

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, April 16, 2007
Volume 43—Number 15
Pages 429–451

Contents

Addresses and Remarks

- Arizona
 - Border security and immigration reform in Yuma—431
 - Tour of the border in Yuma—430
- Easter—430
- National Catholic Prayer Breakfast—447
- No Child Left Behind Act, reauthorization—446
- Parochial education leaders and parents, meeting—448
- Radio address—429
- Texas, remarks to reporters at Fort Hood—430
- Virginia, American Legion Post 177 in Fairfax—435

Communications to Federal Agencies

- Information Sharing Environment, memorandum on assignment of functions—442
- Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization Office, memorandum—446

Interviews With the News Media

- Exchange with reporters in Yuma, AZ—430

Proclamations

- National D.A.R.E. Day—443
- National Volunteer Week—445
- Thomas Jefferson Day—444

Statements by the President

- “Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007” and “Hope Offered through Principled and Ethical Stem Cell Research Act,” Senate passage—443

Supplementary Materials

- Acts approved by the President—451
- Checklist of White House press releases—451
- Digest of other White House announcements—449
- Nominations submitted to the Senate—450

Editor’s Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on April 13, 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.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is also available on the Internet on the GPO Access service at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html>.

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US GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
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Washington DC 20402

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PRESORTED STANDARD
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Week Ending Friday, April 13, 2007

The President's Radio Address

April 7, 2007

Good morning. This week, people around the world celebrate Passover and Easter. These holy days remind us of the presence of a loving God who delivers His people from oppression and offers a love more powerful than death. We take joy in spending this special time with family and friends, and we give thanks for the many blessings in our lives.

One of our greatest blessings as Americans is that we have brave citizens who step forward to defend us. Every man or woman who wears our Nation's uniform is a volunteer, a patriot who has made the noble decision to serve a cause larger than self. This weekend, many of our service men and women are celebrating the holidays far from home. They are separated from their families by great distances, but they are always close in our thoughts. And this Passover and Easter, I ask you to keep them in your prayers.

Our men and women in uniform deserve the gratitude of every American. And from their elected leaders, they deserve something more: the funds, resources, and equipment they need to do their jobs.

Sixty-one days have passed since I sent Congress an emergency war spending bill to provide the funds our troops urgently need. But instead of approving that vital funding, Democrats in Congress have spent the past 61 days working to pass legislation that would substitute the judgment of politicians in Washington for the judgment of our generals in the field.

In both the House and Senate, Democratic majorities have passed bills that would impose restrictions on our military commanders, set an arbitrary date for withdrawal from Iraq, and fund domestic spending that has nothing to do with the war. The Democrats who passed these bills know that I will veto either version if it reaches my desk, and they know my veto will be sustained. Yet they

continue to pursue the legislation. And now the process is on hold for 2 weeks, until the full Congress returns to session.

I recognize that Democrats are trying to show their current opposition to the war in Iraq. They see the emergency war spending bill as a chance to make that statement. Yet for our men and women in uniform, this emergency war spending bill is not a political statement; it is a source of critical funding that has a direct impact on their daily lives.

When Congress does not fund our troops on the frontlines, our military is forced to make cuts in other areas to cover the shortfall. Military leaders have warned Congress about this problem. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Pete Pace, recently testified that if Congress fails to pass a bill I can sign by mid-April, the Army will be forced to consider cutting back on training, equipment repair, and quality of life initiatives for our Guard and Reserve forces. In a letter to Congress, Army Chief of Staff Pete Schoomaker put it this way: "Without approval of the supplemental funds in April, we will be forced to take increasingly draconian measures, which will impact Army readiness and impose hardships on our soldiers and their families."

If Congress fails to pass a bill I can sign by mid-May, the problems grow even more acute. The Army will be forced to consider slowing or even freezing funding for depots where pivotal equipment is repaired, delaying or curtailing the training of some active duty forces, and delaying the formation of new brigade combat teams. The bottom line is that Congress's failure to fund our troops will mean that some of our military families could wait longer for their loved ones to return from the frontlines, and others could see their loved ones headed back to war sooner than they need to. That is unacceptable to me, and I believe it is unacceptable to the American people.

The full Congress will not be back from spring vacation until the week of April 16th. That means the soonest the House and Senate could get a bill to my desk will be sometime late this month, after the adverse consequences for our troops and their families have already begun. For our troops, the clock is ticking. If the Democrats continue to insist on making a political statement, they should send me their bill as soon as possible. I will veto it, and then Congress can go to work on a good bill that gives our troops the funds they need, without strings and without further delay.

We have our differences in Washington, DC, but our troops should not be caught in the middle. All who serve in elected office have a solemn responsibility to provide for our men and women in uniform. We need to put partisan politics aside and do our duty to those who defend us.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:20 a.m. on April 6 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to Reporters at Fort Hood, Texas

April 8, 2007

Easter

The President. Laura and I just had the honor of celebrating Easter Sunday with members of our Armed Forces. I had a chance to reflect on the great sacrifice that our military and their families are making. I prayed for their safety; I prayed for their strength and comfort; and I prayed for peace.

This is a joyous day for many people around the world, and it's a day for us to reflect on the many blessings in our lives. And we thank the General and the troops at Fort Hood for welcoming me and Laura, and Mother and Dad, and my mother-in-law. We wish all Americans a peaceful weekend, and we wish our troops all the very best.

Thank you.

The First Lady. Happy Easter.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. at the 13th Sustainment Command Chapel.

Remarks During a Tour of the Border and an Exchange With Reporters in Yuma, Arizona

April 9, 2007

The President. You know, it's interesting; this is the spot I came to in May of 2006. Colburn told me then that we were in the process of developing a modernization strategy. None of this existed prior to my arrival in May. And they told me they were developing a strategy that would prevent people from charging across to try to get to the neighborhood over here. And that strategy has been implemented.

It is a combination of roads, lighting, and fencing, all aiming at making sure that we have a border that's protected. And it's amazing the progress that's been made. And we have come back to this spot because it's where I was the last time. And I was most impressed by your strategy, even more impressed by the fact that it's now being implemented. And the men have reported that the number of arrests are down, which is an indication that fewer people are trying to cross the border at this part of—along the border. And so we're making some pretty good progress.

And the reason we've come here is to show the American people that the plan that we've announced is now being implemented. And there is still more work to be done, but, nevertheless, a lot of progress is being made. I'm going to talk a little bit later about making sure that we complete the strategy by having a comprehensive immigration bill. I will save my words until then. But in the meantime, I wanted you to see the progress—see firsthand the progress that we're making here on the border.

Anyway, thank you for your time.

U.S. Border Patrol

Q. What most impresses you, Mr. President?

The President. The hard work being done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:36 a.m. at the Yuma Sector, U.S. Border Patrol. In his remarks, he referred to Ronald S. Colburn, Chief Patrol Agent, Yuma Sector, U.S. Border Patrol. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Border Security and Immigration Reform in Yuma

April 9, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks for the warm weather. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Twenty-eight degrees in Washington.

The President. Yes, 28 degrees in Washington; that's right. I appreciate you sharing that with me. [*Laughter*] Sometimes it's a little hotter than that in Washington. [*Laughter*] But I'm glad to be back here in Yuma. Thank you so very much for your hospitality. Thanks for your service to the country. I appreciate so very much the work you're doing day and night to protect these borders. And the American people owe you a great debt of gratitude.

The Border Patrol is really an important agency. I know some people are wondering whether or not it makes sense to join the Border Patrol. My answer is, I've gotten to know the Border Patrol; I know the people serving in this fine agency—I would strongly urge our fellow citizens to take a look at this profession. You're outdoors; you're working with good people; and you're making a solid contribution to the United States of America. And I want to thank you all for wearing the uniform and doing the tough work necessary, the work that the American people expect you to do.

Last May, I visited this section of the border, and it was then that I talked about the need for our Government to give you the manpower and resources you need to do your job. We were understaffed here. We weren't using enough technology to enable those who work here to be able to do the job the American people expect. I returned to check on the progress, to make sure that the check

wasn't in the mail—it, in fact, had been delivered.

