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Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on February 8, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, February 8, 2008

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report Relating to the Interdiction of Aircraft Engaged in Illicit Drug Trafficking

January 31, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the authorities relating to official immunity in the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking (Public Law 107–108, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2291–4), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration. This report includes matters relating to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 4.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting

February 4, 2008

Thank you all for coming. I just met with my Cabinet, where we discussed a lot of issues. And one issue we discussed was the budget. I submitted the budget today to Congress. It's on a laptop notebook, an e-budget. It saves paper, saves trees, saves money. I think it's the first budget submitted electronically.

And it's a good budget. It's a budget that achieves some important objectives. One, it understands our top priority is to defend our country, so we fund our military, as well as fund the homeland security.

Secondly, the budget keeps our economy growing. It's central that we make sure that we deal with the uncertainties—the economic uncertainties we face. And that's why we're working hard with the House and the Senate to get a growth package out quickly that will put money in the hands of consumers and provide incentives to small businesses and large businesses to invest.

Thirdly, we recognize that in order for this economy to grow, it's important to make the tax relief permanent. And that's what this budget reflects. It's a budget that boosts money for education and health and housing. It helps deal with the issue of making the Tax Code more fair for individuals who want to buy health insurance in the individual market.

This budget is one that keeps spending under control; discretionary spending is held to less than 1 percent. It eliminates 151 wasteful or bloated programs, saving the taxpayers $18 billion. It also takes a hard look at entitlement growth over the next 5 years and provides specific recommendations to save $208 billion over those 5 years. At the same time, the budget achieves balance by 2012.

This is a good, solid budget. It's not only an innovative budget, in that it's coming to Congress over the Internet, it's a budget that's balanced—gets to balance in 2012 and saves taxpayers money.

You know, in my State of the Union, I said to the Congress that there's a lot of talk about entitlement spending. Once again, we've proposed specific reforms and specific measures. And Congress needs to come up with its own ideas. And Congress needs to respond to these looming deficits as a result of unfunded liabilities inherent in Social Security and Medicare. Our budget does that. Our budget protects America and encourages economic growth. Congress needs to pass it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Executive Order 13458—Implementation of the Protocol Additional to the Agreement Between the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in the United States of America

February 4, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the United States Additional Protocol Implementation Act (the "Act")(Public Law 109–401) and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in order to facilitate implementation of the Act and the Protocol Additional to the Agreement between the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in the United States of America (the "Additional Protocol"), it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. The Secretaries of State, Defense, Commerce, and Energy, the Attorney General, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and heads of such other agencies as appropriate, each shall issue, amend, or revise, and enforce such regulations, orders, directives, instructions, or procedures as are necessary to implement the Act and United States obligations under the Additional Protocol.

Sec. 2. The Secretary of Commerce, with the assistance, as necessary, of the Attorney General, is authorized to obtain and to execute warrants pursuant to section 223 of the Act for the purpose of gaining complementary access to locations subject to regulations issued by the Department of Commerce pursuant to section 1 of this order.

Sec. 3. The Secretaries of State, Defense, Commerce, and Energy, the Attorney General, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and heads of such other departments and agencies as appropriate, are authorized to carry out, consistent with the Act and in accordance with subsequent directives, appropriate functions that are not otherwise assigned in the Act and are necessary to implement the Act and United States obligations under the Additional Protocol. The Secretary of State shall perform the function of providing notifications or information to the Congress when required by the Act.

Sec. 4. This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

Sec. 5. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 4, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:55 a.m., February 5, 2008]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 5, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on February 6.

Remarks Honoring the 2007 NASCAR Nextel Cup Champion

February 5, 2008

The President. You know, one of the things I love about NASCAR is not only are these great athletes, but they're socially minded folks. And Chandra and Jimmie and I met several times—one time at a place where the folks of NASCAR are putting something back into the community to help the less fortunate. In this case, it happened to be in a place called Victory Junction in North Carolina, and it was a fabulous experience. And I want to thank you all very much for taking your fame and lending it to help somebody in need. It's really what makes America a great place. And you're leaders on the track and leaders off the track.

Jimmie Johnson. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:09 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to NASCAR driver Jimmie Johnson and his wife, Chandra.

Statement on the Appointment of President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Tanzania as President of the African Union and Foreign Minister Jean Ping of Gabon as Chair of the Commission of the African Union

February 5, 2008

I congratulate President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania on his appointment as the new President of the African Union, as well as Foreign Minister Jean Ping of Gabon on his appointment as the new Chair of the Commission of the African Union. I am confident that the African Union and the people of Africa will be well-served by the leadership and vision President Kikwete and Minister Ping will bring to these important posts.

The African Continent has experienced important progress in recent years. Economic growth is at historic highs; democracy is taking root in many countries; and efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other infectious diseases are showing results. Difficult challenges remain, including ending genocide in Darfur, restoring peace and stability to Kenya, and bringing freedom to the Zimbabwean people. The United States looks forward to working closely with President Kikwete, Minister Ping, and the African Union to address these challenges and to build on recent achievements to secure a better future for all Africans.

Laura and I look forward to beginning our visit to Africa next week.

Message on the Observance of the Lunar New Year, 2008

February 5, 2008

I send greetings to those celebrating the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Rat.

Throughout our country and around the world, men and women of Asian descent welcome the Lunar New Year with a spirit of giving and renewed hope. This holiday, filled with vibrant traditions, celebrates new beginnings and recognizes the enduring wisdom of ancestors. During this special time of year, millions of people reunite with family and friends, reflect on the past, and look forward to a future of prosperity and opportunity.

The Lunar New Year also reminds us of the richness of Asian culture and the significance of its history. By preserving and sharing their heritage, Asian Americans enhance the American experience and contribute to our country's legacy of diversity.

Laura and I send our best wishes for peace, health, and happiness in the New Year.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Memorandum on Security Clearances

February 5, 2008

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Subject: Security Clearances

The Federal Government needs a qualified, trusted workforce available to successfully execute its missions. However, longstanding practices used in the security processing of individuals and contractors to work for the Government pose challenges to the speed with which these individuals can begin their work or move from one role to another. Specifically, the processes for determining eligibility for access to classified information, determining suitability for Federal employment, determining eligibility to work on a Federal contract, and for granting access to federally controlled facilities and information systems, created for separate purposes, rely on similar background data. Yet the processes for collecting and analyzing this data are not sufficiently standardized or coordinated to allow for individuals to efficiently move between agencies and positions of Government covered by one or more of these processes.

I have determined that the significant opportunities to improve these processes, and the expected benefits of doing so, argue for aggressive efforts to achieve meaningful and lasting reform. Without altering the distinct lines of authority for establishing policies and procedures relating to security clearance, Federal employment suitability, and related

determinations, such reform should ensure that the executive branch executes these authorities within a framework that maximizes efficiency and effectiveness while protecting the information collected from unauthorized use or disclosure. Embedding that framework in policies, practices, and infrastructure will ensure that the reform effort and its benefits will continue into the future.

Efforts toward achieving this integration are already underway, sponsored by the Director of National Intelligence, Secretary of Defense, Director of the Office of Personnel Management, and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and coordinated by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. These efforts span near-term improvement opportunities up to a blueprint for a transformed clearance process. I direct that their continued close coordination and integration produce a comprehensive reform proposal that:

- Establishes modernized and comprehensive credentialing, security clearance, and suitability processes that employ updated and consistent standards and methods;
- To the extent consistent with applicable law, ensures that investigative standards for security clearance and suitability investigations support and build on each other without requiring duplicative steps;
- Enables these innovations with enterprise information technology capabilities that ensure the most effective and efficient performance across the Federal Government;
- Updates Government information record systems and, as necessary, applicable laws and regulations, to ensure that information maintained by executive departments and agencies and required for investigation and adjudication is available and can be shared rapidly across Government, while still protecting privacy-related information;
- Ensures that a reformed and aligned investigative system maximizes the potential for common ground in the adjudication of those programs whose security and suitability determinations are simultaneous; and,
- Ensures that all resulting decisions are in the national interest, protect national security, and provide the Federal Government with an effective workforce.

Under Executive Order 13381, I assigned to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget responsibility for improving the process for determining eligibility for access to classified national security information. Under Executive Orders 10450 and 10577, as amended, and related statutory authorities, the Office of Personnel Management is assigned various responsibilities related to personnel security investigations and suitability. These and all other current executive orders remain in force. However, recommendations may be made to align or otherwise alter policies and procedures to ensure the effective, efficient, and timely investigation and adjudication of security clearances and suitability for employment for all personnel performing work for or on behalf of the Federal Government.

