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Statement on Provincial Elections Legislation in Iraq

September 24, 2008

Today Iraq's Parliament passed a Provincial elections law enabling Iraq to hold Provincial elections by January 31, 2009. Elections in Iraq can now be held under a new system that will give Iraqis more say in choosing their elected representatives.

Nothing is more central to a functioning democracy than free and fair elections. Today's action demonstrates the ability of Iraq's leaders to work together for the good of the Iraqi people and represents further progress on political reconciliation. I congratulate the members of the Iraqi Council of Representatives for coming together to pass this significant legislation.

Proclamation 8293—Gold Star Mother's Day, 2008

September 24, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Throughout our history, the men and women of the Armed Forces have put our Nation's security before their own, doing their duty in the face of grave danger. On Gold Star Mother's Day, we pay solemn tribute to the mothers of the patriots lost serving this great Nation.

Gold Star Mothers inspire our Nation with their deep devotion to family and country. These extraordinary women serve their communities, dedicate their time to helping members of our Armed Forces and veterans, and bring comfort and hope to families whose loved ones laid down their lives in the defense of our liberty. Nothing can compensate for their sacrifice and loss, yet Gold Star Mothers demonstrate tremendous courage and resolve while working to preserve the memory and legacy of all our fallen heroes.

On this day, we honor our country's Gold Star Mothers and remember their sons' and daughters' noble service and great sacrifice. We offer them our deepest gratitude and our most profound respect, and we ask for God's blessings to be upon them and their families.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 115 of June 23, 1936 (49 Stat. 1895 as amended), has designated the last Sunday in September as "Gold Star Mother's Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in its observance.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Sunday, September 28, 2008, as Gold Star Mother's Day. I call upon all Government officials to display the flag of the United States over Government buildings on this special day. I also encourage the American people to display the flag and hold appropriate ceremonies as a public expression of our Nation's sympathy and respect for our Gold Star Mothers.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 26, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 29.

Address to the Nation on the National Economy

September 24, 2008

Good evening. This is an extraordinary period for America's economy. Over the past few weeks, many Americans have felt anxiety about their finances and their future. I understand their worry and their frustration. We've seen triple-digit swings in the stock market. Major financial institutions have teetered on the edge of collapse, and some have failed. As uncertainty has grown, many banks have restricted lending. Credit markets have frozen, and families and businesses have found it harder to borrow money.

We're in the midst of a serious financial crisis, and the Federal Government is responding with decisive action. We boosted confidence in money market mutual funds