

should be our goals, and I am committed to this end.

Small business embodies so much of what America is all about. Self-reliance, hard work, innovation, the courage to take risks for future growth: these are values that have served our Nation well since its very beginning. They are values to be passed on from generation to generation. We must ensure that our small businesses

continue to thrive and prosper, not just for their own sakes, but for all of us.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 19, 2002.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 25.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Awards for Management Excellence

November 25, 2002

Thanks a lot. Thanks for the warm welcome. Thanks for coming today. I'm honored to be here to present the Presidential Awards for Management Excellence. I guess that's Washington, DC, talk for people doing the job the taxpayers expect. *[Laughter]* These awards recognize the best management practices in Government. This year's recipients have met high standards and, as a result, have earned the respect of the White House and our country.

Kay, I want to thank you for your leadership in this issue. I appreciate you making sure that the awards ceremonies reflect the desires of this administration to provide excellence for every taxpayer, to make sure the services we provide are relevant and necessary, that people who put their heart into their work are able to say that we're doing the job that the people expect. Kay is doing a great job for our country, and I'm glad she's on my team.

And so is our Secretary of Transportation, Norm Mineta. He has performed brilliantly as a Cabinet Secretary. He has taken on some tough jobs. I'll never forget, on 9/11, knowing the fact that Norm was in charge of making sure that our airspace was cleared. He did a fantastic job, and from that point on, he's been just as magnificent in making sure our airports are se-

cure. I want to thank you for your service, Norm. He represents one of the award winners, the FAA Logistics Center. And thank you for being here, Mr. Secretary, and thanks for the note on our anniversary.

I appreciate David Chu being here as well. He represents the Defense Department. There are two award winners from the Defense Department here today, the National Imaging and Mapping Agency and the 55th Wing of Offutt Air Force Base. I want to thank Lt. Gen. James Clapper from the National Imaging and Mapping Agency for being here. And I want to thank Norman Bowles, who is the FAA Administration Logistics Center, for being here, and I want to thank Timothy Jones, the Commander of the 55th Wing, for coming as well. Congratulations for a job well done.

There were runner-ups for this award, and three of the finalists have representatives here today, starting with another member of my Cabinet, Christie Todd Whitman, who runs the Environmental Protection Agency. Christie Todd, thanks for being here. Pat Pizzella is the Assistant Secretary for Labor for Administration and Management. Pat, I appreciate you coming, and thank the good folks who almost won for their hard work. *[Laughter]* Lynn

Scarlett, Assistant Secretary of Policy, Management and Budget, of the Interior, thank you for being here, Lynn. I appreciate your hard work as well. Give Gale Norton my best.

I want to thank the members of the President's Management Council and the Human Resources Management Council for helping on this project. I want to thank the President's Quality Awards evaluators, those who looked around all our Government to find out who deserved this award. I want to appreciate you for your hard work. I want to thank the judges for picking the winners. Better you pick them than me, I might add. *[Laughter]* I want to thank the Director of the Ronald Reagan Building and his staff for putting up with a Presidential trip. Again, I want to thank you all for coming, and I want to thank you for serving your country.

Public service is a high, high calling. And I'm proud of the men and women who devote their lives to our great Nation. You put in long hours. You watch every penny in the budget—or you should watch every penny in the budget. *[Laughter]* You know who the boss is: The boss is the taxpayer. That's who we work for. You do your job right, and a lot of times, you don't get much attention. Today we're here to pay attention to the people who are doing the job really well, to honor excellence, to reward success.

This award is like what we call the Malcolm Baldrige Award. The Malcolm Baldrige Award recognizes excellence in the private sector. This award recognizes excellence in the public sector. It honors really high management quality.

The President's Award also recognizes that our Government has got unique challenges. I mean, we've got challenges in dealing with bureaucracies that have been around a long time. We've got challenges in fighting inertia. We've got challenges in setting new goals and high standards in agencies that sometimes aren't anxious to change. It's different than the private sec-

tor, obviously. But nevertheless, it doesn't mean we shouldn't continue to try and overcome any obstacles to excellence.

The award criteria are based on my management agenda. Kay James explained that agenda to you earlier. We take it very seriously, and we're going to continue to push the agenda, because we think it is best for our country and best for the people we serve.

There have been dozens of excellent nominees who were considered, but three stood out. Today we're here to honor the three. They stood out because they set clear goals and they reached the goals. Each identified a critical challenge. Each considered solutions. Each drew up a plan and a strategy. And then, as importantly, they carried it out. These organizations did more than just make promises; they made good on their promises.

The first recipient is the National Imagery and Mapping Agency in Bethesda, Maryland. And for all of you who work there, I want to congratulate you for winning this award. General Clapper, you might stand up and give everybody a wave. Thank you very much, General. Congratulations to you and your team. *[Applause]*

This agency deals with a complex technology. And one of the things they need to do is to work to keep the workforce. It's hard to keep a workforce in the Government, particularly when the workforce is specialized and talented like—like the General needs. There's a lot of competition for good and skilled Federal workers. And so therefore, it requires—in the private sector—we compete with the private sector to keep good people in place. And so therefore, it requires imaginative ways to attract and retain the very best, and I appreciate you for doing that. You've excelled at high retention to make sure this critical agency has got the expertise needed to help America.

