

I congratulate and thank your families for hanging in with you in this long, 162-game season. I wish you all the best in the upcoming year, and it's my great honor to welcome you back to the White House as the World Series champs.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:08 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Tim Wakefield, Daisuke Matsuzaka, Josh Beckett, Curt Schilling, Mike Timlin, Jonathan Papelbon, and Jon Lester, pitchers, Doug Mirabelli and Jason Varitek, catchers, Larry Lucchino, president and chief executive officer, Terry Francona, manager, Mike Lowell, Kevin Youkilis, and Dustin Pedroia, infielders, David A. "Big Papi" Ortiz, designated hitter, and Manny Ramirez, outfielder, Boston Red Sox; and Jacquie Francona, wife of Terry Francona.

Statement on the Death of William F. Buckley, Jr.

February 27, 2008

America has lost one of its finest writers and thinkers. Bill Buckley was one of the great founders of the modern conservative movement. He brought conservative thought into the political mainstream and helped lay the intellectual foundation for America's victory in the cold war and for the conservative movement that continues to this day. He will be remembered for his principled thought and beautiful writing, as well as his personal warmth, wit, and generous spirit. His legacy lives on in the ideas he championed and in the magazine he founded, *National Review*.

Laura and I send our prayers to Chris Buckley, the Buckley family, and all who loved this good man.

The President's News Conference

February 28, 2008

The President. Good morning. Laura and I, as you know, recently came back from Africa, where we saw firsthand how the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is saving lives. I had a chance to go to the—speak to the Sullivan Foundation the other day about our trip, and the reason I did so was to remind the American people about how important it is for our Nation to remain generous and

compassionate when it comes to helping people overseas.

I also, during my trip, urged Congress to reauthorize the emergency plan and increase our commitment, and they did. They approved a good, bipartisan bill that maintains the principles that have made this program effective. And so I want to thank Acting Chairman Howard Berman and Ranking Member Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and all the members of the committee for the action they took. This afternoon they're going to come down, and I'll be able to thank them in person. And I'm going to brief them on the trip. The—obviously, our hope is now that the House will act quickly and send the bill reauthorizing PEPFAR to the Senate. And I'd like to sign it into law as quickly as possible.

Members should also act on a very urgent priority, and that is to pass legislation our intelligence officials need to quickly and effectively monitor terrorist communications. At issue is a dispute over whether telecommunications companies should be subjected to class-action lawsuits because they are believed to have helped defend America after the attacks of 9/11. Allowing these lawsuits to proceed would be unfair. If any of these companies helped us, they did so after being told by our Government that their assistance was legal and vital to our national security.

Allowing the lawsuits to proceed could aid our enemies because the litigation process could lead to the disclosure of information about how we conduct surveillance, and it would give Al Qaida and others a roadmap as to how to avoid the surveillance. Allowing these lawsuits to proceed could make it harder to track the terrorists because private companies besieged by and fearful of lawsuits would be less willing to help us quickly get the information we need. Without the cooperation of the private sector, we cannot protect our country from terrorist attack.

Protecting these companies from lawsuits is not a partisan issue. Republicans and Democrats in the United States Senate came together and passed a good bill protecting private companies from these abusive lawsuits. And Republicans and Democrats in the House stand ready to pass the Senate bill