I hereby direct the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Secretary of Defense, to submit to the President an initial reform proposal not later than April 30, 2008, that includes, as necessary, proposed executive and legislative actions to achieve the goals of reform described above. This proposal should be followed promptly by any additional proposals this group believes necessary to fulfill its mission.

Nothing in this memorandum alters or impedes the ability to carry out the authorities of the executive departments and agencies to perform their responsibilities under existing law, including, but not limited to, the authority of the Director of the Office of Personnel Management under 5 U.S.C. 1103(a)(7) to recommend executive orders amending the civil service rules governing suitability for employment in the competitive service and the excepted service of the United States, and the authority of the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, Department of Justice, under 28 *C.F.R.* 0.25(b) to draft, revise, and advise as to the

form and legality all executive orders prior to submission to the President.

The heads of executive departments and agencies are directed to provide all information and assistance requested by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget in this important endeavor.

George W. Bush

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency Blocking Property of Certain Persons Contributing to the Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire

February 5, 2008

On February 7, 2006, by Executive Order 13396, I declared a national emergency and ordered related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706). I took this action to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the situation in or in relation to Cote d'Ivoire, which has been addressed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1572 of November 15, 2004, and subsequent resolutions, and has resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and attacks against international peacekeeping forces leading to fatalities. Because the situation in or in relation to Cote d'Ivoire continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, the national emergency declared on February 7, 2006, and the measures adopted on that date to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond February 7, 2008. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 5, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 1:49 p.m., February 5, 2008]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on February 6.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency Blocking Property of Certain Persons Contributing to the Conflict in Cote d'Ivoire

February 5, 2008

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire are to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2008.

In March 2007, the Ougadougou Political Agreement was signed by the two primary protagonists in Cote d'Ivoire's conflict. Although considerable progress has been made in implementing this agreement, the situation in or in relation to Cote d'Ivoire poses a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the

property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for Edward T. Schafer as Secretary of Agriculture

February 6, 2008

Thanks for the warm welcome. Before we begin the ceremony today, we turn our thoughts to those suffering from yesterday's tornadoes.

This was a bad storm that affected a lot of people in a variety of States. Our administration is reaching out to State officials. I just called the Governors of the affected States. I wanted them to know that this Government will help them. But more importantly, I wanted them to be able to tell the people in their States that the American people hold them up and—hold those who suffer up in prayer. Loss of life, a lot of loss of property—prayers can help, and so can the Government. And so today before we begin this important ceremony, I do want the people in those States to know the American people are standing with them.

It's good to be back here at the Department of Agriculture. I am—I first want to say how much I appreciate the hard and good work the people in this Department do on behalf of the American people.

I'm also pleased to witness the swearing-in of an outstanding public servant, the new leader for this Department, Secretary Ed Schafer. I welcome Ed's wife, Nancy, and all their family members. [*Laughter*] They got four children and eight grandchildren, which means he's got valuable experience when it comes to the food supply. [*Laughter*] I know Ed's family is proud of him, as am I, and I congratulate him on taking his place as America's 29th Secretary of Agriculture.

I appreciate the members of my Cabinet who have joined us. Thanks for coming. I very much appreciate the Members of the Senate and the House who are here, and I know the Secretary does as well: Senator Harkin, Senator Chambliss. These men happen to be the ranking member of the—chairman and ranking member of the agricultural committee in the Senate. I appreciate Colin Peterson, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, and I want to thank the other Members here as well. I appreciate very much the fact that John Block, former Secretary of Agriculture, has taken time to join us. Secretary, thanks for coming.

The roots of this Department stretch back to the Presidency of Abraham Lincoln. In 1862, President Lincoln established the first Federal Agency devoted to agriculture, and he called it "the people's department." Nearly a century-and-a-half later, the USDA can still be called "the people's department." With your nutrition programs and your support for farmers and ranchers, you help ensure that our people are healthy and well-fed. With your food safety measures, you give peace of mind to families across America. With your conservation efforts, you help preserve our natural resources.

Secretary Schafer is going to be a strong and effective leader in all these areas. I know him well; we're members of the ex-Governors club. [*Laughter*] He's a fellow you can trust. He's a skilled manager who knows how to focus and get results. Among his many other distinctions, he is the first North Dakotan to run this Department.

He had an interesting first night on the job; he spent it in the House Chamber listening to me give the State of the Union Address. [*Laughter*] I can report that he didn't go to sleep—[*laughter*]—and applauded just at the right times. [*Laughter*]

Our priorities for this Department are clear. We will work to make our strong agricultural sector even stronger. Ed understands what I know: It makes a lot of sense to make sure that we can grow our own food. It's in our national security interest that we're self-sufficient in food. Farm income, farm equity, and farm exports have reached all-time records. The best way to keep the ag economy growing is to open up new markets for America's crops and farm products around the world.

So Ed is going to join with other members of my administration to work to pass free trade agreements with Colombia and Panama and South Korea. We will support a successful conclusion of the Doha round of trade talks. Ed and I are going to work tirelessly to open up foreign markets for U.S. beef.

We recognize that farmers also have the potential to help our Nation solve one of the greatest challenges, and that is our dependence on foreign oil. I'd much rather our farmers be growing energy than trying to buy it from other parts of the world. So we will continue to work on—for renewable fuels, including a new generation of ethanol and biodiesel.

Finally, Ed understands the importance of a good farm bill. More than a year ago, we proposed a fiscally responsible farm bill that provides a strong safety net and makes important reforms to farm programs. Farm payments would be targeted to farmers who truly need them, especially those involved in production agriculture.

Congress is considering legislation now. It seems like to us it lacks reform. It spends too much money and raises taxes. It's critical for farmers and consumers to have a good farm bill in place. So Ed is going to work with members of both parties on a bill that spends people's money wisely, doesn't raise taxes, reforms and tightens subsidy payments—a farm bill that will benefit the entire economy. I'm confident we can come together to get a good farm bill. But if Congress sends me legislation that raises taxes or [does] * not make needed reforms, I'm going to veto it.

In all the work ahead, Ed can count on a strong partner in his Deputy, Chuck Conner. He's a talented public servant. He's devoted his life to agriculture issues, and he did a superb job of running this Department while Ed was being confirmed. And, Chuck, I want to thank you.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to Secretary Mike Johanns. In his 3 years here at this Department, Mike delivered impressive results for farmers and ranchers, from helping to expand trade to promoting biofuels to providing assistance after natural disasters. I know he's enjoying his time in Nebraska; I hope he'll be back soon. [*Laughter*]

There's no doubt in my mind that Ed Schafer and the good men and women in this Department can build on these achievements. I thank him and his family for answering the call to public service once again. I know he's going to do a fine job here in "the people's department." Congratulations, my friend.

And now I ask Deputy Secretary Conner to administer the oath.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. at the Department of Agriculture. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Schafer.

* White House correction.

Remarks Honoring the 2007 Stanley Cup Champion Anaheim Ducks

February 6, 2008

Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. We're glad you're here. Like, have you noticed a lot of security around here? It's because the Vice President heard there were some Ducks around. [*Laughter*]

These Ducks are awfully mighty. It's such an honor to welcome you. I love welcoming champs to the White House, and these are clearly great champs. You know, the playoffs have got to be tough at that time of year, after you've played so long and your legs are a little tired—except you romped through the playoffs. I don't know if many Americans understand that, but this team went 16–5 through the first four rounds, became the first west coast team in the NHL to win the Stanley Cup. And that's a big deal.

And so it's my honor to welcome you to the White House. Glad you're here. I do want to welcome the owner, Henry Samueli; appreciate you coming. Thanks for bringing the girls. I had the privilege of being in pro sports as a baseball owner. I never had the chance to come to the White House as a baseball owner. [*Laughter*] I had a little trouble on the division crowns as a baseball owner. [*Laughter*] But I understand what a joy it must be to represent an ownership group, to watch a team you care about win the Stanley Cup, and win any championship.

So we're glad you came. Thanks for coming, Henry.

Michael Schulman is the CEO; I'm glad you're here, Mike—Brian Burke, the general manager. I really want to say something about Randy Carlyle, the head coach. It's got to be hard to be a head coach of such great athletes. I don't know if you're ever in the newspaper? Yes. I know how you feel. [*Laughter*] But I'm proud to have you here.

Scott Niedermayer is the MVP. I tend not to try to single out a player, but nevertheless, when you have an MVP in your midst, I'm proud to recognize you; glad you're here. I do want to welcome the commissioner. Mr. Commissioner, thanks for coming. This isn't the first time we've been together like this; it will probably be the last like this. [*Laughter*] But I know you'll keep coming back to the White House to promote the champs in a sport you love.

