

And so I'm pleased with the economic progress we're making. The Secretary of the Treasury and I will continue to work as hard as we can to encourage entrepreneurial—entrepreneurship and small-business growth.

And so, again, I want to thank the people of FedEx. This is a great example of what is possible in America. A fellow I knew long years ago, named Fred Smith, had a dream about how to better distribute mail and product. And he and a lot of other good folks built this into a great American company.

So I want to thank the folks here for letting us come by to say hello.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:27 a.m. at the FedEx Express DCA Facility. In his remarks, he referred to Frederick W. Smith, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, FedEx Corp.

Remarks at a Reception Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

October 6, 2006

The President. Thank you. *Hola*. Please be seated.

Audience member. Viva Bush!

The President. Shhh. [Laughter] *Bienvenidos*. We are glad you're here. Thanks for coming. Laura sends her best. She, like me, greets you to come—to welcome you to the *Casa Blanca*—[laughter]—*la casa de todos*. We are glad you're here. I am glad that so many of you joined us for Hispanic Heritage Month. Today we honor the contributions of Hispanic Americans to our country, to our culture, and to our national character.

We celebrate the values *de la familia y fe*. After all, those values are at the heart of the Hispanic American community. We welcome the diversity that enriches our lives, a diversity that makes America a stronger and better country. Thanks for coming.

I am proud to welcome a friend of my family's, His Royal Highness Prince Felipe de Borbon, the Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Spain. Thank you for coming. His Royal Highness is here to help celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, which I think is a kind gesture and a noble gesture from a very important country. We're proud you're here, sir. Thank you for coming. Please give your best

to His Majesty and your mom. And I will do the same on behalf of you to my father and her majesty, my mother. [Laughter]

I am proud to be here with the Attorney General of the United States, Alberto Gonzales. The U.S. Treasurer, Anna Cabral. Anna, thank you for coming; *y su esposo*, Victor. Welcome, Victor. Good to see you.

Today we've got a special guest, Ana Cristina, who will perform two songs after I finish speaking, which probably means you want me to finish speaking soon, so that Ana can come up here. We're proud you're here, Ana. I want to thank my friend Emilio Estefan for arranging for the entertainment today. He's a great buddy of ours from Miami. It's good to see you, sir.

I am proud to be here with Lieutenant Colonel Consuelo Kickbusch. She's the winner of the Hispanic Heritage Award 2006. Interesting name, Kickbusch. [Laughter] It sounds like the political campaign. [Laughter] Congratulations.

I appreciate all the Ambassadors who are here. Thanks for coming. We've got Ambassadors from neighboring countries. I like to remind people that the best foreign policy is to make sure that we've got good foreign policy in our own neighborhood. And so we're glad you're here. Thanks for coming.

We've got distinguished members from the IDB, USO, all kinds of organizations. And I'm proud you're here. Thanks for coming.

We are a blessed nation to have thousands of people who claim Hispanic heritage. I firmly believe that. I know that to be true. I think our citizens must recognize the great contribution of Hispanic Americans to our country. Hispanic Americans are hard-working people. They're entrepreneurial people who dream big dreams. They're people who love their God and especially love their families. But most of all, they love their country, America.

As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, we've got to recognize we have responsibilities in Government to make sure that all in this country can realize the American Dream. In the 21st century, the best way to do that

is to make sure every child gets a good education—not just a few children—but every single child must receive a quality education.

I believe strongly that every child can learn regardless of the color of their skin or whether their parents speak English as a first language. And I know that in order to make sure every child gets educated, we've got to set high standards. And we've got to measure to determine whether or not schools are achieving that which we expect. And when we find a child cannot read at grade level, then that child deserves extra help to make sure that we make—to make sure that we meet a national objective, and that is no child should be left behind.

I'm pleased to report that Hispanic students, in reading and math, are scoring higher, and an achievement gap in our country is beginning to close. We're making progress, but I assure you we will not rest until every child receives a quality education in our country.

I believe that America should remain the land of the entrepreneur, and that ours is a country that benefits when people have a dream and work hard to achieve that dream. The small-business community is strong here in America. It's strong because we have entrepreneurs in our midst. And the role of Government is to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit. Government doesn't create wealth, but Government can create an environment in which people who dream dreams have a chance to realize those dreams.