I went to a neighborhood that abuts up against the border when I was here in May. It's the place where a lot of people came charging across. One or two agents would be trying to do their job and stopping a flood of folks charging into Arizona, and they couldn't do the job—just physically impossible. Back at this site, there's now infrastructure; there's fencing. And the amount of people trying to cross the border at that spot is down significantly.

I appreciate very much Ron Colburn and Ulay Littleton. They gave me the tour. Colburn, as you know, is heading up north. He's going to miss the weather. [*Laughter*] More importantly, he's going to miss the folks he worked with down here. I appreciate both of their service; I appreciate the tour. The efforts are working. This border is more secure, and America is safer as a result.

Securing the border is a critical part of a strategy for comprehensive immigration reform. It is an important part of a reform that is necessary so that the Border Patrol agents down here can do their job more effectively. Congress is going to take up the legislation on immigration. It is a matter of national interest, and it's a matter of deep conviction for me. I've been working to bring Republicans and Democrats together to resolve outstanding issues so that Congress can pass a comprehensive bill and I can sign it into law this year.

I appreciate the hard work of Secretary Michael Chertoff, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. I appreciate Commissioner Ralph Basham. He's the main man in charge of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. David Aguilar, Chief of the Border Patrol, is with us. David, thank you for the job you're doing. Lieutenant General Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau—I want to thank the Governor of the State of Arizona, Janet Napolitano. I appreciate you being here, Governor. Thank you for taking time from the session to be down here. And it means a lot when the Governors take an active interest in what's going on in the borders of their respective States.

I appreciate so very much Senator Jon Kyl. Kyl is one of the most respected United

States Senators, and I'm proud to be with him today—and glad to give him a ride back to Washington, I might add. [Laughter]

I appreciate members of the congressional delegation who have joined us: John Shadegg; Jeff Flake—from Snowflake, Arizona, I want you to know—[laughter]—and I appreciate you working on this immigration issue; Congressman Trent Franks; and Congressman Harry Mitchell. I appreciate you all taking time for being here with me today. It means a lot that you've come.

I want to thank Senator Tim Bee—he's the president of the Arizona State Senate—for being here. Mr. Mayor, thank you for coming. Larry Nelson, the mayor of Yuma, Arizona—I appreciate you being here, Mr. Mayor.

I do want to thank Major General David Rataczak. He's the Adjutant General of the State of Arizona; thank all the local and State officials. Most importantly, I want to thank the Border Patrol agents and I want to thank the National Guard folks for wearing the uniform. I am proud to be the Commander in Chief of all these units here today, and I appreciate your service to the United States of America.

I hope by now the American people understand the need for comprehensive immigration reform is a clear need. Illegal immigration is a serious problem—you know it better than anybody. It puts pressure on the public schools and the hospitals, not only here in our border States but States around the country. It drains the State and local budgets. I was talking to the Governor about how it strained the budgets. Incarceration of criminals who are here illegally strains the Arizona budget. But there's a lot of other ways it strains the local and State budgets. It brings crime to our communities.

It's a problem, and we need to address it aggressively. This problem has been growing for decades, and past efforts to address it have failed. These failures helped create a perception that America was not serious about enforcing our immigration laws and that they could be broken without consequence. Past efforts at reform did not do enough to secure our Nation's borders. As a result, many people have been able to sneak into this country.

If you don't man your borders and don't protect your borders, people are going to sneak in, and that's what's been happening for a long time. Past efforts at reform failed to address the underlying economic reasons behind illegal immigration. People will make great sacrifices to get into this country to find jobs and provide for their families.

When I was the Governor of Texas, I used to say, family values did not stop at the Rio Grande River. People are coming here to put food on the table, and they're doing jobs Americans are not doing. And the farmers in this part of the world understand exactly what I'm saying. But so do a lot of other folks around the country. People are coming to work, and many of them have no lawful way to come to America, and so they're sneaking in.

Past efforts at reform also failed to provide sensible ways for employers to verify the legal status of the workers they hire. It's against the law to knowingly hire an illegal alien. And as a result, because they couldn't verify the legal status, it was difficult for employers to comply. It was difficult for the government to enforce the laws at the worksite, and yet it is a necessary part of a comprehensive plan. You see, the lessons of all these experiences—the lesson of these experiences is clear: All elements of the issue must be addressed together. You can't address just one aspect and not be able to say to the American people that we're securing our borders.

We need a comprehensive bill, and that's what I'm working with Members of Congress on, a comprehensive immigration bill. And now is the year to get it done. The first element, of course, is to secure this border. That's what I'm down here for, to remind the American people that we're spending their taxpayer—their money, taxpayers' money, on securing the border. And we're making progress. This border should be open to trade and lawful immigration and shut down to criminals and drug dealers and terrorists and *coyotes* and smugglers, people who prey on innocent life.

We more than doubled the funding for border security since I've been the President. In other words, it's one thing to hear people come down here and talk; it's another thing for people to come down and do what they

say they're going to do. And I want to thank Congress for working on this issue. The funding is increasing manpower. The additional funding is increasing infrastructure, and it's increasing technology.

When I landed here at the airport, the first thing I saw was an unmanned aerial vehicle. It's a sophisticated piece of equipment. You can fly it from inside a truck, and you can look at people moving at night. It's the most sophisticated technology we have, and it's down here on the border to help the Border Patrol agents do their job. We've expanded the number of Border Patrol agents from about 9,000 to 13,000, and by the end of 2008, we're going to have a total of more than 18,000 agents.

I had the privilege of going to Artesia, New Mexico, to the training center. It was a fantastic experience to see the young cadets getting ready to come and to wear the green of the Border Patrol. By the time we're through, we will have doubled the size of the Border Patrol. In other words, you can't do the job the American people expect unless you got enough manpower, and we're increasing the manpower down here.

This new technology is really important to, basically, leverage the manpower. Whether it be the technology of surveillance and communication—we're going to make sure the agents have got what is necessary to be able to establish a common picture and get information out to the field as quickly as possible so that those 18,000 agents, when they're finally on station, can do the job the American people expect.

But manpower can't do it alone. In other words, there has to be some infrastructure along the border to be able to let these agents do their job. And so I appreciate the fact that we've got double fencing, all-weather roads, new lighting, mobile cameras. The American people have no earthly idea what's going on down here. One of the reasons I've come is to let you know—let the taxpayers know, the good folks down here are making progress.

We've worked with our Nation's Governors to deploy 6,000 National Guard members to provide the Border Patrol with immediate reinforcements. In other words, it takes time to train the Border Patrol, and until

they're fully trained, we've asked the Guard to come down. It's called Operation Jump Start, and the Guard down here is serving nobly.

I had the chance to visit with some of the Guard, and, Mr. Mayor, you'll be pleased to hear, they like being down here in Yuma, Arizona. [Laughter] They like the people, and they like the mission. More than 600 members of the Guard are serving here in the Yuma Sector. And I thank the Guard, and equally importantly, I thank their families for standing by the men and women who wear the uniform during this particular mission. And you e-mail them back home and tell them how much I appreciate the fact they're standing by you.

I appreciate very much the fact that illegal border crossings in this area are down. In the months before Operation Jump Start, an average of more than 400 people a day were apprehended trying to cross here. The number has dropped to fewer than 140 a day. In other words, one way that the Border Patrol can tell whether or not we're making progress is the number of apprehensions. When you're apprehending fewer people, it means fewer are trying to come across. And fewer are trying to come across because we're deterring people from attempting illegal border crossings in the first place.

I appreciate what Colburn says—he puts it this way: "They're watching. They see us watching them," that's what he said, "and they have decided they just can't get across." And that's part of the effort we're doing. We're saying, we're going to make it harder for you, so don't try in the first place.

We're seeing similar results all across the southern border. The number of people apprehended for illegally crossing our southern border is down by nearly 30 percent this year. We're making progress. And thanks for your hard work. It's hard work but necessary work.

Another important deterrent to illegal immigration is to end what was called catch-and-release. I know how this discouraged some of our Border Patrol agents; I talked to them personally. They worked hard to find somebody sneaking in the country; they apprehended them; the next thing they know,

they're back in society on our side of the border.