Secondly, we honor—is the Federal—FAA Logistics Center in Oklahoma City. If anybody works for the FAA Logistics

Center in Oklahoma City that's here, please stand up so we can recognize you. Thank you all. [Applause] Congratulations. Congratulations to you all.

The center supports America's entire system of air traffic safety and provides everything from electronic repair to inventory management. That's a big job. And yet for a while, the system was backwards. Because of a preset fee arrangement, the customers had little incentive to save money. And the system was prone to be overloaded with what they call rush orders. In other words, the system was designed backwards. And these good folks recognized that and put in place new accounting procedures which now make sure that every customer has got information based upon the cost of each order, which in itself provides incentive for budget control. I want to congratulate you on taking a very complex assignment and making it work on behalf of the American people. Good job.

And finally, the third winner is the largest wing in America's Air Combat Command, the 55th, at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska. I had the—I was there on September 11th, 2001, at Offutt. I remember their motto. It says, "The Sun Never Sets on the Fighting 55th." And that's good for the defense of the country, by the way.

I want to thank the good folks at—at Offutt for recognizing that outsourcing is an important part of efficiency in our Government. They identified the best and most cost-effective approaches for hundreds of different tasks on the base. They work closely with contractors, opened the process to employee feedback and concerns, and have saved our taxpayers millions of dollars. They made sure that the system was efficient and effective. They recognize that there are different ways to meet goals, and they encourage the entrepreneurial spirit as a part of meeting the goals that we expect. General—thank you all for coming. Congratulations. Please thank all the folks at the 55th for doing a fine job. Please stand up. [Applause] Good job.

These are examples of what can happen when people put their mind to delivering excellence on behalf of the taxpayers. There's creativity and flexibility, people willing to think outside of the proverbial box. And as a result, our country is better off.

One of the reasons why we have these awards is to hold up your example for other people in Government. Other people should recognize that if they make the right decisions, set high goals, are creative about achieving those goals, they too can receive this award, which is an important award.

When you get back to your offices, make sure your fellow employees know how proud we are of the work they—that you've done, how proud we are of their service to our country, what a credit they are to the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

And so we're here to congratulate three fine agencies, three fine groups of our fellow Americans, all working together to do our job.

I recently came back from Europe. I had an excellent trip on behalf of the citizens of our country. But there's no question in my mind, no question in my mind, I represent and you represent the finest nation on the face of the Earth, full of the finest people on the face of the Earth. I hope you feel that way every day when you go to work. I do.

And so, on behalf of a grateful nation, congratulations. Thanks for what you do. Keep doing what you do. And I hope to see you back here next year. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. in the Amphitheater at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Norman Bowles, Program Director, Federal Aviation Administration Logistics Center; Brig. Gen. Timothy Jones, USAF, Commander, 55th Wing, Air Combat Command, Offutt Air Force Base; and Robert Schall, director, Ronald

Reagan Building and International Trade Center.

Remarks on Signing the Homeland Security Act of 2002 *November 25, 2002*

Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome, and welcome to the White House.

Today we are taking historic action to defend the United States and protect our citizens against the dangers of a new era. With my signature, this act of Congress will create a new Department of Homeland Security, ensuring that our efforts to defend this country are comprehensive and united.

The new Department will analyze threats, will guard our borders and airports, protect our critical infrastructure, and coordinate the response of our Nation to future emergencies. The Department of Homeland Security will focus the full resources of the American Government on the safety of the American people. This essential reform was carefully considered by Congress and enacted with strong bipartisan majorities.

I want to thank Tom Ridge, the Homeland Security Adviser, for his hard work on this initiative. I want to thank all the members of my Cabinet who are here for their work. I want to thank the Members of Congress who are with us today, particularly those Members of Congress who were essential to the passage, many of whom stand up here on the stage with me. One Member not with us is our mutual friend from Texas, Phil Gramm. I appreciate his hard work. I thank the work of Senator Fred Thompson and Senator Joe Lieberman. I appreciate Zell Miller and Don Nickles' hard work as well. We've got a lot of Members from the House here, and I want to thank you all for coming. I particularly want to pay homage to Dick Arney, who shepherded the bill to the

floor of the House of Representatives. I'll miss him. I'm not so sure everybody will. [*Laughter*] But I appreciate your time here. I thank Tom DeLay for making sure the bill got passed. I thank Rob Portman for his hard work. And I want to thank Ellen Tauscher as well for her leadership on this issue.

I appreciate Kay James of the Office of Personnel Management, who worked so hard to make sure this effort was understood by everybody in our Government. And I want to thank the other administration officials who are here, many of whom are going to be responsible for seeing to it this new Department functions well.

I want to thank all the local and State officials who are here with us today—I see Governors and county judges, mayors—for coming. My own mayor, the Mayor of Washington, DC, I appreciate you coming, Mr. Mayor. I want to thank the local and State law enforcement officials who are here, the chiefs of police and fire chiefs who are with us today. I see the chief of my city now is here as well. Thank you, Mr. Chief, for coming.

I want to thank the union representatives who are here. We look forward to working with you to make sure that your people are treated fairly in this new Department. I want to thank the Federal workers who are here. You're charged with being on the front line of protecting America. I understand your job. We look forward to working with you to make sure you get your job done. I want to thank the President's Homeland Security Advisory Council as well, and thank you all for coming.