I'm proud to report that the number of Hispanic-owned businesses is growing at three times the national rate. And that's positive, particularly if you're a fellow like me who worries about whether or not people can find work, because the truth of the matter is 70 percent of new jobs in our country are created by small businesses. And so when the small-business sector is growing, the job base is growing. And equally importantly, when the small business is growing, it means ownership is growing, and the more owners we have in the United States of America, the more hopeful country we will have for all of us.

We take pride in the service of Hispanic Americans. When we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, it's time to thank our fellow

citizens for serving the country. I thank our Attorney General for serving the country. I thank the Secretary of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez, for serving the country. They're in my Cabinet. These are men who serve at the highest councils of Government and can walk in the Oval Office any time they feel like it and say, "Mr. President, here is what's on my mind." I appreciate their counsel in helping me make good decisions on behalf of our country.

We've got Hispanic Americans all across the country who serve our country by loving a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves. Thousands of our fellow citizens feed the hungry or find shelter for the homeless or put their arm around a child who needs love in order to help create a society that is welcoming to all. And for those of you who are involved in our faith-based communities and charitable communities, I thank you on behalf of a grateful nation.

The Hispanic community is also known for its willingness to serve in the United States military and protect our freedoms. Today, we have over 200,000 Hispanic Americans wearing the uniform of the finest military on the face of the Earth. Today, we've got members of the Hispanic community who wear our uniform with us, representing those 200,000, and I want to thank you for your service.

These fine Americans, like the other Americans in our military, are working hard to secure this country. They're answering the call to history. They have volunteered to serve in an historic time, a time when this United States will do what it takes to defend ourselves from people who spread evil by killing the innocent; at a time when the United States understands that in order to spread the peace, we will stand with those who long for liberty. I'm proud to be the Commander in Chief of such a fantastic group of men and women.

And as we renew our commitment to our Hispanic Americans, we also must renew our commitment to make sure we're a welcoming society. We are a land of immigrants, and as we debate immigration policy, we must always keep that important fact in mind. One of the important things about our country is that we provide hope, and that we recognize that we're a stronger nation when we're

bound together under one God—when we bind together under one God, different cultures and different heritages.

We will conduct this debate on immigration in a way that is respectful to our heritage. We are a nation of law, and we will enforce our law. But at the same time, we must remember that in order to secure our borders, in order to make sure we fulfill our heritage, immigration reform must be comprehensive in nature. We must understand that you can't kick 12 million people out of your country; that we must figure out a way to say to those that if you're lawful and if you've contributed to the United States of America, there is a way for you to eventually earn a citizenship.

Nobody in our land wants to grant automatic amnesty. But everybody in our land understands these people must be treated with respect and dignity. There are citizenship lines for people from our neighborhood. People ought to be given a chance to get at the back of the citizenship line and have a chance. And so I assure my friends here that I will—we will enforce the border as people expect us to do. But as we do so, we'll do so in a humane way, in a way that honors that great tradition of the United States of America, one Nation under God.

And so on this day that we recognize the contributions of our Hispanic Americans, we renew the great—our faith in the greatness of our country. I welcome you to the White House. I'm honored, Royal Highness, that you have joined us today. I thank you for serving the United States of America. And I now welcome to the stage Ana Cristina.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:29 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia of Spain; Victor G. Cabral, husband of U.S. Treasurer Anna Escobedo Cabral; Ana Cristina Alvarez, Cuban American singer; Emilio Estefan, Jr., president, Estefan Enterprises; and Lt. Col. Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch, USA, (Ret.). The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

September 30

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

October 1

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

October 2

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Later, he had an intelligence briefing followed by a briefing on wildfires in California. He and Mrs. Bush then participated in planting an elm tree on the north grounds of the White House.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Reno, NV, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Elaine Nickovich.

In the evening, the President traveled to Stockton, CA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Masanobu Kamigaki.

The President announced his intention to appoint Mary E. Peters as a member of the Amtrak Reform Board.

October 3

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, at the Radisson Hotel, he participated in a signing ceremony for Public Law 109-294, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act.

Later in the morning, the President toured the George W. Bush Elementary School.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to El Dorado Hills, CA. Later, he traveled to Los Angeles, CA. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a briefing on wildfires in California. Upon arrival in Los Angeles, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Matthew Cook.