There's nothing more discouraging than have somebody risk their life or work hard and have the fruits of their labor undermined. And that's what was happening with catch-and-release. In other words, we'd catch people, and we'd say, "Show up for your court date," and they wouldn't show up for their court date. That shouldn't surprise anybody, but that's what was happening. And the reason why that was happening is because we didn't have enough beds to detain people.

Now, most of the people we apprehend down here are from Mexico. About 85 percent of the illegal immigrants caught crossing into—crossing this border are Mexicans—crossing the southern border are Mexicans. And they're sent home within 24 hours. It's the illegal immigrants from other countries that are not that easy to send home.

For many years, the government didn't have enough space, and so Michael and I worked with Congress to increase the number of beds available. So that excuse was eliminated. The practice has been effectively ended. Catch-and-release for every non-Mexican has been effectively ended. And I want to thank the Border Patrol and the leaders of the Border Patrol for allowing me to stand up and say that's the case.

And the reason why is, not only do we have beds; we've expedited the legal process to cut the average deportation time. Now, these are non-Mexican, illegal aliens that we've caught trying to sneak into our country. We're making it clear to foreign governments that they must accept back their citizens who violate our immigration laws. I said we're going to effectively end catch-and-release, and we have. And I appreciate your hard work in doing that.

The second element of a comprehensive immigration reform is a temporary-worker program. You cannot fully secure the border until we take pressure off the border. And that requires a temporary-worker program. It seems to make sense to me that if you've got people coming here to do jobs Americans aren't doing, we need to figure out a way that they can do so in a legal basis for a temporary period of time. And that way our Bor-

der Patrol can chase the criminals and the drug runners, potential terrorists, and not have to try to chase people who are coming here to do work Americans are not doing.

If you want to take the pressure off your border, have a temporary-worker program. It will help not only reduce the number of people coming across the border, but it will do something about the inhumane treatment that these people are subjected to. There's a whole smuggling operation—you know this better than I do. There's a bunch of smugglers that use the individual as a piece of—as a commodity. And they make money off these poor people, and they stuff them in the back of 18-wheelers, and they find hovels for them to hide in. And there's a whole industry that has sprung up. And it seems like to me that since this country respects human rights and the human condition, that it be a great contribution to eliminate this thugery, to free these people from this kind of extortion that they go through. And one way to do so is to say, "You can come and work in our country for jobs Americans aren't doing, for a temporary period of time."

The third element of a comprehensive reform is to hold employers accountable for the workers they hire. In other words, if you want to make sure that we've got a system in which people are not violating the law, then you've got to make sure we hold people to account, like employers. Enforcing immigration is a vital part of any successful reform. And so Chertoff and his department are cracking down on employers who knowingly violate the law.

But not only are there *coyotes* smuggling people in; there are document forgers that are making a living off these people. So, in other words, people may want to comply with the law, but it's very difficult at times to verify the legal status of their employees. And so to make the worksite enforcement practical on a larger scale, we have got to issue a tamper-proof identification card for illegal—for legal foreign workers. And we must create a better system for employers to verify the legality of the workers. In other words, we got work to do. And part of a comprehensive bill is to make sure worksite enforcement is effective.

Fourth, we've got to resolve the status of millions of illegal immigrants already here in the country. People who entered our country illegally should not be given amnesty. Amnesty is the forgiveness of an offense without penalty. I oppose amnesty, and I think most people in the United States Congress oppose amnesty. People say, "Why not have amnesty?" Well, the reason why is because you—10 years from now, you don't want to have a President having to address the next 11 million people who might be here illegally. That's why you don't want amnesty. And secondly, we're a nation of law, and we expect people to uphold the law.

And so we're working closely with Republicans and Democrats to find a practical answer that lies between granting automatic citizenship to every illegal immigrant and deporting every illegal immigrant. It is impractical to take the position that, oh, we'll just find the 11 million or 12 million people and send them home. That's just an impractical position; it's not going to work. It may sound good. It may make nice sound-bite news. It won't happen.

And therefore, we need to work together to come up with a practical solution to this problem, and I know people in Congress are working hard on this issue. Illegal immigrants who have roots in our country and want to stay should have to pay a meaningful penalty for breaking the law and pay their taxes and learn the English language and show work—show that they've worked in a job for a number of years. People who meet a reasonable number of conditions and pay a penalty of time and money should be able to apply for citizenship. But approval would not be automatic, and they would have to wait in line behind those who played by the rules and followed the law. What I've described is a way for those who've broken the law to pay their debt to society and demonstrate the character that makes a good citizen.

Finally, we have got to honor the tradition of the melting pot and help people assimilate into our society by learning our history, our values, and our language. Last June, I created a new task force to look for ways to help newcomers assimilate and succeed in our country. Many organizations, from churches to businesses to civic associations, are work-

ing to answer this call, and I'm grateful for their service.

And so here are the outlines for a comprehensive immigration reform bill. It's an emotional issue, as I'm sure you can imagine. People have got deep convictions. And my hope is that we can have a serious and civil and conclusive debate. And so we'll continue to work with members of both political parties. I think the atmosphere up there is good right now. I think people generally want to come together and put a good bill together—one, by the way, that will make your job a lot easier.

It's important that we address this issue in good faith. And it's important for people to listen to everybody's positions. And it's important for people not to give up, no matter how hard it looks from a legislative perspective. It's important that we get a bill done. We deserve a system that secures our borders and honors our proud history as a nation of immigrants.

And so I can't think of a better place to come and to talk about the good work that's being done and the important work that needs to be done in Washington, DC, and that's right here in Yuma, Arizona, a place full of decent, hard-working, honorable people. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:21 a.m. at the Yuma Sector Headquarters, U.S. Border Patrol. In his remarks, he referred to Ronald S. Colburn, Chief Patrol Agent, Yuma Sector, U.S. Border Patrol; and Brig. Gen. Ulay W. Littleton, Jr., USAF, chief of staff, Headquarters, Arizona Air National Guard, and Arizona joint task force commander, Operation Jump Start. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at American Legion Post 177 in Fairfax, VA

April 10, 2007

Thank you all. Good morning. Please be seated. Thank you for your warm hospitality. It's a pleasure to be here at Legion Post 177, Fairfax, Virginia. I appreciate you inviting me. And I've come to share some thoughts about service to our country, this war we

face, and the need for the United States Congress to make sure our troops have what is necessary to complete their mission.

Bob Sussan greeted me coming in. I appreciate you, Commander, greeting a fellow from Post 77—we dropped the “1” in Houston. [*Laughter*] He not only presented me with a cake; he gave me a chance to express my gratitude to the Legion, its members, and the service you provide for those who wear the uniform today.

I appreciate the example you have set. You know, there’s something to be said for a country where people serve something greater than themselves, where people in this era volunteer in the face of danger to defend the United States of America. And those who have worn the uniform in the past have set such a powerful example for our brave men and women who wear the uniform today, and I thank you for that a lot. I don’t know if you know that or not, but the example of our veterans have inspired many to wear the uniform today.

I find the history of this post interesting, Bob. In November of 1944, a group of World War I veterans gathered here in Fairfax to form an organization to help the troops returning from the battlefield in World War II. Veterans said, “What can I do to help a fellow veteran?” The founders rallied support for the soldiers and the sailor and the airmen and the marines. In other words, these veterans understood what it meant to be in war, what it meant to be far from home, and they provided necessary support for our troops.

And when they came back from war, they helped make the transition to civilian life. In other words, there was somebody there available to help them, somebody to say, “Brother or sister, how can I help you? What can I do to help you after you have served our country?” It’s a proud American tradition and a tradition being carried on here at Post 177, and I thank you for that a lot.

Today, the men and women at this post visit the wounded in our military hospitals, and I thank you for going to Walter Reed in Bethesda. You know, we’re going to make sure that the care is superb care. I went over there the other day, and I made it clear to the caregivers that there were some bureaucratic snafus that were unacceptable. Sec-

retary Gates and our military folks will clean that up. But the care that our troops get from the doctors and nurses is superb care, and we owe those people in the frontlines of providing care for the wounded a real debt of gratitude, just like we owe the families and the soldiers the best health care possible.

