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13 governmental agencies involved with identity theft have a well-coordinated strategy to help the victims and to put those who commit the theft behind bars.

Again, I want to thank you all very much for helping us understand the issues but, more importantly, telling a story of the emotions and the feelings that you went through during this—difficult periods of your life.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:27 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Tax Legislation

May 10, 2006

The tax cuts we passed in recent years are working to fuel America's economic expansion. Our progrowth policies have helped the economy create more than 5.2 million jobs since August of 2003, and last year, our economy grew faster than that of any other major industrialized nation. By extending key Capital Gains and Dividends tax relief, the House has taken an important step to continue to help hard-working Americans and to keep our economy strong and growing. I appreciate the House Leadership and Chairman Bill Thomas for their hard work.

I urge the Senate to vote swiftly so that I can sign this bill into law and put a stop to a massive tax hike that would be disastrous for small businesses, our economy, and all working Americans.

Executive Order 13402—Strengthening Federal Efforts To Protect Against Identity Theft

May 10, 2006

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, in order to strengthen efforts to protect against identity theft, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Policy.* It is the policy of the United States to use Federal resources effectively to deter, prevent, detect, investigate, proceed against, and prosecute unlawful use by persons of the identifying information of other persons, including through:

(a) increased aggressive law enforcement actions designed to prevent, investigate, and prosecute identity theft crimes, recover the proceeds of such crimes, and ensure just and effective punishment of those who perpetrate identity theft;

(b) improved public outreach by the Federal Government to better (i) educate the public about identity theft and protective measures against identity theft, and (ii) address how the private sector can take appropriate steps to protect personal data and educate the public about identity theft; and

(c) increased safeguards that Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities can implement to better secure government-held personal data.

Sec. 2. *Establishment of the Identity Theft Task Force.*

(a) There is hereby established the Identity Theft Task Force.

(b) The Task Force shall consist exclusively of:

(i) the Attorney General, who shall serve as Chairman of the Task Force;

(ii) the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, who shall serve as Co-Chairman of the Task Force;

(iii) the Secretary of the Treasury;

(iv) the Secretary of Commerce;

(v) the Secretary of Health and Human Services;

(vi) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

(vii) the Secretary of Homeland Security;

(viii) the Director of the Office of Management and Budget;

(ix) the Commissioner of Social Security;

(x) the following officers of the United States:

(A) the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System;

(B) the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation;

(C) the Comptroller of the Currency;

(D) the Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision;

(E) the Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration Board; and

(F) the Postmaster General; and

(xi) such other officers of the United States as the Attorney General may designate from time to time, with the concurrence of the respective heads of departments and agencies concerned.

(c) The Chairman and Co-Chairman shall convene and preside at the meetings of the Task Force, determine its agenda, direct its work and, as appropriate, establish and direct subgroups of the Task Force that shall consist exclusively of members of the Task Force. Such subgroups may address particular subject matters, such as criminal law enforcement or private sector education and outreach. The Chairman and Co-Chairman may also designate, with the concurrence of the head of department, agency, or instrumentality of which the official is part, such other Federal officials as they deem appropriate for participation in the Task Force subgroups.

(d) A member of the Task Force, including the Chairman and Co-Chairman, may designate, to perform the Task Force or Task Force subgroup functions of the member, any person who is a part of the member's department, agency, or instrumentality and who has high-level policy or operational duties or responsibilities related to the mission of the Task Force.

Sec. 3. *Functions of the Task Force.* The Task Force, in implementing the policy set forth in section 1 of this order, shall:

(a) review the activities of executive branch departments, agencies, and instrumentalities relating to the policy set forth in section 1, and building upon these prior activities, prepare and submit in writing to the President within 180 days after the date of this order a coordinated strategic plan to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Federal Government's activities in the areas of identity theft awareness, prevention, detection, and prosecution;

(b) coordinate, as appropriate and subject to section 5(a) of this order, Federal Government efforts related to implementation of the policy set forth in section 1 of this order;

(c) obtain information and advice relating to the policy set forth in section 1 from representatives of State, local, and tribal governments, private sector entities, and individuals, in a manner that seeks their individual advice and does not involve collective judgment or consensus advice and deliberation and without giving any such person a vote or a veto over the activities or advice of the Task Force;

(d) promote enhanced cooperation by Federal departments and agencies with State and local authorities responsible for the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of significant identity theft crimes, including through avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort and expenditure of resources; and

(e) provide advice on the establishment, execution, and efficiency of policies and activities to implement the policy set forth in section 1:

(i) to the President in written reports from time to time, including recommendations for administrative action or proposals for legislation; and

(ii) to the heads of departments, agencies, and instrumentalities as appropriate from time to time within the discretion of the Chairman and the Co-Chairman.

Sec. 4. *Cooperation.* (a) To the extent permitted by law and applicable presidential guidance, executive departments, agencies, and instrumentalities shall provide to the Task Force such information, support, and assistance as the Task Force, through its Chairman and Co-Chairman, may request to implement this order.

(b) The Task Force shall be located in the Department of Justice for administrative purposes, and to the extent permitted by law, the Department of Justice shall provide the funding and administrative support the Task Force needs to implement this order, as determined by the Attorney General.

Sec. 5. *General Provisions.* (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted by law to an executive department, agency, or instrumentality or the head thereof; and

(ii) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the Federal Government and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

Sec. 6. *Termination.* Unless the Task Force is sooner terminated by the President, the Attorney General may terminate the Task Force by a written notice of its termination published in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

The White House,
May 10, 2006.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 12, 2006]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on May 15.

Remarks on the Terrorist Surveillance Program

May 11, 2006

After September the 11th, I vowed to the American people that our Government would do everything within the law to protect them against another terrorist attack. As part of this effort, I authorized the National Security Agency to intercept the international communications of people with known links to Al Qaida and related terrorist organizations. In other words, if Al Qaida or their associates are making calls into the United States or out of the United States, we want to know what they're saying.

Today there are new claims about other ways we are tracking down Al Qaida to prevent attacks on America. I want to make some important points about what the Government is doing and what the Government is not doing.

First, our intelligence activities strictly target Al Qaida and their known affiliates. Al Qaida is our enemy, and we want to know their plans. Second, the Government does not listen to domestic phone calls without court approval. Third, the intelligence activities I authorized are lawful and have been briefed to appropriate Members of Congress, both Republican and Democrat. Fourth, the privacy of ordinary Americans is fiercely protected in all our activities.

We're not mining or trolling through the personal lives of millions of innocent Americans. Our efforts are focused on links to Al Qaida and their known affiliates. So far we've been very successful in preventing another attack on our soil.

As a general matter, every time sensitive intelligence is leaked, it hurts our ability to defeat this enemy. Our most important job is to protect the American people from another attack, and we will do so within the laws of our country.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:03 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Commencement Address at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Biloxi, Mississippi

May 11, 2006

Thanks for the warm welcome. President Lott; members of the faculty, staff, and administration; distinguished guests; family, friends, and, most importantly of all, the graduating class of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

This afternoon, we celebrate commencement in a stadium that is still under repair, near streets lined with temporary housing, in a region where too many lives have been shattered—and there has never been a more hopeful day to graduate in the State of Mississippi.

I am proud to stand before some of the most determined students at college or university in America. Over these past 9 months, you have shown a resilience more powerful than any storm. You continued your studies in classrooms with crumbling walls. You lost homes and slept in tents near campus to finish courses. You cleared debris during the