I want to thank the mayor of Anaheim, my friend Curt Pringle. Thanks for coming, Mr. Mayor. It must be a big deal when the Ducks win the Stanley Cup for the people of Anaheim, and I'm honored that you're here. I also want to welcome Congressman Eddy Royce. Ed, thanks for coming; appreciate you being here. Of course, we welcome all the players, all the personnel, all the fans.

And how about the Northern Virginia Ice Dog Mites hockey team? The Ice Dogs—[*laughter*]—are here to see the Ducks. [*Laughter*] I bet you guys want to be Stanley Cup champs some day too, don't you? Well, here they are; you got a chance to see what they look like. I bet you they would tell you that in order to be a Stanley Cup champ, you have to work hard and skate hard and make right choices in life, just like these folks did that are standing up here with me.

The Stanley Cup was awarded 115 years ago, which makes it the oldest trophy in professional sports. The Cup bears the names of not only the teams that won it but more than 2,000 names of the individuals who have raised the Cup in victory. And these men behind me now have their name on the Cup.

The interesting thing about the Stanley Cup, it's the only professional sports trophy that every player on the championship team gets to take home for a day. This Cup has been to some odd places. [*Laughter*] For example, it went to Elvis's place in Memphis, Graceland. [*Laughter*] It has taken a turn on the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. It has seen the inside of an igloo and a New York City jail. [*Laughter*] It stood next to a giant statue of Lenin and a 55-foot Jolly Green Giant in Blue Earth, Minnesota. The Cup has been to countless bars and nightclubs across the world, and I'm sure some of the players are pleased the Cup can't talk. [*Laughter*]

Last year, the Cup made its first visit to a combat zone. Nineteen players—former NHL players took this cup to Kandahar Air Base in Afghanistan for a ball-hockey game with Canadian and American troops. I promise you, our troops were thrilled to see the Cup. And whoever thought of it, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for supporting those kids.

The Anaheim Ducks also took the Cup on many adventures, traveling with it to Canada, Sweden, Finland, and England. Chris Pronger and Todd Marchant each took it home to use it as a cereal bowl for the kids—[*laughter*]—pretty hungry kids. Sean O'Donnell filled it with dog food so that his Lab, Buddy, could eat from it. You know, I was wondering why Barney and my dogs took such a liking to the Stanley Cup. [*Laughter*]

Ducks players have used their time to help lift the lives of others. This is what I'm particularly grateful for. The Ducks took the Cup to the Mattel Children's Hospital at UCLA and the Children's Hospital in Orange County, where it brought joy to somebody who is suffering. That must have been a fantastic experience, to see somebody's face light up who was having a pretty tough go in life, and I want to thank you for that. I appreciate the fact that you took the Cup to the Orangewood Children's Foundation, where it helped raise the spirits of those who have been—who are victims of abuse and neglect.

Several Ducks took the Cup for a visit to our wounded warriors at Camp Pendleton. The general manager, Brian Burke, said this: "This is the most special moment I've had with the Cup—not being with my family, not being with my friends, but being at Camp Pendleton." He knows what I know: The

United States of America is incredibly lucky to have brave men and women volunteer in the face of danger to serve our country. And I cannot thank you enough for honoring those wounded warriors, those marines, and for lifting their spirits and for thanking them for their sacrifice and their service.

I appreciate your talent. These are great athletes, but they've also got big hearts. I congratulate the coaches. I congratulate the family members, the wives, girlfriends who put up with the long, long time away from home. It's got to be tough to be a spouse supporting somebody you love in professional sports, and I want to thank your families for supporting you in this.

I do want to thank all those who make the training room go. You know, a lot of times championships are focused on the players, but these players will be the first to tell you there's the locker room attendants, there's the laundry people, there's the equipment people who deserve just as much of this championship as they do. And I want to congratulate you and those of you who happened to handle this aspect of—for the Anaheim Ducks. Welcome to the White House.

I will remind you that you've achieved something millions of kids dream about—and a couple of oldtimers dream about too. You set a great example for them, and I congratulate you for your championship. And you'll for always be remembered for the rest of your lives as Stanley Cup champs.

Welcome to the White House, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:02 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gary B. Bettman, commissioner, National Hockey League; and Chris Pronger and Sean O'Donnell, defensemen, and Todd Marchant, forward, Anaheim Ducks.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 6, 2008

On March 1, 1996, by Proclamation 6867, a national emergency was declared to address the disturbance or threatened disturbance of international relations caused by the February 24, 1996, destruction by the Cuban government of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. In July 1996 and on subsequent occasions, the Cuban government stated its intent to forcefully defend its sovereignty against any U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft that might enter Cuban territorial waters or airspace while involved in a flotilla or peaceful protest. Since these events, the Cuban government has not demonstrated that it will refrain from the future use of reckless and excessive force against U.S. vessels or aircraft that may engage in memorial activities or peaceful protest north of Cuba. On February 26, 2004, by Proclamation 7757, the scope of the national emergency was expanded in order to deny monetary and material support to the repressive Cuban government, which had taken a series of steps to destabilize relations with the United States, including threatening to abrogate the Migration Accords with the United States and to close the United States Interests Section. Further, Cuba's most senior officials repeatedly asserted that the United States intended to invade Cuba, despite explicit denials from the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense that such action is planned. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867 as amended and expanded by Proclamation 7757.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 6, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:19 a.m., February 6, 2008]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 7, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on February 7.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 6, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, which states that the national emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2008.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 6, 2008.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 7.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the International Convention Against Doping in Sport

February 6, 2008

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the International Convention Against Doping in Sport, adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization on October 19, 2005.

The United States supported the development of the Convention as a means to ensure equitable and effective application and promotion of anti-doping controls in international competition. The Convention will help to advance international cooperation on and promotion of international doping control efforts, and will help to protect the integrity and spirit of sport by supporting efforts to ensure a fair and doping-free environment for athletes.

The International Olympic Movement has been supportive of the promotion and adoption of this Convention by the international community. Ratification by the United States will demonstrate the United States' longstanding commitment to the development of international anti-doping controls and its commitment to apply and facilitate the application of appropriate anti-doping controls during international competitions held in the United States. Ratification will also ensure that the United States will continue to remain eligible to host international competitions. The Convention does not cover U.S. sports leagues.

I recommend that the Senate give prompt and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 6, 2008.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 7.

Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast

February 7, 2008

The President. *Gracias, mi amigo.*

Senator Kenneth L. Salazar. *De nada.*

The President. Thank you, friend. Laura and I are honored to join you all here for the 56th National Prayer Breakfast. A lot of reasons to pray, and one, of course, is to strengthen us against temptation, particularly this morning—from temptation to stay in bed. [*Laughter*] Obviously there's a lot of prayerful people here. [*Laughter*] And I appreciate your warm welcome.

We have a lot of distinguished guests here today: Members of Congress, military leaders, captains of industry. Yet at this annual gathering, we are reminded of an eternal truth: When we lift our hearts to God, we're all equal in His sight. We're all equally precious; we're all equally dependent on His grace. It's fitting that we gather each year to approach our Creator in fellowship and to thank Him for the many blessings He has bestowed upon our families and our Nation. It is fitting that we gather in prayer, because we recognize a prayerful nation is a stronger nation.

I want to appreciate Senators—[*applause*]—I appreciate Senators Salazar and Enzi. Thank you for putting this deal on. Madam Speaker, Leader Hoyer, Leader Blunt, thank you all for being here. Welcome the Members of Congress. I appreciate the heads of state who are here. Welcome to America, again. I thank the members of the diplomatic corps who have joined us. Appreciate the distinguished dignitaries, all the members of my Cabinet—don't linger; get back to work. [*Laughter*]

Admiral, thank you for your leadership. Always proud to be with the members of the United States military. I thank the State and local officials. Ward, thanks for your remarks. Those were awesome. I guess that's a Presidential word. [*Laughter*] Proud to be here with Michael W. and Debbie. They're longtime friends of our family. Thank you for lending your beautiful voice. Judge, I'm not going to hold the Texas thing against you. [*Laughter*]

Every President since Dwight Eisenhower has attended the National Prayer Breakfast, and I am really proud to carry on this tradition. It's an important tradition, and I'm confident Presidents who follow me will do the same. The people in this room come from many different walks of faith, yet we share one clear conviction: We believe that the Almighty hears our prayers and answers those who seek Him. That's what we believe; otherwise, why come? Through the miracle of prayer, we believe He listens—if we listen to His voice and seek our presence—His presence in our lives, our hearts will change. And in so doing, in seeking God, we grow in ways that we could never imagine.