I appreciate very much the ROTC scholarships you provide, particularly for George Mason University students. I’m a big believer in education; I know you are as well. But rather than talking on the subject, you’re acting, and I appreciate that a lot. But, more importantly, the students do too.

And thanks for sending the care packages to our troops. It matters. Iraq and Afghanistan are far away from home—a little different from the wars you fought, however; there is e-mail today—[*laughter*]—and cell phones. But, nevertheless, there is a sense of loneliness that can sometimes affect our troops, and the fact that you would take time to send them care packages to remind those who wear the uniform that you support them, a stranger reaches out to them and offers support—I thank you a lot for that.

This is an unusual era in which we live, defined on September the 11th, 2001. See, that’s a date that reminded us the world had changed significantly from what we thought the world was. We thought that oceans and friendly neighbors could protect us from attack. And yet, on that day, less than 20 miles from this post, an airplane crashed into the Pentagon and killed 184 men, women, and children. An airplane driven by fanatics and extremists and murderers crashed into the Pentagon. And as you know, on that day nearly 3,000 people died in New York that day. And more would have died had not the people on United Flight 93 showed incredible courage and saved no telling how many lives here in Washington, DC, by taking that plane to the ground.

My attitude about the world changed, and I know the attitude about the world from a lot of folks here in—America’s attitude changed. It reminded me that the most solemn duty of your Federal Government is to protect the American people from harm. The most solemn duty we have is to protect this homeland. I vowed that day that we would go on the offense against an enemy, that the

best way to defeat this enemy is to find them overseas and bring them to justice so they will not hurt the folks here at home.

In other words, we don't have the luxury of hoping for the best, of sitting back and being passive in the face of this threat. In the past we would say, oceans would protect us and, therefore, what happened overseas may not matter here at home. That's what changed on September the 11th. What happens overseas affects the security of the United States. And it's in this Nation's interest that we go on the offense and stay on the offense. We want to defeat them there so we don't have to face them here.

On 9/11, we saw that problems originating in a failed and oppressive state 7,000 miles away can bring death to our citizens. I vowed that if you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist. That's a doctrine. In order for this country to be credible, when the President says something, he must mean it. I meant it, and the Taliban found out that we meant what we said. And therefore, we ended Al Qaida's safe haven in a failed state.

The two points I want to make is, doctrine matters, and secondly, a failed state can lead to severe consequences for the American people. And therefore, it's in our interests not only to pursue the enemy overseas so we don't have to face them here; it's in our interest to spread an alternative ideology to their hateful ideology.

These folks do not believe in the freedom to worship. They don't believe that women have got an equal place in society. They don't believe in human rights and human dignity. We believe that people have the right to worship the way they see fit. We believe all humans are created equal. We believe in dissent. We believe in public discourse. Our ideology is based upon freedom and liberty; theirs is based upon oppression.

And the best way to secure this country in the long run is to offer up an alternative that stands in stark contrast to theirs. And that's the hard work we're doing in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan the Taliban that ran that country and provided safe haven to Al Qaida—where thousands of people were able to train in order to be able to launch attacks on innocent people, innocent Ameri-

cans, for example—that Taliban no longer is in power.

And, in fact, there is a young, struggling democracy in Afghanistan. The people in Afghanistan went to the polls and voted. President Karzai is now representing a government of and by and for the people. It's an unimaginable sequence of events. Had you asked people in the mid-1990s, "Is it possible for there to be a democracy in Afghanistan?"—of course not. But there is a democracy in place, and it's in our interest to deny Al Qaida and the Taliban and the radicals and the extremists a safe haven. And it's in our interest to stand with this young democracy as it begins to spread its wings in Afghanistan.

And then we're doing the hard work in Iraq. I made a decision to remove a dictator, a tyrant who was a threat to the United States, a threat to the free world, and a threat to the Iraq people. And the world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power.

And now we're undertaking the difficult and dangerous work of helping the Iraqi people establish a functioning democracy. I think it's necessary work to help them establish a functioning democracy. It's necessary because it is important for the moderate people—people who want to live in peace and security—to see what is possible in the Middle East. It is hard work because we face an enemy that understands the consequences of liberty taking root and are willing to kill innocent lives in order to achieve their political objectives.

A minority—and I emphasize "minority"—of violent extremists have declared that they want to turn that country into a terrorist base from which to launch an ideological war in the Middle East and attacks on the United States of America. That is the stated objective of Al Qaida in Iraq. It's important that we listen to the enemy. It's important we take their threats seriously.

In contrast, however, the vast majority of Iraqis have made it clear they want to live in peace. After all, about 12 million of them went to the polls—a feat that was, again, unimaginable in the mid-1990s. If you had said, "Can you imagine Iraqis being able to vote for a Constitution and then a Government under that Constitution," in the mid-1990s,

they would have said, “You’re too idealistic; that’s impossible.” And yet, that’s what happened.

The terrorists, recognizing that this country was headed toward a society based upon liberty, a society based upon an ideology that is the opposite of what they believe, struck. And they struck by blowing up the Golden Mosque of Samarra, which is a holy shrine, a holy site. It’s a site that a lot of people hold dear in their heart. And they were attempting to provoke retaliation by a segment of that society—the Iraqi Shi’a. And they succeeded, and the result was a tragic escalation of violence.

And in the face of the violence—in other words, there was reprisal, people said, “We’re going to get even; how dare these people do this.” And in the face of this violence, I had a choice to make. See, we could withdraw our troops from the capital of Iraq and hope that violence would not spiral out of control, or we could send reinforcements into the capital in the hopes of quelling sectarian violence, in order to give this young democracy time to reconcile, time to deal with the politics necessary for a government that can sustain itself and defend itself to emerge.

I made the decisions after—to reinforce, but I didn’t do it in a vacuum. I called in our military commanders and experts, and I listened to a lot of opinions—and there’s a lot of opinions in Washington, DC, in case you hadn’t noticed. [*Laughter*] The opinions that matter a lot to me are what our military folks think. After all, this is a military operation, and as the Commander in Chief, you must listen to your military and trust their judgment on military matters. And that’s what I did.

They recognized what I recognized, and it’s important for the American citizen to recognize this, that if we were to have stepped back from Baghdad before the Iraqis were capable of securing their capital, before they had the troops trained well enough to secure the capital, there would have been a vacuum that could have easily been filled by Sunni and Shi’a extremists, radicals that would be bolstered by outside forces. In other words, the lack of security would have created an opportunity for extremists to move in. Most

people want to live in peace in Iraq. There are extremists who can’t stand the thought of a free society, that would have taken advantage of the vacuum. A contagion of violence could spill out across the country, and in time, the violence could affect the entire region.

What happens in the Middle East matters here in America. The terrorists would have emerged under this scenario more emboldened. They would have said, our enemy the United States, the enemy that we attacked, turns out to be what they thought, weak in the face of violence, weak in the face of challenge. They would have been able to more likely recruit. They would have had new safe haven from which to launch attacks. Imagine a scenario in which the extremists are able to control oil revenues to achieve economic blackmail, to achieve their objectives. This is all what they have stated. This is their ambition.

If we retreat—were to retreat from Iraq, what’s interesting and different about this war is that the enemy would follow us here. And that’s why it’s important we succeed in Iraq. If this scenario were to take place, 50 years from now people would look back and say, “What happened to those folks in the year 2007? How come they couldn’t see the danger of a Middle East spiraling out of control where extremists competed for power but they shared an objective which was to harm the United States of America? How come they couldn’t remember the lesson of September the 11th, that we were no longer protected by oceans, and chaos and violence and extremism could end up being a serious danger to the homeland?”

That’s what went through my mind as I made a difficult decision, but a necessary decision. And so rather than retreat, I sent more troops in. Rather than pull back, I made the decision to help this young democracy bring order to its capital so there can be time for the hard work of reconciliation to take place after years of tyrannical rule, brutal tyrannical rule.

And now it’s time for these Iraqis, the Iraqi Government to stand up and start making some strong political moves. And they’re beginning to. I speak to the Prime Minister quite often and remind him that here at

home we expect them to do hard work; we want to help, but we expect them to do some hard work. And he reminds me, sometimes legislative bodies and parliaments don't move as quickly as the executive branch would like. [Laughter] But he understands.

