

Week Ending Friday, July 13, 2007

**The President's Radio Address**

*July 7, 2007*

Good morning. This week, we received more good news showing that our economy is strong and growing. Department of Labor reports that our economy has now created jobs for 46 consecutive months. America added 132,000 jobs in June, and that means our economy has added more than 8.2 million new jobs since August of 2003. Unemployment is low; consumer confidence is high; incomes are rising; and opportunity is growing across America.

Our Nation's strong economy is no accident. It is the result of the hard work of the American people and progrowth policies in Washington. Starting in 2001, my administration delivered the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was in the White House. Our tax relief has left \$1.1 trillion in the hands of citizens like you to save and spend and invest as you see fit.

Over the past 3 years, we have also held the growth of annual domestic spending close to 1 percent, well below the rate of inflation. The result is a thriving and resilient economy that is the envy of the world.

Over the past 6 years, our economy has overcome serious challenges: a stock market decline; recession; corporate scandals; an attack on our homeland; and the demands of an ongoing war on terror. Despite these obstacles, our economy recovered, and tax revenues soared, and America is now in a position to balance the Federal budget. To achieve this goal, I sent Congress a budget plan this February that would keep taxes low, restrain Federal spending, and put us in surplus by 2012.

Next week, my administration will release a report called the Mid-Session Review, which will provide you with an update on our Nation's progress in meeting the goal of a balanced budget. We know from experience that when we pursue policies of low

taxes and spending restraint, the economy grows, tax revenues go up, and the deficit goes down.

Democratic leaders in Congress want to take our country down a different track. They are working to bring back the failed tax-and-spend policies of the past. The Democrats' budget plan proposes \$205 billion in additional domestic spending over the next 5 years and includes the largest tax increase in history. No nation has ever taxed and spent its way to prosperity. And I have made it clear that I will veto any attempt to take America down this road.

Democrats in Congress are also behind schedule passing the individual spending bills needed to keep the Federal Government running. At their current pace, I will not see a single one of the 12 must-pass bills before Congress leaves Washington for the month-long August recess. The fiscal year ends September 30th. By failing to do the work necessary to pass these important bills by the end of the fiscal year, Democrats are failing in their responsibility to make tough decisions and spend the people's money wisely.

This moment is a test. Under our Constitution, Congress holds the power of the purse. Democratic leaders are in control of Congress. They set the schedule for when bills are considered. They determine when votes are held. Democrats have a chance to prove they are for open and transparent government by working to complete each spending bill independently and on time. I urge Democrats in Congress to step forward now and pass these bills one at a time.

As they do, I will insist they restrain spending so we can keep our Government running, while sustaining our growing economy and getting our budget into balance. And to help achieve these goals, I call on the Senate to act on my nomination of Jim Nussle as Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Jim is a former chairman of the House Budget Committee, and he will be a strong advocate for protecting your tax dollars here in Washington.

By setting clear budget priorities and maintaining strong fiscal discipline, we can promote economic growth and bring our budget into balance. Our Nation has the most innovative, industrious, and talented people on the face of the Earth. And when we unleash the entrepreneurial spirit of our country, there is no limit to what the American people can achieve or the hope and opportunity we can pass on to future generations.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7 a.m. on July 6 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 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 the White House Conference on the Americas in Arlington, Virginia

July 9, 2007

**The President.** Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming today. In my recent trip down to Central and South America, I told the folks that we were going to host a conference here in Washington, a conference to promote best practices, which really says, how best can the United States help people in our neighborhood.

Laura and I had a magnificent trip to Central and South America. It reminded me of the importance of having a peaceful and prosperous neighborhood. It's in our interests, in the interests of the United States that our neighborhood be healthy and educated. And so this conference is an attempt to bring together key people of my administration and faith-based groups and private sector groups from the United States, as well as our neighborhood, to discuss how we can work together to promote social justice, to help people realize a better life through good education and good health care.

I do thank members of my administration who have joined us. I understand after this event there's going to be a series of breakout groups, led by members of my Cabinet—Hank Paulson is here, the Secretary of the Treasury. As a matter of fact, he's heading down to, I think, Brazil tomorrow. Secretary Carlos Gutierrez, Secretary of Commerce, will be leading a group. Mike Leavitt will lead a breakout session—he's the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and then Margaret Spellings, who is the Secretary of Education. I think you're going to find these folks to be concerned, compassionate Americans who care about the lives of our citizens in our neighborhood. And I appreciate them, certainly.

And then you get a speech from my wife, which is, like, really smart to have her speak. [Laughter] You're stuck with the B team right now, and then the A team will be coming for—[laughter].

I want to thank all the folks who have joined us. Thanks for coming. As you can see, we've got an interesting way of making a variety of points. What I hope to accomplish at this breakout session is to, first, explain to our fellow citizens how important it is that the United States be active in the neighborhood in which we live.

Secondly—and, by the way, thanks, ambassadors, for coming. I appreciate you all being here. It's very kind of you to take time out of your busy schedules to be here. We're honored you're here. Secondly, it's important for us—for me to explain to our fellow citizens some of the work we're doing in the neighborhood. I think our citizens will be pleased to know, for example, that we're working very hard to get trade agreements through our Congress, because the best way to help defeat poverty is to encourage commerce and trade.

We've got trade agreements we've reached with Peru and Panama and Colombia. It's really important for the United States Congress to pass these trade agreements. If you're interested in prosperity in our neighborhood, if you want to help improve the lives of others, then the United States Congress must honor the agreements we've negotiated with these important countries and pass this legislation.