

Week Ending Friday, July 18, 2008

### **The President's Radio Address**

*July 12, 2008*

Good morning. This week, Members of Congress returned to Washington after their Fourth of July recess. While they were at home, they heard a clear message from their constituents: Americans are concerned about high gas prices. Everyone who commutes to work, grows food, books a plane ticket, or runs a small business feels the squeeze of rising energy prices. And Americans are increasingly frustrated with Congress's failure to take action.

One of the factors driving up high gas prices is that many of our oil deposits here in the United States have been put off-limits for exploration and production. Past efforts to meet the demand for oil by expanding domestic resources have been repeatedly rejected by Democrats in Congress.

This week, however, we are seeing signs that the recent rise in gasoline prices has caused some to rethink their long-held opposition to opening up more areas for domestic production. If this change of heart is real, we can work together on four steps that will expand American oil and gas production and eventually relieve the pressure of rising prices.

First, we should expand American oil production by increasing access to offshore exploration on the Outer Continental Shelf, or OCS. Experts believe that the OCS, that is currently off-limits, 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. Since that time, technological advances have allowed us to explore oil offshore in ways that protect the environment.

Last month, I called on the House and the Senate to lift this legislative ban, so we can allow States to have the option of opening up OCS resources off their coasts. I also of-

fered to lift an executive restriction on this exploration if Congress did so. Unfortunately, Congress has failed to act. Time is running out before Congress leaves for its summer recess. For the sake of our economy and American consumers, Congress must move quickly to expand exploration of the OCS, so we can tap into these vast oil resources as soon as possible.

Second, we should expand 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 or other processes. One major deposit in the Rocky Mountain West alone could, if fully recovered, equal more than a century's worth of imports at current levels. Last year, however, Democratic leaders inserted a provision blocking oil shale leasing on Federal lands into an omnibus spending bill. 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 redtape 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 is now time for Congress to change it.

It's time for Members of Congress to address the pain that high gas prices are causing our citizens. Every extra dollar that American families spend because of high gas prices is one less dollar they can use to put food on the table or send a child to college. The American people deserve better, so I urge Congress to come together with my administration now to ensure that our economy remains the strongest, most vibrant, and most hopeful in the world.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:10 a.m. on July 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Statement on the Death of Former White House Press Secretary Tony Snow**

*July 12, 2008*

Laura and I are deeply saddened by the death of our dear friend Tony Snow. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Jill, and their children, Kendall, Robbie, and Kristi. The Snow family has lost a beloved husband and father, and America has lost a devoted public servant and a man of character.

Tony was one of our Nation's finest writers and commentators. He earned a loyal following with incisive radio and television broadcasts. He was a gifted speechwriter who served in my father's administration. And I was thrilled when he agreed to return to the White House to serve as my Press Secretary. It was a joy to watch Tony at the podium each day. He brought wit, grace, and a great love of country to his work. His colleagues will cherish memories of his energetic personality and relentless good humor.

All of us here at the White House will miss Tony, as will the millions of Americans he inspired with his brave struggle against cancer. One of the things that sustained Tony Snow was his faith. And Laura and I join people across our country in praying that this

good man has now found comfort in the arms of his Creator.

### **Remarks on the Death of Former White House Press Secretary Tony Snow**

*July 13, 2008*

Well, we had some bad news this weekend. Our good friend Tony Snow passed away. Tony, you know, worked with us and made a lot of friends here in the White House. And Laura and I are—we're really saddened by his death.

I came to know Tony as a very smart and capable man. He had good values. He was an honest guy. You know, he had a wonderful sense of humor. He loved to laugh; he loved his country; and he loved his family.

And our thoughts are with Jill and the three children now as they deal with their grief. We went to church this morning at Camp David, and I prayed for Jill and the family, that they would have—find comfort and strength during this tough time for them. And I just hope they understand that Tony was loved here in the White House, and a lot of those who, you know, got to know him really do care about Jill and the kids.

So, anyway, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

### **Remarks on the 10th Anniversary of the International Religious Freedom Act**

*July 14, 2008*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome. I want to welcome Congressman Wolf, Congressman Smith, Congressman Franks, former Senator Nickles. Thank you all for coming. I'm so honored that you've come to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the International Religious Freedom Act.

This legislation that we commemorate today builds on a tradition that defined our Nation. After all, when the Founding Fathers adopted the Bill of Rights, the very first liberty they enshrined was the freedom of religion. They recognized that the most basic