He understands we expect them to spend money on their reconstruction, and they've committed \$10 billion to do so. They understand that when we said, "We were going to send more troops in; you need to send more troops into Baghdad," that we expect them to, and they have. They understand that when we work together to set up a security plan where there is a top military figure in charge of Baghdad's security from the Iraq side, that we expect somebody there who is going to be nonsectarian and implement security for all the people of Baghdad, they responded. See, they understand that.

And now we expect them to get an oil law that helps unify the country, to change the de-Ba'athification law so that, for example, Sunni teachers that had been banned from teaching are allowed back in the classroom, and that there be provincial elections. And we'll continue to remind them of that. In sending more troops—in other words, in sending troops in, it is—I recognize that this is more than a military mission. It requires a political response from the Iraqis as well.

The Iraqi people, by the way, have already made a political response; they voted. [Laughter] I also sent a new commander in, General David Petraeus. He is an expert in counterinsurgency warfare. He's been in Baghdad 2 months. A little less than half of—only about half of the reinforcements that he's asked for have arrived. In other words, this operation is just getting started. There's kind of, I guess, a knowledge or a thought in Washington that all you got to say is, "Send 21,000 in," and they show up the next day. That's not the way it works. [Laughter] It takes a while for troops to be trained and readied and moved into theater, and that's what our military is doing now.

And there are some encouraging signs. There's no question it's violent, no question the extremists are dangerous people. But there are encouraging signs. Iraqi and American forces have established joint security stations across Baghdad. As you might remem-

ber, we had a strategy of clear, hold, and build. Well, because we didn't have enough troops nor did the Iraqis have enough troops, we would do the clear part, but we didn't do the hold part, and so it made it hard to do the build part.

And now because of our presence and more Iraqi troops along with coalition troops, they're deployed 24 hours a day in neighborhoods to help change the psychology of the capital that, for a while, was comfortable in its security, and then violence began to spiral out of control. That's the decision point I had to make, do you try to stop it? And what I'm telling you is, according to David Petraeus, with whom I speak on a weekly basis, we're beginning to see some progress toward the mission—toward completing the mission.

Our troops are also training Iraqis. In other words, part of the effort is not only to provide security to neighborhoods, but we're constantly training Iraqis so that they can do this job. The leaders want to do the job. Prime Minister Maliki makes it clear he understands it's his responsibility. We just want to make sure that when they do the job, they've got a force structure that's capable of doing the job. So that's why I rely upon our commanders like General Petraeus that let me know how well the Iraqis are doing. So it's the combination of providing security in neighborhoods through these joint security stations and training that is the current mission we're going through, with a heavy emphasis on security in Baghdad.

Iraqis see our forces out there, joint forces, both coalition and Iraqi forces, and they have confidence. And as a result of the confidence, they're now cooperating more against the extremists. Most people want to live in peace. Iraqi mothers, regardless of their religious affiliation, want their children to grow up in a peaceful world. They want there to be opportunities. They don't want their children to be subject to random murder. They expect their government to provide security, and when the government doesn't provide security, it causes a lack of confidence. And they're beginning to see more security, and so people are coming into the stations and talking about different—giving different tips

about where we may be able to find the extremists or radicals who kill innocent people to achieve political objectives.

We're using the information wisely. And I say "we"—every time I say "we," it's just not American troops, there are brave Iraqi troops with us. Our forces have launched successful operations against extremists, both Shi'a and Sunni. My attitude is, if you're a murderer, you're a murderer and you ought to be held to account. Recently, Iraqi and American forces captured the head of a Baghdad car bomb network that was responsible for the attacks that you see on your TV screens—some of the attacks you see on your TV screen.

Look, these people are smart people, these killers. They know that if they can continue the spectacular suicide bombings, they will cause the American people to say, "Is it worth it? Can we win? Is it possible to succeed?" And that really speaks to the heart of the American people, I think. I mean, we are a compassionate people. We care about human life. And when we see the wanton destruction of innocent life, it causes us to wonder whether or not it is possible to succeed. I understand that.

But I also understand the mentality of an enemy that is trying to achieve a victory over us by causing us to lose our will. Yet we're after these car bombers. In other words, slowly but surely, these extremists are being brought to justice by Iraqis, with our help. Violence in Baghdad, sectarian violence in Baghdad, that violence that was beginning to spiral out of control is beginning to subside. And as the violence decreases, people have more confidence, and if people have more confidence, they're then willing to make difficult decisions of reconciliation necessary for Baghdad to be secure and this country to survive and thrive as a democracy.

The reinforcements are having an impact, and as more reinforcements go in, it will have a greater impact. Remember, only about half of the folks we've asked to go in are there.

It's now been 64 days since I have requested that Congress pass emergency funding for these troops. We don't have all of them there. About half more are going to head in. We're making some progress. And 64 days ago, I said to the United States Con-

gress, these troops need funding. And instead of proving that vital funding, the Democrat leadership in Congress has spent the past 64 days pushing legislation that would undercut our troops, just as we're beginning to make progress in Baghdad. In both the House and the Senate, majorities have passed bills that substitute the judgment of politicians in Washington for the judgment of our commanders on the ground. They set arbitrary deadlines for withdrawal from Iraq, and they spend billions of dollars on porkbarrel projects and spending that are completely unrelated to this war.

Now, the Democrats who pass these bills know that I'll veto them, and they know that this veto will be sustained. Yet they continue to pursue the legislation. And as they do, the clock is ticking for our troops in the field. In other words, there are consequences for delaying this money. In the coming days, our military leaders will notify Congress that they will be forced to transfer \$1.6 billion from other military accounts to cover the shortfall caused by Congress's failure to fund our troops in the field. That means our military will have to take money from personnel accounts so they can continue to fund U.S. Army operations in Iraq and elsewhere.

This \$1.6 billion in transfers come on top of another \$1.7 billion in transfers that our military leaders notified Congress about last month. In March, Congress was told that the military would need to take money from military personnel accounts, weapons and communications systems so we can continue to fund programs to protect our soldiers and marines from improvised explosive devices and send hundreds of mine-resistant vehicles to our troops on the frontlines. These actions are only the beginning, and the longer Congress delays, the worse the impact on the men and women of the Armed Forces will be.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace, recently testified that if Congress fails to pass a bill I can sign by mid-April, the Army will be forced to consider cutting back on equipment repair and quality of life initiatives for our Guard and Reserve forces. The Army will also be forced to consider curtailing some training for Guard and Reserve units here at home. This

would reduce their readiness and could delay their availability to mobilize for missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

If Congress fails to pass a bill I can sign by mid-May, the problems grow even more acute. The Army will be forced to consider slowing or even freezing funding for its depots, where the equipment our troops depend on is repaired. They will have to consider delaying or curtailing the training of some active duty forces, reducing the availability of those forces to deploy overseas. And the Army may also have to delay the formation of new brigade combat teams, preventing us from getting those troops into the pool of forces that are available to deploy.

So what does that mean? These things happen: Some of our forces now deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq may need to be extended because other units are not ready to take their places. In a letter to Congress, the Army Chief of Staff, Pete Schoomaker, recently warned, "Without approval of the supplemental funds in April, we will be forced to take increasingly draconian measures, which will impact Army readiness and impose hardships on our soldiers and their families."

The bottom line is this: Congress's failure to fund our troops will mean that some of our military families could wait longer for their loved ones to return from the frontlines. Others could see their loved ones headed back to war sooner than anticipated. This is unacceptable. It's unacceptable to me. It's unacceptable to our veterans. It's unacceptable to our military families. And it's unacceptable to many in this country.

The United States Senate has come back from its spring recess today. The House will return next week. When it comes to funding our troops, we have no time to waste. It's time for them to get the job done. So I'm inviting congressional leaders from both parties—both political parties—to meet with me at the White House next week. At this meeting, the leaders in Congress can report on progress on getting an emergency spending bill to my desk. We can discuss the way forward on a bill that is a clean bill, a bill that funds our troops without artificial timetables for withdrawal and without handcuffing our generals on the ground.