In prayer, we grow in gratitude and thanksgiving. When we spend time with the Almighty, we realize how much He has bestowed upon us, and our hearts are filled with joy. We give thanks for our families. We give thanks for the parents who raised us. We give thanks for the patient souls who married us and the children who make us proud each day. We give thanks for our liberty and the universal desire for freedom that He has written in every human heart. We give thanks for the God who made us in His image and redeemed us in His love.

In prayer, we grow in meekness and humility. By approaching our Maker on bended knee, we acknowledge our complete dependence on Him. We recognize that we have nothing to offer God that He does not already have, except our love. So we offer Him that love and ask for the grace to discern His will. We ask Him to remain near to us at all times. We ask Him to help us lead lives that are pleasing to Him. We discover that by surrendering our lives to the Almighty, we are strengthened, refreshed, and ready for all that may come.

In prayer, we also grow in boldness and courage. The more time we spend with God, the more we see that He is not a distant king, but a loving Father. Inspired by this confidence, we approach Him with bold requests. We ask Him to heal the sick and comfort the dying and sustain those who care for them. We ask Him to bring solace to the victims of tragedy and help to those suffering from addiction and adversity. We ask him to strengthen our families and to protect the

innocent and vulnerable in our country. We ask Him to protect our Nation from those who wish us harm and watch over all who've stepped forward to defend us. We ask Him to bring about the day when His peace shall reign across the world and every tear shall be wiped away.

In prayer, we grow in mercy and compassion. We are reminded in prayer that we are all fallen creatures in need of mercy. And in seeking God's mercy, we grow in mercy ourselves. Experiencing the presence of God transforms our hearts. And the more we seek His presence, the more we feel the tug at our souls to reach out to the poor and the hungry, the elderly and the infirm. When we answer God's call to love a neighbor as ourselves, we enter into a deeper friendship with our fellow man and a deeper relationship with our eternal Father.

I believe in the power of prayer because I have felt it in my own life. Prayer has strengthened me in times of personal challenge. It has helped me meet the challenges of the Presidency. I understand now clearly the story of the calm in the rough seas. And so at this final prayer breakfast as your President, I thank you for your prayers, and I thank our people all across America for their prayers. And I ask you not to stop in the year ahead. We have so much work to do for our country, and with the help of the Almighty, we will build a freer world and a safer, more hopeful, more noble America.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:16 a.m. at the Hilton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Edward "Ward" Brehm, Chairman of the Board of Directors, United States African Development Foundation; entertainer Michael W. Smith and his wife, Debbie; and Carlos F. Lucero, U.S. Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Remarks on Nominations Awaiting Senate Confirmation

February 7, 2008

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you being here in a timely fashion. After all, Washington traffic is famous for making people late. These days, it seems the worst delays, however, are in the committee rooms of the United States Senate.

Many of the nominees for important Government posts have been waiting for Senate confirmation for way too long. Some of these men and women here—are with us today, and I want to thank you all for joining me. More importantly, I thank you for your willingness to step forward to serve our great country. These folks are qualified, and the Senate needs to give them a prompt vote.

I appreciate very much Members of the Senate who have joined us. These are good, strong leaders, people who share the same spirit about the need to get confirmation done quickly, starting with the Senate minority leader, Mitch McConnell. I appreciate Arlen Specter joining us. You might remember Arlen that when—Arlen was the man, when I named two nominees for the Supreme Court, did a fantastic job of getting those nominees out of the Judiciary Committee and onto the floor of the Senate. And he had good help from Orrin Hatch, his friend and member of the Judiciary Committee.

I'm also here with some of the younger stars—not to call you guys old—but some of the younger stars—[*laughter*]—of the Senate: Richard Burr from North Carolina, Lindsey Graham from South Carolina, and Jim DeMint from South Carolina. Thank you all for coming. Appreciate you guys being here.

I thank members of my administration joining us. Steve, thanks for being here. Chief of Staff Bolten, I appreciate you being here. And thank you all for coming.

As President, I have a constitutional responsibility to nominate qualified men and women for public office. That's my responsibility. I take it very seriously. I have nominated skilled and faithful public servants to lead Federal Agencies and sit on the Federal bench. The Constitution also gives Senators an important responsibility. They must provide advice and consent by voting up or down on these nominees. Unfortunately, the Senate is not fulfilling its duty.

The confirmation process has turned into a never-ending political game where everyone loses. With more than 180 of my nominees waiting for the confirmation process in the Senate, it is clear that the process is not working. About half these nominees have been waiting for more than 100 days. More than 30 have been waiting a year or more. And nine have been waiting for more than 2 years.

That's no way to treat men and women who have stepped forward to serve our country, and it's got to stop. It's in our Nation's interest that this process change. It's not right to treat these good folks this way. These nominees deserve an up-or-down vote. Many of them have had their careers on hold. They've got spouses whose lives are stuck in limbo. They have children waiting to find out where they're going to go to school.

These are real folks making real sacrifices, and they should not be treated like political pawns. Senators should examine every nomination closely, but they should not drag them out indefinitely. If the Senators holding up this process believe my nominees are unworthy for confirmation, the course of action is clear: Hold a vote, and see if the majority agree. If these nominees are not approved, they can move on with their lives. If they are approved, they can take office.

The confirmation backlog also places this strain on our Government. Every day nominees are delayed represents another day without them in office, and that makes it harder for the Government to meet its responsibilities. The nomination before the Senate—these nominations before the Senate are vital positions—or for vital positions affecting issues from the economy to public safety to national security.

The Senate must confirm nominees who help guide our economy during a time of uncertainty. The Senate has stalled nominations for critical economic positions. I mean, we've got—we're dealing with uncertainty, and there are key positions that are not being filled.

The three-member Council of Economic Advisers is down to one person, which makes for lonely Council meetings. [*Laughter*] One of my nominees for the Council withdrew his name after 6 months of waiting without receiving so much as a hearing. My other nominee continues to wait after 7 months of delay. At a time of important decisions for our economy, it is irresponsible for the United States Senate to leave these positions unfulfilled.

One of the most important institutions for the American economy is the Federal Reserve. The Fed decides monetary policy, and it sets key interest rates that have an impact on homeowners and businesses across our country. Yet the Senate is delaying confirmation of three highly qualified nominees for the Fed's Board of Governors. I nominated these individuals nearly 9 months ago. They have valuable experience and skills, and the Senate needs to confirm them as soon as possible.

The Senate also must confirm nominees who will help address issues of public safety. The Federal Aviation Administration plays a vital role in keeping air travelers safe. Yet the Senate has failed to act on my nominee to head this Agency. In October, I nominated Bobby Sturgell to lead the FAA. Bobby has nearly 20 years of cockpit experience from his time as a Navy fighter pilot, Top Gun instructor, and commercial airline pilot. He is committed to addressing problems that have caused airline delays, and he has good experience and the skills necessary to get the job done.

I appreciate the Senate commerce committee giving Bobby a hearing today. I urge the Senators to put aside politics and confirm this good man to office. It's important for the country that he be confirmed. If they don't like him, vote him down, but at least give him a vote as soon as possible.

The Senate has also failed to act on my nominations for the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission. As a result of the Senate's ongoing delays, this body can no longer decide cases because it has more vacancies than members. Two of my nominees for the Commission have gone more than a year without even receiving a confirmation hearing. The American people have not forgotten the recent mining tragedies in Kentucky and West Virginia and Utah, and they expect this Commission to have enough members to issue decisions on mine safety.

The Senate must also confirm nominees who will help protect America's national security. In this time of war, we need a strong Department of Justice. Yet the Senate has not voted on seven nominations for senior leadership positions at the Department. I remember being criticized for having too many vacancies at the Justice Department. We stepped up. We sent good names up, and now it's time for those critics to act.

One of the vacancies is for Deputy Attorney General. The Deputy Attorney General helps lead efforts to detect and prevent terrorist attacks here at home. I've selected an outstanding nominee for this position, Judge Mark Filip. I'm sorry that he's not here. He's dealing with a serious family matter. This former prosecutor has earned a reputation for being fairminded and dedicated.

Several years ago, the Senate confirmed him unanimously for a lifetime position on the Federal bench. In other words, this isn't the first time he's gone through a confirmation process. If the Senate can confirm this good man for a lifetime post, there's no reason the Senate cannot confirm him to spend the next year protecting the American people. Yet one Senator has placed a hold on this nomination because of an issue that has nothing to do with the judge. This is unacceptable. Senators need to base their decisions on the judge's qualifications for the job; they need to bring this nomination to the floor for a vote; and they need to confirm this good man.

As Senators confirm these nominees, they also must confirm judges to the Federal bench. I've nominated good men and women who will rule by the letter of the law, not the whim of the gavel. I thank the Senators on both sides of the aisle, like Mitch McConnell, Jon Kyl and Arlen and Dianne Feinstein and Thad Cochran, for helping confirm fine judges like Leslie Southwick.

