

our troops are coming home as result of our policy called return on success. We welcome them home. And with this legislation we send a clear message to all that are serving on the frontline that our Nation continues to support them.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to our Nation's military families. They endure sleepless nights and the daily struggle of caring for children while a loved one is serving far from home. We have a responsibility to provide for them. So I'm pleased that the bill I sign today includes an expansion of the GI bill. This legislation will make it easier for our troops to transfer unused education benefits to their spouses and children. It will help us to recruit and reward the best military on the face of the Earth. It will help us to meet our responsibilities to those who support our troops every day, America's great military families.

The bill also includes agreed-upon funding for other critical national priorities. This bill includes \$465 million for the Merida Initiative, a partnership with Mexico and nations in Central America to crack down on violent drug trafficking gangs. The bill includes nearly \$2.7 billion to help ensure that any State facing a disaster, like the recent flooding and tornadoes in the Midwest, has access to needed resources. This bill includes a measured expansion of unemployment insurance benefits with a reasonable work requirement. And this bill holds overall discretionary spending within the sensible limits that I requested.

The bill is a result of close collaboration between my administration and members of both parties on Capitol Hill. I appreciate the hard work of my Cabinet, especially the leaders of Defense and State and Veterans Affairs, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, as well as OMB. I want to thank House and Senate leadership and leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. I am particularly grateful to Congressmen Boehner, Hoyer, Obey, and Lewis. And I want to thank Members who worked hard for the GI bill expansion, especially Senators Webb and Warner, Graham, Burr, and McCain.

This bill shows the American people that even in an election year, Republicans and

Democrats can come together to stand behind our troops and their families.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:48 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Veterans Affairs James B. Peake; and James A. Nussle, Director, Office of Management and Budget. H.R. 2642, approved June 30, was assigned Public Law No. 110-252. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## Remarks at Opening Day of 2008 White House Tee-Ball

June 30, 2008

**The President.** Menudo, thank you. Yes, we're glad you're here. Opening day 2008, tee-ball on the South Lawn. I'm proud to be joined by the commissioner for the day, Roberto Clemente, Jr. *Bienvenido*.

**Roberto Clemente, Jr.** *Gracias, gracias.*

**The President.** Si. Roberto, I don't know if you know this or not, but we've got a special right field porch this year. This is an addition—we might just call that Clemente porch. After all, we did retire your dad's number this year.

I'm so proud to welcome, from Manati, Puerto Rico, the Little Angels. We're glad you're here; and from Camden, New Jersey, the mighty Red Sox; first base coach, Jose Rijo—he could deliver that fast ball in the best of times—now with the Washington Nationals. Third base coach, Carlos Gutierrez, Secretary of Commerce; Carlos, glad you're here. Congressman Rob Andrews—Congressman, thanks for coming. We're sure proud you're here.

Today we're very lucky to have our game called by Natalie Morales. Natalie, *bienvenidos*. Thank you for coming.

**Natalie Morales.** *Gracias.*

**The President.** Natalie happens to work for NBC's "Today" show. We really appreciate you coming.

**Ms. Morales.** That's right. Thank you, sir, for having me.

**The President.** No problem.

Boy Scout Troop 457 from Rockville, Maryland, is with us today. Thanks for coming. Steve Keener, president of Little League

America; we're glad you're here, Steve. Thanks for coming back. Appreciate you supporting baseball throughout America.

Laura and I are thrilled also to be joined today by our first pitch kind of semi-throwers. [Laughter] Angel Macias is with us. For those of you who follow Little League baseball, you might remember, in 1957—*es verdad?*

**Angel Macias.** Right.

**The President.** *Si.* He threw a perfect game for Monterrey, Mexico, in the Little League World Series, and Mexico went on to win the world series. And we're so glad you're here. Welcome to the White House.

And standing with you is Jake T. Austin, who happens—who's going to be playing Angel in the movie—

**Jake T. Austin.** Yes, I play Angel Macias in the movie.

**The President.** And what's the movie?

**Mr. Austin.** The movie is called "The Perfect Game," and it's coming out in 2008, this year.

**The President.** —2008, yes. You probably recommend we all go see it.

**Mr. Austin.** We'd greatly appreciate it. [Laughter]

**The President.** Yes. Well, Laura was suggesting, Jake T., that we actually have a showing here at the White House.

**Mr. Austin.** Great.

**The President.** Yes, see, he's for that.

Before we get started, I do want the players to join me in the Little League Pledge. Are you ready?

[At this point, the pledge was recited.]

Play ball!

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Menudo, who sang the national anthem; sports broadcaster Roberto Clemente, Jr.; and Jose Rijo, special assistant to the general manager, Washington Nationals. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

**Proclamation 8272—To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences, Take Certain Actions Under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, and for Other Purposes**

June 30, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

**A Proclamation**

1. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)), beneficiary developing countries, except those designated as least-developed beneficiary developing countries or beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries as provided in section 503(c)(2)(D) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(D)), are subject to competitive need limitations on the preferential treatment afforded under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) to eligible articles.

2. Pursuant to sections 501 and 503(a)(1)(A) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2461 and 2463(a)(1)(A)), the President may designate articles as eligible for preferential tariff treatment under the GSP.

3. Section 503(c)(2)(F)(i) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(F)(i)) provides that the President may disregard the competitive need limitation provided in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)(i)(II)) with respect to any eligible article from any beneficiary developing country if the aggregate appraised value of the imports of such article into the United States during the preceding calendar year does not exceed an amount set forth in section 503(c)(2)(F)(ii) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(F)(ii)).

4. Pursuant to section 503(d)(1) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)(1)), the President may waive the application of the competitive need limitations in section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act with respect to any eligible article from any beneficiary developing country if certain conditions are met.

5. Pursuant to section 503(d)(5) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)(5)), any waiver granted under section 503(d) shall remain in