

“Ed” McMahan; former Senator Lauch Faircloth of North Carolina; Jim Culbertson and Aldona Wos, North Carolina State finance chairs, Bush-Cheney ’04, Inc.; Ferrell

Blount, chairman, and Jim Cain, national committeeman, North Carolina Republican Party; and Teresa Earnhardt, chief executive officer and president, Dale Earnhardt, Inc.

Statement on Signing Legislation on Amendments to the Mexico-United States Agreement on the Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank

April 5, 2004

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 254, “To authorize the President of the United States to agree to certain amendments to the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States concerning the establishment of a Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank, and for other purposes.” The Act is intended to implement an agreement between the United States and Mexico to accelerate the delivery of environmental infrastructure projects on the border by improving the operations of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission and the North American Development Bank.

Section 546 of Public Law 103–182, as added by section 1 of the Act, purports to direct the President to instruct United States representatives on the Board of Directors of the North American Development Bank to take a particular position with respect to certain grant proposals. Under the Constitution, the President alone

is charged with developing the position of the United States in international fora. The executive branch will accordingly interpret this provision as a nonbinding recommendation from the Congress.

Sections 2(5) and 2(6) of the Act purport to require the annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury to include a description of discussions between the United States and Mexican governments. In order to avoid intrusion into the President’s negotiating authority and ability to maintain the confidentiality of diplomatic negotiations, the executive branch will not interpret this provision to require the disclosure of either the contents of diplomatic communications or specific plans for particular negotiations in the future.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
April 5, 2004.

NOTE: H.R. 254, approved April 5, was assigned Public Law No. 108–215.

Message on the Observance of Passover, 5764

April 5, 2004

I send greetings to those observing Passover, beginning at sundown on April 5.

Freedom is God’s gift to every man and woman. During Passover, Jewish people

celebrate their historic liberation from slavery. This joyous eight-day observance is testimony to the power of good to overcome evil and is an opportunity for Jews to share