Unfortunately, some of their colleagues continue to delay votes for 28 of my other nominees. The Senate has sat on these nominations to the court of appeals for nearly 600 days. And in some cases, the Senate has imposed a new and extra constitutional standard where nominees who have the support of the majority of the Senate can be blocked by a minority of obstructionists. As a result, some judgeships can go unfulfilled for years and justice can be delayed for the American people.

Our courts should render swift decisions. That's what we expect, and so should the United States Senate. Many of my nominees would fill urgent vacancies on courts that are understaffed and overworked. I've sent the Senate three nominees to relieve such a situation on the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. Bob Conrad and Steve Matthews and Rod Rosenstein are with us today. These are my nominees. They are accomplished members of the legal community. They will be outstanding members of this court. Yet the Senate has not acted on their nominations. This delay is irresponsible. It undermines the cause of justice. And the United States Senate needs to bring every one of my judicial nominations to the floor for an up-or-down vote.

When men and women agree to serve in public office, we should treat them with respect and dignity. When the Senate fails to do this, it leaves important positions in our Government vacant for months at a time, and it makes it harder for future Presidents to be able to attract good people to serve the United States of America.

We've got to—I'm really grateful for the many talented and dedicated and patriotic men and women who have answered the call to service. And now my call to the United States Senate is this: Rise to your responsibilities; give these nominees the vote they deserve; and confirm them as soon as possible.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks on Signing the Executive Order to Improve the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs

February 7, 2008

Thank you all. Thanks. Please be seated. Thank you for joining Laura and me. I've got two jobs. One is I'm going to sign an

Executive order here in a minute. I'm making sure that all Agencies involved with Helping America's Youth coordinate their activities. And then I've got to introduce Laura. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate very much those of you who are committed to helping our country by saving souls and by giving people hope. I think it's—I can't think of a more noble cause than to serve America. And there's all kinds of ways to serve America. One way is to wear the uniform. Another way is to find—somebody wonders whether or not there's a positive future in their lives, and put your arm around them and say, "I love you; what can I do to help you?"

That happens, by the way, all across America. And it doesn't take one single law to cause somebody to love a neighbor. It does take a law; it's just—it's a higher law. It's a law from a higher inspiration than government. And so today Laura and I welcome those who are neighborhood healers and helpers. We really appreciate your focus on helping our Nation's youth, particularly boys.

In my State of the Union a couple of years ago, I talked about the initiative that we're honoring today, and it's an initiative that says, there is a better future for America's young folks. And we've set some important goals. And one of the goals inside this administration is to make sure that those people who are responsible for spending taxpayers' money on these programs actually coordinate their efforts and set high standards. A lot of times in government we don't do a very good job of measuring, and so the idea is to set standards and to coordinate, but the idea is also to empower those who are on the frontlines of saving lives.

I like to say, government is not really about love. There may be loving people in government, but government itself is laws and justice. Love is found in the hearts of our citizens who are in the neighborhoods.

And so the Executive order I'm going to sign is to—all aimed at kind of leaving behind a structure so that whoever is lucky enough to follow me—[*laughter*]—will see a blueprint on how to help, really, people realize the great promise of the country.

I believe we solve—save souls one person at a time. And I like to remind our fellow citizens, while one person can't save every soul, one person can save a soul. And it's that cumulative effort of love and compassion and work that will define a hopeful future. And somebody who shares that same passion about recognizing the true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens and someone who cares deeply about making sure the young in America have a bright future is our speaker, my wife, the First Lady, Laura Bush.

[*At this point, the First Lady spoke, then a video was watched, and the President signed the Executive order.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Executive Order 13459. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Executive Order 13459—Improving the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs

February 7, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in recognition of the successful interagency collaboration resulting from the *Helping America's Youth* initiative, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Policy*. It is the policy of the Federal Government to promote achievement of positive results for at-risk youth through:

(a) enhanced collaboration among government organizations at the Federal, State, and local level, including with faith-based and other community organizations, as well as among families, schools, and communities, in order to leverage existing resources and improve outcomes;

(b) identification and dissemination of promising strategies and practices that have been proven effective through rigorous evaluation; and

(c) online publication of essential information to assist interested citizens and decision-makers, particularly at the community level, to plan, implement, and participate in effective programs for at-risk youth.

Sec. 2. *Establishment of the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs.* The Secretary of Health and Human Services (Secretary) shall establish within the Department of Health and Human Services for administrative purposes only, an Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (Working Group), consistent with this order and reflecting the ongoing interagency collaboration under the *Helping America's Youth* initiative.

Sec. 3. *Membership and Operation of the Working Group.*

(a) The Working Group shall consist exclusively of the following members or their designees, who shall be full-time Federal officers or employees:

(i) the Secretary;

(ii) the Attorney General;

(iii) the Secretaries of Defense, the Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Housing and Urban Development, and Education;

(iv) the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy;

(v) the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service; and

(vi) other officers or full-time or permanent part-time employees of the United States, as determined by the Secretary, with the concurrence of the head of the department or agency concerned.

(b) The Secretary (or the Secretary's designee) shall serve as Chair, and the Attorney General (or the Attorney General's designee) shall serve as Vice Chair, for a period of 2 years from the date of this order. Subsequent Chairs and Vice Chairs shall be designated by the Secretary on a biennial basis.

(c) In implementing this section, the Chair, and in the Chair's absence the Vice Chair, shall convene and preside at meetings of the Working Group, determine its agenda, direct its work, and establish and direct subgroups of the Working Group, as appropriate, to deal with particular subject matters, that shall consist exclusively of members of the Working Group or their designees. The Chair, after consultation with the Vice Chair, shall designate an officer or employee of one of the member departments or agencies to serve as the Executive Secretary of the Working Group. The Executive Secretary shall head any staff assigned to the Working Group and any subgroups thereof, and such staff shall consist exclusively of full-time or permanent part-time Federal employees.

Sec. 4. *Functions of the Working Group.* Consistent with the policy set forth in section 1 of this order, the Working Group shall:

(a) identify and engage key government and private or nonprofit organizations that can play a role in improving the coordination and effectiveness of programs serving and engaging youth, such as faith-based and other community organizations, businesses, volunteers, and other key constituencies;

(b) develop a new Federal website on youth, built upon the *Community Guide to Helping America's Youth*, with the first phase of this website to be launched within 10 months of the date of this order, by:

(i) identifying and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of existing Federal websites focusing on youth-serving entities in order to improve access to the most useful content;

(ii) providing for training to youth-serving entities to enable effective use of the Federal website;

(iii) developing additional strategies and tools and resources accessible through the Federal website that will help promote effective community-based efforts to reduce the factors that put youth at risk and the provision of high-quality services to at-risk youth across the country; and

(iv) developing strategies to ensure that the Federal website is routinely updated, improved, and publicized;

(c) encourage all youth-serving Federal and State agencies, communities, grantees, and organizations to adopt high standards for assessing program results, including through the use of rigorous impact evaluations, as appropriate, so that the most effective practices can be identified and replicated, and ineffective or duplicative programs can be eliminated or reformed;

(d)(i) identify and promote initiatives and activities that merit strong interagency collaboration because of their potential to offer

cost-effective solutions to achieve better results for at-risk youth, including volunteer service in concert with the USA Freedom Corps and mentoring in concert with the Federal Mentoring Council; and,

(ii) encourage rigorous evaluations, as appropriate, of such initiatives and activities to ascertain their effectiveness in improving academic, employment, social, and other individual outcomes, and make these findings publicly available, and

(e) annually report to the President, through the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, on its work and on the implementation of any recommendations arising from its work, with the first such report to be submitted no later than 6 months after the date of this order.

Sec. 5. *Administration of the Working Group*. (a) The Secretary shall, to the extent permitted by law, provide administrative support and funding for the Working Group.

With the consent of the Secretary, other member departments or agencies may provide administrative support to the Working Group, to the extent permitted by law and consistent with their statutory authority.

(b) The heads of executive departments and agencies shall provide, as appropriate, such assistance and information as the Secretary may request to implement this order.

(c) The website referred to in section 4(b) of this order shall be funded by contributions from executive departments and agencies to the extent permitted by law and consistent with their statutory authority.

Sec. 6. *General Provisions*. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted by law to a department, agency, or the head thereof; or

(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 not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 7, 2008.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 11, 2008]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on February 12.

Statement on Senate Action on Economic Growth Legislation

February 7, 2008

Two weeks ago, my administration reached an agreement with Speaker Pelosi and Leader Boehner on a short-term economic growth package that would quickly put money into the hands of the American people and provide our economy the boost it needs. Today the Senate amended that bill in ways I can support.