I'm hopeful we'll see some results soon from the Congress. I know we have our differences over the best course in Iraq. These differences should not prevent us from getting our troops the funding they need without withdrawal and without giving our commanders flexibility.

The Democrat leaders in—Democratic leaders in Congress are bent on using a bill that funds our troops to make a political statement about the war. They need to do it quickly and get it to my desk so I can veto it, and then Congress can get down to the business of funding our troops, without strings and without further delay.

We are at war. It is irresponsible for the Democratic leadership in Congress to delay for months on end while our troops in combat are waiting for the funds they need to succeed. As the national commander of the American Legion, Paul Morin, recently put it, "The men and women of the Armed Forces in the theater of operations are dependent on this funding to sustain and achieve their military missions. This funding is absolutely critical to their success and individual well being," end quote. I thank the commander and the American Legion for their strong support on this issue. You do not make a political statement; you're making a statement about what is necessary for our troops in the field, and I am grateful.

I'm always amazed at the men and women who wear our uniform. Last week, before I went down to Crawford—for a snowy Easter, I might add—[laughter]—I was in California at Fort Irwin. And I had a chance to visit with some who had just come back from Iraq and some who were going over to Iraq, and it just amazes me that these young men and women know the stakes, they understand what we're doing, and they have volunteered to serve. We're really a remarkable country and a remarkable military, and therefore, we owe it to the families and to those who wear the uniform to make sure that this remarkable group of men and women are strongly supported—strongly supported, by the way, during their time in uniform and then after their time in uniform, through the Veterans Administration.

I tried to put this war into a historical context for them. In other words, I told them

that they're laying the foundation of peace. In other words, the work we're doing today really will yield peace for a generation to come. And part of my discussion with them was I wanted them to think back to the work after World War II. After World War II, we defeated—after we defeated Germany and Japan, this country went about the business of helping these countries develop into democracies. Isn't it interesting a country would go to—have a bloody conflict with two nations, and then help democracy succeed. Why? Because our predecessors understood that forms of government help yield peace. In other words, it matters what happens in distant lands.

And so today, I can report to you that Japan is a strong ally of the United States. I've always found that very ironic that my dad, like many of your relatives, fought the Japanese as the sworn enemy, and today, one of the strongest allies in keeping the peace is the Prime Minister of Japan. Something happened between when old George H. W. Bush was a Navy fighter pilot and his boy is the President of the United States. Well, what happened was the form of government changed. Liberty can transform enemies into allies. The hard work done after World War II helped lay the foundation of peace.

How about after the Korean war? Some of you are Korean vets, I know. I bet it would have been hard for you to predict, if you can think back to the early fifties, to predict that an American President would say that we've got great relations with South Korea, great relations with Japan, that China is an emerging marketplace economy, and that the region is peaceful. This is a part of the world where we lost thousands of young American soldiers, and yet there's peace.

I believe that U.S. presence there has given people the time necessary to develop systems of government that make that part of the world a peaceful part of the world, to lay the foundation for peace. And that's the work our soldiers are doing in the Middle East today, and it's necessary work. It is necessary because what happens in the Middle East, for example, can affect the security of the United States of America. And it's hard work, and we've lost some fantastic young men and women, and we pray for their fami-

lies, and we honor their service and their sacrifice by completing the mission, by helping a generation of Americans grow up in a peaceful world.

I cannot tell you how honored I am to meet with the families of the fallen. They bear an unbelievable pain in their heart. And it's very important for me to make it clear to them that I believe the sacrifice is necessary to achieve the peace we all long for.

I thank you for supporting our troops. I thank you for setting such a fantastic example for a great group of men and women who have volunteered to serve our country, and thanks for being such fine Americans.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:23 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Bob Sussan, commander, American Legion Post 177; Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; Lt. Gen. Abboud Gambar, Iraqi commander of Baghdad, Iraqi Army; Haytham Kazim Abdallah Al-Shimari, head of the Rusafa Al Qaida-Iraq bomb network; and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan.

Memorandum on Assignment of Functions Relating to the Information Sharing Environment

April 10, 2007

Memorandum for the Director of National Intelligence

Subject: Assignment of Functions Relating to the Information Sharing Environment

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, the functions of the President under section 1016(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-458) (the "Act") are hereby assigned to the Director of National Intelligence (Director).

The Director shall perform such functions in a manner consistent with direction and guidance issued by the President, including (1) the Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies of June 2, 2005, entitled "Strengthening Information

Sharing, Access, and Integration—Organizational, Management, and Policy Development Structures for Creating the Terrorism Information Sharing Environment,” and (2) the Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies of December 16, 2005, entitled “Guidelines and Requirements in Support of the Information Sharing Environment,” provided that the Director shall ensure that the official within the Office of the Director of National Intelligence previously designated as the program manager responsible for information sharing across the Federal Government pursuant to the Act shall be the assistant to the Director in carrying out the functions delegated by this memorandum.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 12, 2007]

NOTE: This memorandum was published in the *Federal Register* on April 13.

Statement on Senate Passage of the “Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007” and the “Hope Offered through Principled and Ethical Stem Cell Research Act”

April 11, 2007

Scientists believe that stem cells have the potential for medical breakthroughs in treating debilitating medical diseases and disorders. However, the advancement of science and medicine need not conflict with the ethical imperative to protect every human life. I am a strong supporter of scientific research, which is why I authorized the first Federal funding for research on embryonic stem cells, under careful safeguards, starting in 2001.

My policy unleashed an unprecedented scientific effort using the stem cell lines my policy approved for funding. While encouraging—not banning—research, my policy also ensures that Federal funds are not used to create incentives to destroy or harm or create living human embryos for purposes of research.

The Senate today voted in support of legislation to overturn these safeguards. I believe this will encourage taxpayer money to be spent on the destruction or endangerment of living human embryos—raising serious moral concerns for millions of Americans.

Research using human embryonic stem cells is still at an early stage, and it will be years before researchers know how much promise lies in therapeutic applications. I believe this early stage is precisely when it is most important to develop ethically responsible techniques, so the potential of stem cells can be explored without violating human dignity and life.

S. 5 is very similar to legislation I vetoed last year. This bill crosses a moral line that I and many others find troubling. If it advances all the way through Congress to my desk, I will veto it.

Meanwhile, exciting and significant scientific advances have been reported over the past few years on uses of stem cells that do not involve the destruction of embryos. These advances using adult and other forms of stem cells are exciting. Some have even produced effective therapies and treatments for disease—all without the destruction of human life.

The second bill that passed the Senate today, the Hope Act, builds on this ethically appropriate research by encouraging further development of these alternative techniques for producing stem cells without embryo creation or destruction. I strongly support this bill, and I encourage the Congress to pass it and send it to me for my signature, so stem cell science can progress, without ethical and cultural conflict.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 5 and S. 30.

Proclamation 8123—National D.A.R.E. Day, 2007

April 11, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Each year, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) teaches millions of children across our country how to resist drugs

and violence. On National D.A.R.E. Day, we honor the individuals who help our Nation's young people avoid the dangers of substance abuse and become productive citizens.

For more than two decades, D.A.R.E. programs have taught America's youth about the devastating effects of drug use and encouraged them to lead drug-free and violence-free lives of purpose. By opening the lines of communication between law enforcement, educators, and students, all those involved in D.A.R.E. help save lives and stop drug use before it starts.

My Administration is dedicated to fighting drug use throughout our country. The National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign is working with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America to teach our youth about resisting the pressure to use drugs. Additionally, the Helping America's Youth initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, encourages community partnerships that bring together families, faith-based and community organizations, and schools to help make a positive impact on the lives of young people. Through the Strategic Prevention Framework and the Drug Free Communities Program, we are also helping communities to develop effective local strategies to prevent substance abuse. By working together, we can reduce illicit drug use and help every child realize the promise of our country.

Youth development programs like D.A.R.E. encourage our Nation's children to make healthy choices that lead to a better future. This year's National D.A.R.E. day is an opportunity to renew our commitment to building strong, drug-free communities.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 12, 2007, as National D.A.R.E. Day. I urge all young people to make good decisions and call upon all Americans to recognize our collective responsibility to combat every form of drug abuse and to support all those who work to help our children avoid drug use and violence.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:49 a.m., April 13, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 16.

