

Week Ending Friday, November 23, 2007

Proclamation 8206—National Family Week, 2007

November 16, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As families gather together to celebrate Thanksgiving, we underscore the comforting and positive role they play in our society. During National Family Week, we celebrate the contributions of families everywhere.

Families strengthen our communities by teaching important values such as compassion and honesty to their children. Families also offer a supportive environment and help ensure that children grow into responsible members of society. By providing guidance and unconditional love, parents shape the character of their children.

My Administration believes that the strength of our Nation is built upon the foundation of strong families. To help support families, we have doubled the child tax credit, reduced the marriage penalty, and lowered tax rates. We are also committed to promoting positive youth development. The Helping America's Youth initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, supports organizations, including faith-based and community groups, that continue this important mission.

All Americans are grateful to our Nation's military families, who have stood by their loved ones in times of war and peace. Our country will always be especially thankful for the sacrifices of our military personnel and for their devotion to duty and their love of country. During National Family Week, we pray for their safe return and for the families who await them at home.

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 November 18

through November 24, 2007, as National Family Week. I invite the States, communities, and all the people of the United States to join together in observing this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor our Nation's families.

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

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:06 a.m., November 20, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 21. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

November 17, 2007

Good morning. In a few days, our Nation will celebrate Thanksgiving. Like millions of Americans, Members of Congress will travel home for the holiday. Unfortunately, as they get to work carving their turkeys, they're leaving a lot of unfinished work back in Washington, DC. And unless they complete this work soon, middle class Americans will pay higher taxes and American troops will not receive the critical funding they need to fight and defeat our enemies.

Many middle class taxpayers will face higher tax bills unless Congress acts on the Alternative Minimum Tax, or AMT. The AMT was designed to ensure that the wealthy paid their fair share of taxes. But when Congress passed the AMT decades ago, it was not indexed for inflation. As a result, the AMT's higher tax burden is creeping up on more and more middle class families.

To deal with this problem, Congress has in recent years passed temporary legislation that prevented most middle class taxpayers from having to pay the AMT. But this year, Congress has yet to pass this legislation. A failure to do so would mean that 25 million Americans would be subject to the AMT, more than six times the number that faced the tax last year. If you are one of those 25 million, you would have to send an average of \$2,000 more to the IRS next year. This is a huge tax increase that Americans do not expect and do not deserve.

The longer Congress waits to fix this problem, the worse it will get. Last month, Treasury Secretary Paulson wrote a letter to Members of Congress warning that delaying action on legislation to fix the AMT could create confusion for millions of taxpayers and delay the delivery of about \$75 billion worth of tax refund checks. Congress has ignored Secretary Paulson's warnings, and we are now beginning to see the consequences. On Friday, the tax forms for 2007 had to be sent to the Government Printer. And because of Congress's refusal to act, the IRS will be forced to send out tens of millions of tax forms that will almost certainly end up being wrong, wasting your money, delaying refunds, and making it even more complicated to figure out your taxes.

It is clear that Congress's failure to adjust the AMT for inflation was a mistake. Unfortunately, Congress seems determined to compound this original mistake by making another one. Last week, the House passed a bill that provides relief from the AMT but raises other taxes. Congress should not use legislation that millions of Americans are counting on to protect them from higher taxes in one area as an excuse to raise taxes in other areas. I will veto any bill that raises taxes as a condition of fixing the AMT. Members of Congress must put political theater behind them, fix the AMT, and protect America's middle class from an unfair tax hike.

Congress is also failing to meet its responsibilities to our troops. For months, Congress has delayed action on supplemental war funding because some in Congress want to make a political statement about the war. On Wednesday, the House passed a bill that

once again has Congress directing our military commanders on how to conduct the war in Iraq as a condition for funding our troops. We do not need Members of Congress telling our commanders what to do. We need Congress listening to our military commanders and giving them what they need to win the war against extremists and radicals. Congress knows I'll veto this bill. During this time of war, our troops deserve the full support of Congress, and that means giving our troops the funding they need to successfully carry out their mission. I urge Congress to work quickly and send me a clean bill, so we can fulfill our obligation to our brave men and women in uniform.

With both of these delays, congressional leaders are choosing political posturing over the priorities of the people. These choices have real-world consequences for our taxpayers and our troops. When Members of Congress return from their 2-week long Thanksgiving vacation, they will have only a few weeks left on the legislative calendar before they go home again for their Christmas break. I call on Congress to use the time that is left to do what is right and pass AMT relief and fund our troops in combat.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on November 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at Berkeley Plantation in Charles City, Virginia

November 19, 2007

Thank you all. Thanks very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. I am proud to be back in the great State of Virginia. I particularly appreciate the chance to visit Berkeley Plantation. I thank the good people who care for this historic treasure. Over the years, Presidents have visited Berkeley. President William Henry Harrison called it home. As