of our history, and it has been my honor to serve with you.

In a system of two parties, two chambers, and two elected branches, there will always be differences and debate. But even tough debates can be conducted in a civil tone, and our differences cannot be allowed to harden into anger. To confront the great issues before us, we must act in a spirit of goodwill and respect for one another—and I will do my part. Tonight the state of our Union is strong, and together we will make it stronger.

In this decisive year, you and I will make choices that determine both the future and the character of our country. We will choose to act confidently in pursuing the enemies of freedom, or retreat from our duties in the hope of an easier life. We will choose to build our prosperity by leading the world economy, or shut ourselves off from trade and opportunity. In a complex and challenging time, the road of isolationism and protectionism may seem broad and inviting, yet it ends in danger and decline. The only way to protect our people, the only way to secure the peace, the only way to control our destiny is by our