Proclamation 8124—Thomas Jefferson Day, 2007

April 11, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On Thomas Jefferson Day, we commemorate the birthday of a monumental figure whose place in our Nation's history will always be cherished. Thomas Jefferson was a scholar, statesman, author, architect, and patriot, and today we celebrate his many accomplishments and lasting legacy.

Thomas Jefferson continues to capture our imagination because our country still echoes his ideals. In 1776, as a young lawyer from Virginia, he drafted the Declaration of Independence for the Continental Congress and articulated the American creed. From that document was born a Nation with a message of hope—that all men are created equal and meant to be free. The words Jefferson penned were a bold statement of revolutionary principles, and they have lifted the lives of millions in America and around the world.

As the third President of the United States, Jefferson worked to realize the vision he held for our young democracy. He signed legislation in 1802 that established the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, and began the great tradition of service academies that have contributed immensely to the defense of our freedom. He believed in the possibility of westward expansion, doubling the size of our Nation with the Louisiana Purchase and encouraging the Lewis and Clark Expedition to help open the unknown West for future development.

Thomas Jefferson served his fellow citizens in many other important roles, including

Governor of Virginia, Secretary of State, and Ambassador to France. Yet, of his many accomplishments, Thomas Jefferson will always be remembered for his belief in liberty and in the ability of citizens to govern their own country and their own lives. As we celebrate his birthday, we are proud that the Nation he helped establish remains free, independent, and true to the ideals of our founding. Today, the United States of America is the world's foremost champion of liberty, moving forward with confidence and strength, and an example to the world of what free people can achieve.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 13, 2007, as Thomas Jefferson Day. I encourage all citizens to join in celebrating the achievements of this extraordinary American, reflecting on his words, and learning more about his influence on our history and ideals.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:49 a.m., April 13, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 16.

Proclamation 8125—National Volunteer Week, 2007

April 11, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During National Volunteer Week, we celebrate the spirit of service in America and honor those who demonstrate the great character of our country through acts of kindness, generosity, and compassion.

Throughout the history of America, volunteers and civic organizations have helped extend the blessings of liberty and opportunity

to our citizens. People across our Nation answer the universal call to love their neighbor by giving their time, talents, and energy to comfort those in despair, support others in need, and change lives for the better. The optimism and determination of our country's volunteers reflect the true spirit and strength of our Nation.

My Administration encourages Americans to seize the opportunity to help someone in need. Individuals can find ways to serve in communities throughout our Nation by visiting the USA Freedom Corps website at volunteer.gov. The USA Freedom Corps works to rally America's armies of compassion and bring together individuals and faith-based and community organizations committed to volunteer service. These efforts are helping to build a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility across our country.

America's volunteers demonstrate that the strength of our Nation lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. During National Volunteer Week, we recognize all those who have touched the lives of others with their kindness and who have made our country a better place by helping their fellow Americans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 15 through April 21, 2007, as National Volunteer Week. I call upon all Americans to recognize and celebrate the important work that volunteers do every day throughout our country. I also encourage citizens to explore ways to help their neighbors in need and serve a cause greater than themselves.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:50 a.m., April 13, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on April 16.

Presidential Determination on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization Office

April 11, 2007

Presidential Determination No. 2007-16

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Presidential Determination on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization Office

Pursuant to the authority and conditions contained in section 534(d) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-102, as carried forward by the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, Public Law 110-5, I hereby determine and certify that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive the provisions of section 1003 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, Public Law 100-204.

This waiver shall be effective for a period of 6 months from the date hereof. You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Remarks Following a Meeting on the No Child Left Behind Act Reauthorization

April 12, 2007

I have just had what I consider to be not only a fascinating meeting but an important meeting about the No Child Left Behind Act with leaders of the civil rights movement, education leaders from around our country, business leaders who are concerned about America's competitiveness.

There is a universal belief that the No Child Left Behind Act needs to be reauthorized, and I want to thank you all for working with us to get this piece of legislation reauthorized.

I believe the No Child Left Behind Act needs to be reauthorized because it's work-

ing. It's a piece of legislation which believes in setting high standards and using accountability to make sure that every single child gets a good education. I strongly support the notion that when we find a child falling behind that there ought to be extra Federal help so that child can catch back up early, before it's too late.

I strongly condemn an achievement gap that exists in this country. It's a gap between Anglo students and Latino students or white students and black students, and it's not in our country's interest to allow an education system to continue to foster that difference in achievement. The No Child Left Behind Act is beginning to close that gap. It's the impetus necessary to cause the reforms, curriculum changes necessary to make sure every child has a chance of realizing the great hopes of our country.

Reauthorizing No Child Left Behind Act is an important statement, an important move; it's an important piece of legislation necessary to keep this country not only competitive but also a country of great hope. And so I want to thank you all for joining us.

I also want to comment on today's bombing of the Iraqi Parliament. First of all, I strongly condemn the action. It reminds us, though, that there is an enemy willing to bomb innocent people in a symbol of democracy. In other words, this assembly is a place where people have come to represent the 12 million people who voted. And there is a type of person that would walk in that building and kill innocent life, and that is the same type of person that is willing to come and kill innocent Americans. And it is in our interest to help this young democracy be in a position so it can sustain itself and govern itself and defend itself against these extremists and radicals.

Our hearts go out to those who suffered as a result of this bombing. My message to the Iraqi Government is: We stand with you as you take the steps necessary to not only reconcile politically but also put a security force in place that is able to deal with, you know, these kinds of people.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

**Remarks at the National Catholic
Prayer Breakfast**

April 13, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. Good morning. Good morning. Thank you. It's good to be with you. You know how to make a Methodist feel right at home. [Laughter] I noticed that this year's breakfast was the Friday after Lent—[laughter]—you can eat your bacon in good conscience—[laughter]—and the priests can relax. [Laughter]

I appreciate the opportunity to be with you, I really do. I thank you for having this prayer breakfast. Prayer breakfasts show the true strength of our Nation. I am honored that people say to me and Laura, "We pray for you." It means a lot. A prayerful nation is a strong nation. A prayerful nation is a nation—the true strength of which lies in the hearts of the men and women of our Nation.

Our Declaration of Independence states that our freedom rests on self-evident truths about the dignity of the human person. Throughout our Nation's history, Catholic Americans have embraced, sustained, and given their lives to defend these truths. This morning we give thanks for the blessings of freedom, and we ask Almighty God to guide us as we renew our founding promise of liberty and justice for all.

I'm sorry Laura couldn't be here. She is by far the best representative of our family. Thank you for praying for her.

I appreciate my friend Leonard Leo for inviting me. I thank the leaders of the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast. I'm honored to be in the presence of Archbishop Donald Wuerl. I have known the Archbishop for quite a while. I appreciate his strong and firm dedication to making sure every child in America gets a good education. I am proud to be here with Archbishop Sambini, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States. I appreciate the members of the Catholic clergy. I am honored to be here with two members of our Supreme Court, the Chief Justice, John Roberts, and Justice Sam Alito.

I thank the members of my administration who have joined us, particularly our Cabinet Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Jim Nicholson, and Suzanne. Thank you for joining us.

I am in awe of people like Corporal Michael Blair, United States Marine Corps. I thank the members of our Armed Services who are here today. I appreciate the Members of Congress who have joined us. Thanks for letting me come by to say hello. [Laughter]

Of the 56 men who signed our Declaration of Independence, only one was a Catholic—Charles Carroll. In 1776, Carroll was one of the wealthiest men in America. But because he was a Catholic, he could not vote or hold public office in his native Maryland. John Adams noted that Carroll's wealth and patriotism marked him for special vengeance if the Revolution were to fail. That is why when Carroll added his name to the Declaration, one bystander quipped: "There goes a few million." [Laughter]

Carroll was willing to risk those millions because he knew that something far more precious was at stake: freedom. He believed that the self-evident truths of our Declaration would lead to religious as well as civil liberty. He knew that an America where people were free to worship God as they saw fit would be a land where Catholics would flourish and prosper. And he understood that whatever America's failings, our founding promise would always be a source of hope and renewal for our country. And at this breakfast, we commit ourselves to renewing that promise in our time.

