

to a foreign soil after wandering in refugee camps and he found some love. He enrolled in high school. Just last month, he graduated from college. He's landed his dream job. The boy who grew up without electricity or running water is now a mechanical engineer. Elijah, where are you? There he is, right there. [Applause] You applaud for a good man named Elijah, but also for those kind souls who share in the great story of this good man.

It's only in a place like America—think about it; think about our country for a second—could a life nearly extinguished by hate be restored by love and compassion.

So I've been proud to stand by you as you have worked these miracles across our country. You probably don't even realize some of the acts of kindness are miracles. I'm telling you, they are. And you can find it in the hopeful expressions on the people you've helped. And so I thank you for your efforts. I thank you for your life-changing work. And I thank you for your record of compassion that I'm confident you will build on in the years to come.

May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:59 p.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Edith Espinoza, administrative assistant, Chicano Federation of San Diego County, Inc., who introduced the President; Jay F. Hein, director, Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives; and Rwanda's Ambassador to the U.S. James Kimonyo.

### **Remarks on Congressional Action on the Legislative Agenda**

*June 26, 2008*

Fourth of July is fast approaching, and Democratic leaders in Congress have scheduled another recess. Americans are concerned that Congress may leave town with a lot of important business that hasn't been completed.

Before they leave, the Congress needs to pass an emergency war funding bill so that our troops on the frontlines have the tools they need to protect themselves and us. The House passed a good bill, and now the Senate needs to act.

Before they leave, Congress needs to give our intelligence professionals the tools they need to act quickly and effectively to monitor foreign terrorist communications so we can stop any new attack. The House passed a good—very good bipartisan bill, and the Senate needs to act.

Before they leave, the Senate needs to make progress on the enormous backlog of nominations that they've held up. Many of these nominations are for vital positions affecting our courts, our economy, our public safety, and our national security. Every day that these nominees are delayed makes it harder for the Government to meet its responsibilities, and the Senate needs to act right away.

Now, when they come back—when they get off their recess, the Democratic Congress needs to act on critical issues that they've failed to address. One such issue is housing legislation. The Congress needs to come together and pass responsible housing legislation to help more Americans keep their homes.

Another area of concern for the American citizens is the price of gasoline. And one way to relieve the price of gasoline is to expand domestic production of crude oil here at home. The Congress failed to act on this measure, and they got to when they come back.

And finally, the Congress needs to act when it comes to the Colombia free trade agreement. This is a good deal for our economy. It will help our economy grow, and it's strong—to support our friend and ally in the neighborhood, Colombia.

I'm—I asked the Democratic leaders to make the last 2 days before their recess productive. I will, of course, wish the Members—to have a great Fourth of July week. And I'm looking forward to working with them to address critical issues facing our Nation when they return.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House.

## **Statement on the United States Supreme Court Ruling on Individual Gun Rights**

*June 26, 2008*

As a longstanding advocate of the rights of gun owners in America, I applaud the Supreme Court's historic decision today confirming what has always been clear in the Constitution: The second amendment protects an individual right to keep and bear firearms.

I also agree with the Supreme Court's conclusion that the DC firearm laws violate this fundamental constitutional right. The District of Columbia should now swiftly move to ensure that its residents' rights under the second amendment are fully protected.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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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.

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#### **June 21**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

#### **June 23**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, on the South Portico, the President participated in a photo opportunity with the 2008 Presidential Scholars.

#### **June 24**

In the morning, the President had a video teleconference with President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to McLean, VA.

In the evening, at a private residence, the President attended a Republican National Committee reception. He then returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Illinois and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on June 1.

The President announced his intention to nominate Holly A. Kuzmich to be Assistant Secretary for Legislation and Congressional Affairs at the Department of Education.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher M. Marston to be Assistant Secretary for Management at the Department of Education.

The President announced his intention to nominate David D. Pearce to be Ambassador to Algeria.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lyndon L. Olson, Jr., to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sambhu N. Banik as a member of the President's Committee for People With Intellectual Disabilities.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Council on Bioethics: Floyd E. Bloom; Benjamin S. Carson, Sr.; Rebecca Susan Dresser; Nicolas Eberstadt; Jean B. Elshtain; Daniel Willett Foster; Michael S. Gazzaniga; Robert Peter George; Alfonso Gomez-Lobo; William Barton Hurlbut; Donald W. Landry; Peter A. Lawler; Paul Rodney McHugh; Gilbert Carl Meilaender, Jr.; Edmund D. Pellegrino; Janet Davison Rowley; Diana J. Schaub; and Carl E. Schneider.

#### **June 25**

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of Japan. He then had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr., to discuss the economic situation.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Detroit, MI, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Jean Peirce. He then traveled to Livonia, MI.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.