This plan is robust, broad-based, timely, and it will be effective. This bill will help to stimulate consumer spending and accelerate needed business investment.

This economic growth package is an example of bipartisan cooperation at a time when the American people most expect it. I thank members of both parties and both Houses for their efforts to advance this important legislation.

Remarks to the Conservative Political Action Conference

February 8, 2008

The President. Thank you all. Good morning. Thank you all very much. I thank you for coming. I apologize to my friend; he likes to sleep in. [*Laughter*]

I really do want to thank you all for adjusting the schedule. Right after the speech, I'm going to get on an airplane and fly to Tennessee. I'll be taking the prayers of the American people to those who suffered from the devastating tornadoes.

Mr. Leader, thank you for that introduction, and I appreciate your outstanding leadership in the United States Senate. You

know, Mr. Leader, I used to think that leading a group of strong-willed Senators was one of the toughest jobs in the country. I may have found one even tougher one: father of the bride. You know, I told Laura I was going to say that, and she said, well, you might add another one: son-in-law to the President. [*Laughter*]

I thank you for the invitation. I appreciate the fact that you've invited our candidates to your forum, and thank you for the hearing you gave them. These are good, honorable people. And I appreciate the fact you invited Vice President Cheney here. He is the best Vice President in history. Mother may have a different opinion. [*Laughter*] But don't tell her I said this, but my opinion is the one that counts.

Since I spoke with you last, some things have changed. It seems like my hair is little grayer. [*Laughter*] And my jokes are a little older. And some say my speeches are a little windier. Some things haven't changed: the principles I believe in and my deep, abiding faith in the American people.

It just doesn't seem all that long ago that David invited me here, but it's been about 7 years. And during that time, we have stood together, and we have advanced a philosophy of freedom and responsibility that's made our Nation a better place and a stronger place. And today I want to talk to you about what you and I have achieved together, what it tells us about the stakes in the year ahead, and why it is so important that we keep the White House in 2008.

I thank the leader, David Keene. He's a good guy. You know, this is the 35th—yes—anniversary, which means he started the deal when he was 15. [*Laughter*] At least that's what he claims. [*Laughter*] But thank you for your leadership. I thank you for your board. I've got a lot of friends up here at the head table and a lot of friends in the audience, and I really do appreciate what you've done.

Audience member. We love you, George.

The President. Well, thank you.

A lot has happened over 8 years—that was the last time I spoke to you, was 8 years ago. And we've seen vigorous debates, a lot of debates on nearly every conceivable issue, matters that affected the prosperity and peace.

Our views are grounded in timeless truths. During these debates, we stuck to timeless truths. We believe that the most reliable guide for our country is the collective wisdom of ordinary citizens. We believe our culture benefits from a diversity of faith, a respect for values, and the guidance of a higher power. We believe in personal responsibility. We believe in the universality of freedom. We believe our Nation has the right to defend itself, even if sometimes others disagree. And we believe America remains a force of good in our world.

There's another philosophy, and it's advanced by decent people who see the world differently. They tend to think Washington has the answers to our problems. They tend to believe our country only succeeds under the expansive Federal Government. They tend to be suspicious of America's exercise of global leadership, unless, of course, we get a permission slip from international organizations. [*Laughter*]

Over the past 7 years, we have engaged this opposition with a clear and consistent philosophy. We didn't take polls to decide what to say. We didn't seek the advice of editorial pages to decide what to think. And we darn sure didn't seek the approval of groups like CODEPINK and MoveOn.org before deciding what to do.

We applied our philosophy on issues relating to economic prosperity. When I took office, we inherited a recession, and then we acted. We were guided by this principle: The best way to help our economy grow is to leave money in the hands of those responsible for our prosperity. That, of course, would be the American people. And so with your support, we passed one of the largest tax cuts in American history, and then we cut taxes again. In all, we delivered nearly $2 trillion in tax relief over the past 7 years.

Our critics wanted a different approach. They believed that the best way to keep the economy—to help the economy was to keep taxes in Washington and expand the size and scope of the Federal Government.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. One columnist wrote this—one columnist said this: "Tax cuts—any tax cuts—are the wrong way to go." A prominent newspaper said my administration was

on a tax cut rampage and called our tax relief unfair and unaffordable. A think tank expert called our tax relief a reckless gamble.

Despite these dire predictions, the tax cuts we passed contributed to a record 52 months of job creation. They helped produce strong economic growth, and the increased revenues from that growth have put us on track to balance our budget by 2012. Here is the bottom line: Tax relief works.

We're in a period of economic uncertainty, and we've acted again. I want to thank the Members for passing a good piece of legislation, which I will sign into law next week. I want you all to understand that this bill reflects our principles. It is robust. It is progrowth. It stimulates business investment. And it puts money into the hands of American consumers.

In the longer run, the best way to make sure that our economy continues to grow is to make the tax relief we passed permanent. Unfortunately, the other side still hasn't learned the lessons. They want to let the tax cuts expire, and some are claiming, of course, this isn't a tax increase. Yet if they have their way, 116 million American taxpayers would see their taxes rise by an average of $1,800. Listen, I'm not known for my English—[*laughter*]—but in my way of speaking, it sure sounds like a tax increase to me.

You and I know the American people are not under-taxed. The problem is, Washington spends too much of your money. One of the things I have done is I have set priorities. And you must understand my passion about protecting America. My number-one priority is to protect you. And after 9/11, we have substantially increased spending on defense, intelligence, and homeland security. And we will continue to provide for our troops. We will make sure the men and women who wear the uniform have the best and strongest support they need to do their job.

And so we've worked hard to make sure we hold the line on spending in other areas. For 5 years in a row, my budget requests have kept the growth of nonsecurity discretionary spending below the rate of inflation. I set clear spending limits, told the Congress I was going to veto them if they—veto bills if they exceeded those spending limits. The Democratically controlled Congress, at the end of last year, cut spending plans by billions of dollars. Last week, I proposed a budget that terminates or substantially reduces 151 wasteful or bloated programs. Those programs total more than $18 billion. And if Congress sends me appropriations bills that exceed the reasonable limits I have set, I will veto the bills.

Last month, I issued an Executive order that directs Federal Agencies to ignore any future earmark that is not actually voted on by the United States Congress. This Executive order will extend beyond my Presidency; it will stay in effect unless revoked by a future President. What that means is, any President who wants to return to the old ways of unaccountable and wasteful spending will get to do so publicly. And if that happens, that President will have some explaining to do.

In the long run, you and I know the greatest threat to our fiscal health is the unsustainable growth of entitlement spending. We all know the painful choices ahead if America stays on this path: massive tax increases, sudden and drastic cuts in benefits, or crippling deficits. I have laid out specific proposals to reform and strengthen these programs.

On Social Security, I took the issue head on. That's what you expect a President to do. I proposed a way to make this program solvent without raising taxes and with personal saving accounts that will give individuals more control over their retirement savings.

On Medicare and Medicaid, I sent Congress a budget this week that saves nearly $200 billion over the next 5 years. I hear all the talk from the other side on Capitol Hill about fiscal responsibility, but they haven't put any of their ideas on the table for programs. It is time to stop talking; it is time for them to stop acting and not pass these problems on to future Congresses and future generations.

On matters relating to our economy, our record is clear. You and I succeeded in cutting taxes. We're reducing wasteful spending. On these issues, both sides have made their case. The results are in, and they are proving us right.

We applied our philosophy to questions affecting the moral fabric of our Nation. We

believe that all human life is precious and deserves to be protected. In 2001, I had a grave decision to make on the question of embryonic stem cell research. I believed we could empower scientists and researchers to discover cures for terrible diseases without crossing a moral line. So I authorized research on existing stem cell lines and stood against any effort to use Federal tax dollars to support the destruction of human life.

Our critics had a different view. They thought my defense of life was shortsighted and harmful. When I vetoed two bills that sought to use tax dollars to destroy human embryos, some academics described my position as ridiculous and scientifically naive. One publication predicted our plan would not hold up over the long haul.

Then last November, scientists announced a landmark achievement. They found a way to reprogram adult skin cells to act like embryonic stem cells. This discovery has the potential to end the divisive debate over stem cell research. It will allow us to expand the frontiers of medicine while maintaining a culture of life. In the coming year, we will increase funds for this type of ethical research. And I will continue to push for a ban on the buying, selling, patenting, or cloning of human life.

When I took office, our society was grappling with a troubling rate of drug use among our children. A new generation of young people was in danger of being swept up in a cycle of addiction and crime and hopelessness. We believe people should be held responsible for their actions, and we know that people can change their behavior. Sometimes all it takes is the help of a loving soul, somebody who puts their arm around a troubled person and says," I love you; can I help you?" We also know that——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. My soul is not that troubled, but thank you.