Renewing the promise of America begins with upholding the dignity of human life. In our day, there is a temptation to manipulate life in ways that do not respect the humanity of the person. When that happens, the most vulnerable among us can be valued for their utility to others, instead of their own inherent worth. We must continue to work for a culture of life, where the strong protect the weak and where we recognize in every human life the image of our Creator.

Renewing the promise of America requires good citizens who look out for their neighbors. One of the reasons that I am such a strong believer in the power of our faith-based institutions is that they add something the government never can, and that is love. Pope Benedict the XVI put it this way in his first letter as a Pope: "There is no ordering of the state so just that it can eliminate the

need for a service of love.” In parishes and neighborhoods across our Nation, Catholics take this call to heart, and that is why we find so many of you leading the armies of compassion. You are changing America one heart, one soul at a time, and I thank you.

Renewing the promise of America also includes ensuring a sound education for every single child. America’s Catholic schools play a vital role in our Nation. The schools were built by poor immigrants. They were staffed by legions of dedicated nuns and brothers and priests, and they have given millions of Americans the knowledge and character they need to succeed in life. Today, these schools are also serving thousands of non-Catholic children in some of our Nation’s poorest neighborhoods. I appreciate the tremendous sacrifices that many dioceses are making to keep their inner-city schools going. I am worried that too many of these schools are closing, and our Nation needs to do something about it.

This afternoon I’ll hold a meeting at the White House to discuss the difference America’s parochial schools are making in the lives of some of our neediest children. We see that difference right here in the Nation’s Capital. Pam Battle sat with Laura during my State of the Union Address. She’s a mom of two, Carlos and Calvin. A few years ago, these boys were in a public school that was not meeting Pam’s expectations. We passed what’s called the DC School Choice Incentive Act. Many of you in this room helped get that act passed. As a result of that act, her boys were able to transfer to Assumption Catholic School, a parochial school that serves an almost entirely African American student body.

Carlos became an A-student and president of his eighth grade class. He now attends high school at Georgetown Day. Calvin is a fifth-grader at Assumption; I’m told that he’s running for “Student of the Month.” [*Laughter*] Something I never achieved. [*Laughter*]

Pam has a big smile on her face when she comes to talk about the education her boys are receiving. “The main benefit of this program is that I can drop off my sons at school with peace of mind. It’s safe, and I know they are working up to their level.” That’s what Pam said. I believe every parent in

America should have that same peace of mind and every school in America should ensure that its students are working up to their fullest of potentials. I applaud our Nation’s Catholic schools. I will continue to work to help these schools reach more children in need so that our children have the skills they need to realize the full promise of the United States of America.

Finally, to realize the promise of America, we must have comprehensive immigration reform that enforces our laws and upholds the dignity of every single person in the United States. And now is the time for the United States Congress to get a bill to my desk that I can sign.

I thank you for your fine tradition. I applaud you for the love you—of neighbor you show through your organizations and your churches. I ask that you pray for our soldiers and their families in harm’s way. And I ask that you pray that in a troubled world, America may always remain a beacon of hope and of freedom.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:43 a.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Leonard A. Leo, member, Board of Directors, National Catholic Prayer Breakfast; and Donald W. Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Parochial Education Leaders and Parents

April 13, 2007

Secretary Spellings and I have just had the privilege of talking to some of our country’s leading educational entrepreneurs. We had the privilege of talking to parents whose lives have been positively affected by our Catholic school system. One of the great assets in the United States is the Catholic schools, which oftentimes educate the so-called hard-to-educate. And they do so in such a spectacular way.

The question is, how do we make sure that this important asset is sustainable? How do we make sure that our Catholic schools meet the needs of parents like Patricia, meet the expectations of some of our educational leaders like Ben. And one way is for the Federal

Government to provide opportunity scholarships for parents, so that they can redeem that scholarship at a school of their choice.

We've got such a program like that here in Washington, DC. It's been a very successful program, and Congress needs to make sure it gets fully funded. If any Congressman doubts the utility of a program, all they've got to do is speak to Wendy Cunningham, whose daughter takes advantage of this special funding for people, that enables her to say, "My school isn't meeting the needs, and therefore, I'd like to make another choice." A parental choice is a very important part of educational excellence. And one way to make sure that that's the case is not only to fully fund the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship but to provide these kinds of scholarships for school systems outside of Washington.

For example, we've just heard from Margaret Dames, who has got a marvelous school program in Bridgeport, Connecticut. And it seems like it makes sense to me for a parent in Bridgeport to be able to have the same kind of opportunity that a parent here in Washington, DC, has. Congress needs to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act as well. We want all schools to be excellent. We want every school, public or parochial, to meet expectations and to give our children the skill sets necessary to realize the great promise of the country.

One thing is for certain, if you're interested in educational excellence, you can look at the Catholic schools in the United States of America, because they provide it, and for that, this country is very grateful.

Thank you all for coming, appreciate your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Patricia Weitzel-O'Neill, superintendent of Catholic schools, Archdiocese of Washington, DC; Ben Ketchum, assistant principal, St. Ann's Academy; and Margaret A. Dames, superintendent of schools and director of the Office for Education, Diocese of Bridgeport, CT.

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.

April 7

In the morning, at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush had Easter dinner with family members.

April 8

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Fort Hood, TX, where they attended an Easter Sunday church service at the 13th Sustainment Command Chapel.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to the Bush Ranch.

April 9

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Yuma, AZ, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Michael Christopher.

Later in the morning, the President participated in a briefing on U.S. Border Patrol use of unmanned aerial vehicles and toured the Mexico-U.S. border.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

April 10

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Sidi Mohamed Ould Cheikh Abdallahi of Mauritania. He then had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Fairfax, VA.

Later in the morning, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced that he has nominated Peter Michael McKinley to be Ambassador to Peru.

The President announced that he has nominated Charles L. Hopkins III to be Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Operations, Preparedness, Security and Law Enforcement).

The President announced that he has appointed Ronald Radosh as a member of the Public Interest Declassification Board.

The President announced that he has appointed Ira F. Jaffe, Annette M. Sandberg, and Peter W. Tredick (Chair) as members of Presidential Emergency Board No. 241.

April 11

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Senators John E. Sununu of New Hampshire, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island, and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota.

The President announced his designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the inauguration of Sidi Mohamed Ould Cheikh Abdallahi as President of Mauritania on April 19: John D. Negroponte (head of delegation); Jendayi Elizabeth Frazer; William E. Ward; and Bobby Pittman, Jr.

April 12

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Senators John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina to discuss their recent trip to Iraq.

April 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Camp David, MD.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Lech Kaczynski of Poland to the White House on July 16.

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 April 10

Robert M. Couch,
of Alabama, to be General Counsel of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, vice Keith E. Gottfried, resigned.

Charles Lewis English,
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 Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Miriam K. Hughes,
of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia.

Michael J. Kussman,
of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs, vice Jonathan Brian Perlin, resigned.

Peter B. McCarthy,
of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Sandra L. Pack.

Cameron Munter,
of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Serbia.

Robert B. Nolan,
of Virginia, 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 Kingdom of Lesotho.

Michael G. Vickers,
of California, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Thomas W. O'Connell.

John L. Withers II,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Albania.

Submitted April 11

Charles L. Hopkins, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Operations, Preparedness, Security and Law Enforcement) (new position).

Peter Michael McKinley, of Virginia, 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 Peru.

Withdrawn April 11

Alex A. Beehler, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency, vice Nikki Rush Tinsley, resigned, which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2007.

William Ludwig Wehrum, Jr., of Tennessee, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, vice Jeffrey R. Holmstead, 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 April 9

Transcript of a press gaggle by National Security Council Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe

Fact sheet: Acting This Year To Pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Released April 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary announcing that on April 9 the President signed S. 494

Released April 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Released April 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Released April 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino

Transcript of a press gaggle by Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino and Ali Al-Dabbagh, spokesman for the Government of Iraq

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary: Visit of President Lech Kaczynski of Poland

Announcement: President and Mrs. Bush Release 2006 Tax Return

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved April 9

S. 494 / Public Law 110-17
NATO Freedom Consolidation Act of 2007