

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of the Class-Action
Lawsuit Reform Legislation
February 17, 2005

I commend the House for passing a class-action reform bill that will help protect people who are wrongfully harmed while reducing the frivolous lawsuits that clog our courts, hurt the economy, cost jobs, and burden American businesses. Junk lawsuits have helped drive the cost of

America's tort system to more than \$240 billion a year, greater than any other major industrialized nation. This bill is an important step forward in our efforts to reform the litigation system and to continue creating jobs and growing our economy. I look forward to signing the bill into law.

Statement on the Resignation of N. Gregory Mankiw as Chairman of the
Council of Economic Advisers
February 17, 2005

Greg Mankiw has been a trusted member of my economic team and a close adviser. His wise and principled counsel over the past 2 years has helped shape policies

that today are fueling our economic growth. I am grateful to Greg for his service to our country, and I wish him, Deborah, and the Mankiw family all the best.

Interview With European Print Journalists
February 18, 2005

The President. Let me give a couple of opening comments, and we'll do a couple rounds of questions.

First, I'm—you know, I said in my press conference yesterday, for a period of time, we have a tendency in Europe and in America to talk past each other. In other words, September the 11th for some was obviously an important moment, but it passed. For us, it changed our way of thinking. It changed our foreign policy. It caused me, as the President, and people in my administration to have an intense focus on securing our country. And I say "talk past" because when you have a different view about priority, it creates a—it's missed opportunity, is the best way to put it.

So my trip to Europe, with that in mind, is to seize the moment and invigorate a

relationship that is a vital relationship for our own security as well as a vital relationship for long-term peace in the world. We compete at times, but we don't compete when it comes to values, and that's a very important part of my message, is that we share a belief in human rights and human dignity and rule of law and transparency of government and democracy and freedom. And those are vital values necessary to not only secure our own countries but necessary to do our duty, which is to work together to help people live in freedom. If freedom is good enough for us, why isn't it good enough for others?

So I'm looking forward to it. It's a full schedule, and I'm going to, obviously, start in Belgium and see the Belgium leaders