We also know that the drug crisis requires us to reduce both supply and demand. And so in 2002, I set our country on an ambitious goal to cut drug use among young people by 25 percent over 5 years. Critics didn't think that was possible. Some thought the drug war had already failed. Some said we focused too much on interdiction and not enough on treatment. An influential magazine and assorted commentators wanted to declare defeat and legalize the drug trade. A left-leaning drug prevention group said that our aggressive strategy was "very unlikely . . . to produce any different result than we have seen so far."

We stood our ground. We worked with international partners to interdict drugs into our country. We increased funds for drug treatment programs. We helped move drug addicts from a culture of victimization to a culture of responsibility. And we have gotten results. Since I took office, the overall use of illicit drugs by young people has dropped 24 percent. Marijuana use fell by 25 percent, steroid by a third, the use of ecstasy by 54 percent. Methamphetamine abuse has plummeted by 64 percent since 2001.

On matters relating to America's moral compass, we have defended human life. We promoted strong families. We confronted the crippling cycle of drug dependency. We challenged the critics, the self-proclaimed experts, and the status quo. Both sides made their case. The results are in, and they're proving us right.

We've also applied our philosophy to issues of national security. Six-and-a-half years ago, our country faced the worst attack in our history. I understood immediately that we would have to act boldly to protect the American people. So we've gone on the offense against these extremists. We're staying on the offense, and we will not relent until we bring them to justice. We recognized that this is a war, not just a matter of law enforcement. We recognize that we're engaged in the decisive ideological struggle of our time.

The first battle in this war against the extremists centered on Afghanistan; the 9/11 attackers had trained and planned in Afghanistan. We believed our military could remove the Taliban from power and that we could help aid the rise of a stable and democratic government.

Critics had a different view. One commentator said most Afghans would oppose an American invasion and fight the foreign occupiers. Another declared, "We're not headed toward a quagmire; we are already in one." Another commentator scoffed, "Afghanistan as a democracy? Forget it."

Well, we stood our ground, and we have seen the results. Al Qaida lost its terrorist camps in Afghanistan and the Taliban was driven from power. The Afghan people braved threats of violence to elect a new President and a new Parliament. Roads and hospitals are being built. Girls who were once forbidden from going to school are now going to school. America, 25 NATO allies, and 15 partner nations are helping the Afghan people secure their country. The Taliban, Al Qaida, and their allies are on the run. Afghanistan has a long road ahead, but they have a future that offers promise and hope. We're going to stand with the Afghan people; we're going to help millions claim their liberty. And we will always work to make sure Afghanistan will never again be a safe haven for terrorists and extremists who want to do us harm.

The war against our enemies also brought us to Iraq. Our coalition confronted a regime that defied United Nations Security Council resolutions, violated a ceasefire agreement, attacked its neighbors, sponsored terrorism, and had a history of using and pursuing weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein was a threat to the United States and a threat to the world. My decision to remove Saddam was the right decision at the time, and it is the right decision today.

Because we acted, 25 million Iraqis are free. We've seen them go to the polls. We've seen them elect a representative government. We've also seen an enemy determined to roll back this progress through horrific acts of violence designed to pit Iraqis one against another.

One year ago, things were not going well in that country. Terrorists and extremists were succeeding in their efforts to plunge Iraq into chaos. You see, they wanted to deny Iraqis their liberty. They can't stand freedom. They wanted to establish safe havens in Iraq from which to launch attacks against America and its allies. I strongly believe that America's security and peace in the world depend upon defeating this enemy. So we reviewed our strategy. Things weren't working; I need to know why and what it would take to make things better. And that's why you review a strategy.

I made up my mind. I listened carefully to a lot of folks, and I decided to send more troops into Iraq, in a dramatic policy shift. And the policy shift has become known as the surge.

Our critics had a different view. They looked at rising violence in Iraq and declared the war was lost.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Some concluded the surge had failed even before it had fully begun. Two foreign affairs experts proposed "a well-managed defeat . . . to boost U.S. credibility."

We stood our ground, and we're seeing results. A year after I ordered the surge of forces, high-profile terrorist attacks in Iraq are down, civilian deaths are down, sectarian killings are down. U.S. and Iraqi forces have captured or killed thousands of extremists in Iraq, including hundreds of key Al Qaida leaders and operatives. There is more work to be done. It takes awhile for young democracies to take root, but reconciliation is taking place. I recognize the progress in Iraq is fragile, and there's going to be tough days ahead. Yet even the enemy recognizes the progress we're being making. They recognize they're on the wrong side of events. They are disheartened. They are demoralized. And they will be defeated.

We can have confidence in Iraq's ultimate success because we believe in the transformative power of freedom. We believe there is an Almighty God. And a gift of that Almighty to every man, woman, and child on the face of this Earth is freedom. We have seen that free societies become peaceful societies. We know that a free Iraq will be a friend of America, an ally in this war against these extremists, and a source of hope and stability in a dangerous part of the world.

We'll fight the enemy overseas so we do not have to face them here at home. And as we do so, we must take measures to protect America, the homeland. We must give our intelligence officials the tools they need to uncover terrorist plots and prevent new attacks. And one of the most important tools is the ability to monitor terrorist communications. My most important job is to protect the American people. In order to do that job, we need to know who the terrorists are talking to; we need to know what they're saying;

we need to know what they're planning. So Congress passed the Protect America Act. This law modernized an outdated surveillance law and closed dangerous gaps in our intelligence.

Now, critics had a different view. One liberal interest group called the law an end run around the Constitution. Others falsely claimed law enforcement officials wanted to spy on Americans. Still another summed up the initiative as "a groupthink travesty."

We countered these critics, and we stood our ground. Our ability to monitor the communications of terrorists overseas has helped us gain crucial elements on terrorist cells and helped keep our country safe. The Protect America Act is working. The problem is that Congress set the law to expire 1 week from tomorrow. I don't think the Al Qaida threat is going to expire 1 week from tomorrow. [*Laughter*] Congress must ensure the flow of vital intelligence is not disrupted. Congress must pass liability protection for companies believed to have assisted in the efforts to defend America. The time for temporary fixes has ended. Congress must pass this law, and they must pass it now.

On matters of war and peace, we have taken the fight to our enemies abroad, and we are defending our people here at home. We're standing with new partners in Afghanistan and Iraq to help them build free nations. We refused to yield when the going got tough. And when the history of our actions is written, it will show that we were right.

We will face other challenges ahead that will require new energy and, before long, new leadership. I'm absolutely confident, with your help, we will elect a President who shares our principles. As we take on the challenges, we must be guided by the philosophy that has brought us success. Our policies are working. The American people support our points of view. They share our philosophy.

And consider our advantage on other great questions before us. On health care, one side says we should expand the Federal Government's control over your private medicine. You and I say we should expand access to health care, empower consumers to make choices, and ensure that medical decisions are left in the hands of patients and their doctors.

On education, one side says we should spend your tax dollars without measuring whether or not our children are actually learning to read and write and add and subtract. You and I believe in accountability. We believe parents should have more options, and we believe in liberating children from failing public schools.

On the rights of the unborn, the most vulnerable among us, one side supports abortion on demand. You and I believe in the worth of every human being, the matchless joy of adoption, and the right to life.

On the Federal judiciary, one side says we should confirm judges who believe in the "living Constitution," which basically means they can make up laws as they go along. I say we need judges who respect our values, do not follow the political winds, and revere the plain meaning of our Constitution. We need more judges like John Roberts and Sam Alito.

On America's role in the world, some believe that our Nation is often the cause of global turmoil, a mentality once called "blame America first." You and I believe that America is a leading light, a guiding star, and the greatest nation on the face of the Earth.

You see, I know of America's greatness because I get to see it up close, and it is a privilege to see it up close. I see it in the footsoldiers in the armies of compassion, who perform acts of kindness and hope every single day. I see it in the courage of ordinary citizens like those who rushed toward danger when the Twin Towers fell and our Pentagon burned. I see it with military families who've lost loved ones, and every time, I come away moved and inspired by their valor, their grit, their pride, and their love of country. I see it when I exchange salutes with the finest young men and women our country has ever known. These Americans give me endless optimism about our future, and they have made my Presidency a joyous experience.

You know, since I've come to Washington, I've been reading a lot of history. Laura notes it's probably because I'm making up for lost time. [*Laughter*] Over the past few years, I've read three books on George Washington, or as I call him, the "original George W."

It is interesting to me that they are still analyzing the record of our first President.

My attitude is, if they're still analyzing number 1, 43 doesn't need to worry about it. I'm not going to be around to see the final history written on my administration. The truth is that history's verdict takes time to reveal itself.

