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Week Ending Friday, June 27, 2008

The President's Radio Address

June 21, 2008

Good morning. Americans are concerned about the high price of gasoline. Everyone who commutes to work, purchases food, ships a product, or takes a family vacation feels the burden of higher prices at the pump. And families across our country are looking to Washington for a response.

The fundamental problem behind high gas prices is that the supply of oil has not kept up with the rising demand across the world. One obvious solution is for America to increase our domestic oil production. So my administration has repeatedly called on Congress to open access to new oil exploration here in the United States. Unfortunately, Democrats on Capitol Hill have rejected virtually every proposal. Now Americans are paying the price at the pump for this obstruction. So this week, I asked Democratic congressional leaders to take the side of working families and small businesses and farmers and ranchers and move forward with four steps to expand American oil and gasoline production.

First, we should expand American oil production by increasing access to the Outer Continental Shelf, or OCS. Experts believe that the OCS could produce enough oil to match America's current production for almost 10 years. The problem is that Congress has restricted access to key parts of the OCS since the early 1980s. So I've called on the House and Senate to lift this legislative ban and give States the option of opening up OCS resources off their shores, while protecting the environment. There's also an executive prohibition on exploration in the OCS, which I will lift when Congress lifts the legislative ban.

Second, we should expand American oil production by tapping into the extraordinary potential of oil shale. Oil shale is a type of rock that can produce oil when exposed to heat and other processes. One major deposit in the Rocky Mountain West alone would equal current annual oil imports for more than 100 years. Unfortunately, Democrats in Congress are standing in the way of further development. In last year's omnibus spending bill, Democratic leaders inserted a provision blocking oil shale leasing on Federal lands. That provision can be taken out as easily as it was slipped in, and Congress should do so immediately.

Third, we should expand American oil production by permitting exploration in northern Alaska. Scientists have developed innovative techniques to reach this oil with virtually no impact on the land or local wildlife. With a drilling footprint that covers just a tiny fraction of this vast terrain, America could produce an estimated 10 billion barrels of oil. That is roughly the equivalent of two decades of imported oil from Saudi Arabia. I urge Members of Congress to allow this remote region to bring enormous benefits to the American people.

Finally, we need to expand and enhance our refining capacity. It has been 30 years since a new refinery was built in our Nation, and lawsuits and red tape have made it extremely costly to expand or modify existing refineries. The result is that America now imports millions of barrels of fully refined gasoline from abroad. This imposes needless costs on American families and drivers. It deprives American workers of good jobs, and it needs to change.

I know Democratic leaders have opposed some of these policies in the past. Now that their opposition has helped drive gas prices to record levels, I ask them to reconsider their positions. If congressional leaders leave for the Fourth of July recess without taking action, they will need to explain why $4 a gallon gasoline is not enough incentive for them to act.

This is a difficult time for many American families. Rising gasoline prices and economic

uncertainty can affect everything from what food parents put on the table to where they can go on vacation. With the four steps I've laid out, Congress now has a clear path to begin easing the strain high gas prices put on your family's pocketbook. These proposals will take years to have their full impact, so I urge Congress to take action as soon as possible. Together we can meet the energy challenges we face and keep our economy the strongest, most vibrant, and most hopeful in the world.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:40 a.m. on June 20 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Memorandum on the 2008 Combined Federal Campaign

June 19, 2008

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: 2008 Combined Federal Campaign

Admiral Thad W. Allen, Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, has agreed to serve as the Honorary National Chairman of the 2008 Combined Federal Campaign. I ask you to enthusiastically support the CFC by personally chairing the campaign in your agency and by exhorting top agency officials around the country to do the same.

The Combined Federal Campaign is an important way for Federal employees to support thousands of worthy charities. Public servants not only contribute to the campaign but also assume leadership roles to ensure its success.

Your personal support and enthusiasm will help positively influence thousands of employees and will guarantee another successful campaign.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 23.

Remarks Honoring the 2007 Women's National Basketball Association Champion Phoenix Mercury

June 23, 2008

The President. Thanks for coming. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. And it is fitting that we use the East Garden because, one, this is rarely used; and two, it is an opportunity for me to welcome a lot of people to the—that are here to see the WNBA champs, Phoenix Mercury. And we're glad you came.

People who follow sport in America will know that the Phoenix Mercury played together as a great team, and they brought new glory to women's athletics and the sport of basketball. As they like to say, "Mighty Mercury, we are number one!" [*Laughter*] And these women proved it.

I want to thank Jay Parry, president and COO of the Phoenix Mercury, for joining us. Ann Meyers Drysdale, the general manager of the Phoenix Mercury—where is your son? There he is. Kind of looks like the big right-hander. You're right. [*Laughter*]

Corey Gaines, the head coach—Coach, thanks for coming, proud you're here. I particularly want to pay my respects to the co-captains of the team, Cappie Pondexter and Diana Taurasi.

Now, this is not the first time that Diana has been here to the White House. She came with the mighty UConn Huskies. And she told me she was going to amount to something in life when I saw her. [*Laughter*] She said, "I will be back," and she is, as the champion. Welcome. Glad you're here.

And I wish these two great athletes all the best at the Olympics in Beijing. They're going to be carrying on the great tradition of women's basketball here in the United States. And even though it's going to be tough—a lot of teams are getting ready for them—they're going to come back with the gold. And America will be proud.

I welcome the other athletes on the stage and the newly—the new athletes who have joined the Phoenix Mercury. Must be pretty cool to be playing with champs. I bet it's wearing off on you, what it means to make