

Memorandum on the Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) Initiative

January 9, 2004

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: The Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) Initiative

The cost of Federal workplace injuries, when measured by workers' compensation losses, is more than \$2 billion and 2 million lost production days annually. In fiscal year 2003, the Federal workforce of almost 2.7 million filed more than 168,000 injury claims. Behind these numbers lie pain and suffering by workers and their families. Clearly, Government agencies should strive to do more to improve workplace safety and health and reduce the costs of injury to workers and taxpayers. Many workplace injuries are preventable.

Therefore, I am establishing SHARE: Safety, Health, and Return-to-Employment Initiative, a safe workplace initiative for fiscal years 2004–2006. The initiative's four goals cover the most important elements of a strong safety and health management program: lower workplace injury and illness case rates, lower lost-time injury and illness case rates, timely reporting of injuries and illnesses, and fewer lost days resulting from work injuries and illnesses. The Secretary of Labor will lead the SHARE Initiative and will measure the performance of each department and agency against the goals. I direct all executive branch departments and agencies to participate in SHARE for this 3-year period.

Each department and agency will collaborate with the Department of Labor to establish challenging annual goals based on its current performance in the four areas. The Department of Labor will measure and track agency performance, and will report to me annually on each agency's progress towards meeting its goals. The Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Office of Workers' Compensation Programs will also work with Federal departments and agencies to develop new workplace strategies to improve safety and health at high injury rate sites, assist them in improving the timeliness of reporting claims through electronic and other means, and guide them in providing suitable work and tools for injured and disabled employees.

Federal supervisors and managers must focus management tools and resources on eliminating unsafe and unhealthy working conditions. Federal employees should be encouraged to perform their jobs safely, effectively, and alertly to remain injury-free. Dedication to ensuring our Government workforce family is safe and healthy preserves the resources of Government and helps promote the delivery of Government services to the American people.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

The President's Radio Address

January 10, 2004

Good morning. As the year 2004 begins, America's economy is strong and getting

stronger. More Americans than ever own their own homes. More businesses are

investing. More manufacturers are seeing increased activity than at any time in the last 20 years. Stock market wealth has increased by more than \$3 trillion over the past year. And over the past 5 months, more than a quarter-million Americans started work at new jobs. In December, the unemployment rate fell to 5.7 percent, from a high of 6.3 percent last June.

This latest report underscores a choice about the future of our economy and the future of those who are looking for work. We can continue on the path to prosperity and new jobs, a path marked by a progrowth agenda that has cut taxes on paychecks for 109 million American taxpayers, or we can reverse the course by raising taxes on hard-working Americans. The choice is clear. Tax relief has got this economy going again, and tax relief will keep it moving forward.

In my budget for the upcoming fiscal year, I will call on Congress to make permanent all the tax relief we have delivered to the American people and our Nation's small businesses. If Congress fails to act, this tax relief will disappear, and millions of American families and small businesses would see tax hikes starting in 2005. For the sake of our economic expansion and for the sake of millions of Americans who depend on small businesses for their jobs, we need Congress to act and to make tax relief permanent.

Every American who pays income taxes got a tax cut. They should keep that tax cut in the future. American families saw the child credit double to \$1,000 per child. They should keep that higher credit. American investors, including millions of seniors, saw taxes fall on dividend income and investment gains. They should keep that tax relief. American small businesses received new tax incentives to invest in equipment and software. They should keep those incentives. Every American family, including every farmer, rancher, and small-business owner, will see the death tax disappear in

2010 then reappear in 2011. But the death tax should stay buried.

Now is not the time to turn our backs on America's families and workers and entrepreneurs by letting much-needed tax relief expire. Making tax relief permanent is a simple step that would keep our economy growing so that every American who wants to work can find a job.

We must continue to take other steps to promote growth and job creation throughout our economy. We must promote free and fair trade, reform our class action system, and help businesses and their employees address the problem of rising health care costs.

To serve the economic needs of our country, we must also reform our immigration laws. Reform must begin by confronting a basic fact of life and economics: Some of the jobs being generated in America's growing economy are jobs American citizens are not filling. This past week, I proposed a new temporary-worker program that would match willing foreign workers with willing American employers when no Americans can be found to fill the jobs. If an American employer is offering a job that American citizens are not willing to take, we ought to welcome into our country a person who will fill that job.

This temporary-worker program represents the best tradition of our society. It will help strengthen our economy, return order to our immigration system, and secure our homeland.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:54 a.m. on January 9 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference With President Vicente Fox of Mexico
in Monterrey, Mexico
January 12, 2004

President Fox. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. President Bush, welcome to Mexico, and welcome to Monterrey. We receive you with great enthusiasm, the way we are receiving the leaders of the countries of America. We have great expectations in order to work in this extraordinary Summit of the Americas.

In order to know each other better—all of us leaders that have responsibilities in America—it's best to analyze extraordinary matters that have been brought about in the last few years, since the last meeting of the Americas. While checking and making a revision on these matters, we can give broad solutions to the problems—economic and poverty problems in a great part of the continent; perhaps solutions to the problems of human capital, social capital in our respective countries; and likewise deal, as we have been doing in every single meeting, the safety and security matters, going deep inside the problems of corruption, making sure that in our countries, democracy should be there and the state of law should be there. So this meeting will enable us to give steps forward in all these multilateral topics.

Likewise, we have had a bilateral meeting—and I will mention this later on, a couple of matters, important matters in reference to this bilateral conversation. First of all, relating to the migration topic, President Bush has given us in full detail and has told us once again the proposal made in the United States for the migration matters and the policy that should be checked upon that—that topic. It's a sovereign matter of the United States.

Consequently, this migration proposal is analyzed according to the different conversations that President Bush and President Fox, myself, even when he was a Governor in the State of Texas and I was a

Governor in the State of Guanajuato. Since that time, we have been touching upon this subject, and we did that in the first meeting in Rancho San Cristobal in the State of Guanajuato. We did it once again, and we spoke about migration. We have been doing this in each one of the different meetings.

So I would like to give full acknowledgment that part of the conversations, a great part of the conversations have been collected and analyzed. But this is a proposal made by the President of the United States. We totally agree and are aware that the proposal should be discussed, broadly discussed, analyzed, particularly in the Congress of the United States. Consequently, we should give full time so that the idea—well, the idea should mature, and it should definitely be approved.

So for us in Mexico, this is a very important step forward on what has to do with the relationship between the two countries, on what has to do with the migration flow. It is a topic with a great priority for our countries, for both countries. This proposal opens an opportunity to have a certain movement, a certain situation, important for many millions of Mexicans. It is a priority. It is a valuable proposal, and by all means, it will have to do with the improvement of the situation of these migrants, but it will have to do as well with the strengthening of our respective economies—that on the one hand.

On the other, the topic that we have been dealing with is the initiative of North America, by means of which both Governments want to work with very specific objectives so as to create a greater economic growth, increase productivity and competitiveness within the region through the reduction of costs, and facilitating trade flows, promoting development of common markets in different specific sectors. And it has