But we don't have to wait on history for one thing: In the year ahead, the pundits, the so-called experts, commentator, analysts will offer more gloomy predictions and more big Government solutions. And when they do, let us remember their record. This is a group that is seldom correct—[*laughter*]—but never in doubt.

You and I have seen that in our own time. Ronald Reagan was called a "warmonger," "an amiable dunce," a "movie actor detached from reality." Yet within a few years after President Reagan left office, the Berlin Wall came down, the evil empire collapsed, the cold war was won. And over the years, a strange thing has happened. A lot of people who spent the 1980's criticizing President Reagan now tell us they were with him all along. [*Laughter*]

You were with him all along. And over the past 7 years, you've been with me. I appreciate your support.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all. I appreciate the chance that you've given me—help me get this opportunity to serve our country. It's been a fantastic experience. I appreciate the countless phone calls you've made. I appreciate the volunteer work you did in two tough campaigns. I'll always—always—be grateful [to each of you] * for supporting our cause, for giving me a chance, and for loving our country. I thank you for that.

I look forward to working with you this year. My energy is up; my spirit is high; and I will finish strong. And in the meantime, we will elect a new President. We've had good debates, and soon we'll have a nominee who will carry a conservative banner into this election and beyond. Listen, the stakes in November are high. This is an important election. Prosperity and peace are in the balance. So with confidence in our vision and faith in our values, let us go forward, fight for victory, and keep the White House in 2008.

God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:21 a.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to David A. Keene, chairman, American Conservative Union Foundation and Conservative Political Action Conference; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan. He also referred to H.R. 5140 and Executive Order 13457.

Remarks Following a Briefing on Regional Tornado Damage in Lafayette, Tennessee

February 8, 2008

Listen, I want to thank you for the briefing. People have got to understand here in the region that a lot of folks around America care for them now. And I'm here to listen, to determine—to make sure that the Federal response is compassionate and effective. I don't want people to think something is going to happen that's not going to happen. And therefore, when we say something is going to happen to help them get their feet back on the ground, it will happen.

Secondly, I am here to thank the people that will provide the compassion for people who hurt. I notice we've got the Red Cross sitting over there. They're good responders. They respond to help people in need.

Thirdly, I will make it clear to people here that I have no doubt in my mind this community will come back better than before. Macon County people are down-to-earth, hard-working, God-fearing people, who, if just given a little help, will come back stronger.

And that's what—and so I want to thank you all for the briefing. Governor, again, thank you for being here. Appreciate the Senators and Congressmen joining us too.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. at the Lafayette Fire Department's Atwell & Scruggs Fire Station. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Phil Bredesen of Tennessee.

* White House correction.

Remarks Following a Tour of Tornado Damage in Lafayette

February 8, 2008

The President. Phil and June Spears have just—I looked in their eyes and saw incredible sadness and worry.

Phil Spears. It's true.

The President. And I know the Governor joins me in sharing our concerns with you. But I hope a couple of things become evident to you. One, there's a lot of people who care about you, total strangers showing up here in this community to help you get back on your feet.

And the Government has got a role to play. And I want to thank the Senators and Congressmen for being here, because they know that there is programs available for you. And one of the things the people have got to do is call a phone number. Life has been turned upside down here. If you've been affected, you ought to call 1–800–621–3362—1–800–621–3362. And that's where you can find out the help that is available.

What happened is, is that the Governor and his team quickly moved as this storm moved through this—moved through the State of Tennessee, and he made an assessment, and he sent the paperwork up to me. And because he moved quickly, I was able to sign a disaster declaration that then frees help. And so we want the folks to know that there is help from the Federal Government, and he can get the number I just outlined. But there's also going to be a lot of help from loving neighbors.

And we're sorry you're going through what you're going through. You know, life sometimes is unfair, and you don't get to play the hand that you wanted to play.

Mr. Spears. That's true.

The President. But the question is, when you get dealt the hand, how do you play it? And I've come away with this impression of the folks in Macon County: One, they're down-to-earth, good, hard-working people. They have a respect for the Almighty. And this community is going to be as strong as ever. That's what I think.

Mr. Spears. Yes, sir.

The President. I bet you feel the same way.

Mr. Spears. Yes, sir. If it wasn't for my friends, I don't know what I'd do.

The President. And you're going to find you got some new friends showing up too——

Mr. Spears. Appreciate it.

The President. ——people you've never heard of, they don't know who you are, total strangers. But when they know there's a neighbor in need, they'll come and help you.

And I appreciate you giving me a chance to come by, and I know the folks traveling with me appreciate. We're so sorry you're going through what you're going through, but there's help, and that's what you've got to know.

Anyway, God bless. Thank you.

June Spears. Appreciate it.

Mr. Spears. Thank you.

The President. Yes. Hang in there, brother.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:43 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Phil Bredesen of Tennessee.

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.

February 2

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

February 3

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

February 4

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister-elect Samak Sundaravej of Thailand to congratulate him on his appointment. He then had separate telephone conversations with New

York Giants president and chief executive officer John K. Mara, chairman and executive vice president Steve Tisch, head coach Tom Coughlin, and quarterback Eli Manning to congratulate them on their February 3 Super Bowl victory.

February 5

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President declared a major disaster in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding from January 7–10.

The President announced his intention to nominate Hugo Llorens to be Ambassador to Honduras.

The President announced his intention to designate John L. Morrison as a member of the Intelligence Oversight Board on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

February 6

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with Governor Bob Riley of Alabama, Governor Haley Barbour of Mississippi, Governor Mike Beebe of Arkansas, Governor Steve Beshear of Kentucky, and Governor Phil Bredesen of Tennessee to discuss the damage and recovery efforts in the areas struck by severe storms and tornadoes on February 5.

The White House announced that the President will host Secretary General Jakob Gijsbert "Jaap" de Hoop Scheffer of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization at the White House on February 29.

The President declared a major disaster in Hawaii and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, high surf, flooding, and mudslides from December 4–7.

The President announced his intention to nominate Linda Thomas-Greenfield to be Ambassador to Liberia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Susan D. Peppler to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (Community Planning and Development).

The President announced his intention to nominate Ralph E. Martinez to be a member of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission.

February 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced that due to the President's travel to Tennessee on Friday, he will now welcome President Amadou Toumani Toure of Mali to the White House on February 12.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Donald Tusk of Poland to the White House on March 10.

The President declared a major disaster in Arkansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on February 5 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding from February 5–6.

February 8

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Nashville, TN, where, upon arrival, he met with Wilson County Emergency Management employee David Harmon, who rescued an 11-month-old baby after the February 5 tornadoes.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Lafayette, TN. While en route aboard Marine One, he, Governor Phil Bredesen of Tennessee, and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator R. David Paulison took an aerial tour of the areas damaged by the February 5 tornadoes.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Camp David, MD.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Bush will host Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark and his wife, Anne-Mette Rasmussen, at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on February 29 and March 1.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia to Washington on March 19.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted February 5

Clyde R. Cook, Jr.,
of North Carolina, to be U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of North Carolina for the term of 4 years, vice Charles R. Reavis.

Hugo Llorens,
of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Honduras.

Marianne Matuzic Myles,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cape Verde.

Submitted February 6

Ralph E. Martinez,
of Florida, to be a member of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States for a term expiring September 30, 2010, vice Laramie Faith McNamara.

Susan D. Peppler,
of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, vice Pamela Hughes Patenaude.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield,
of Louisiana, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Liberia.

Withdrawn February 7

Paul DeCamp,
of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, vice Tammy Dee McCutchen, resigned, which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released February 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Office of Management and Budget Director James A. Nussle

Transcript of remarks by National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace *

Statement by the Press Secretary on the terrorist attack in Dimona, Israel

Fact sheet: The President's FY09 Budget

Released February 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary on the situation in Burma

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3432

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Missouri

Released February 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

* This transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 5.

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senate action on the economic growth legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 2110

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Hawaii

Released February 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Prime Minister Donald Tusk of Poland

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by President Amadou Toumani Toure of the Republic of Mali

Statement by the Press Secretary on the International Convention Against Doping in Sport

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Arkansas

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Tennessee

Fact sheet: Senate Must Act on Nominations to Federal Courts and Agencies

Fact sheet: Continuing the Work of Helping Our Nation's Youth

Excerpts of the President's remarks to the Conservative Political Action Conference

Released February 8

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Scott M. Stanzel

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia

Acts Approved by the President

Approved February 5

H.R. 3432 / Public Law 110–183
Commission on the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade Act

Approved February 6

S. 2110 / Public Law 110–184
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 427 North Street in Taft, California, as the "Larry S. Pierce Post Office"