

The President's Radio Address *April 16, 2005*

Good morning. American families and small businesses across the country are feeling the pinch from rising gas prices. If you're trying to meet a family budget or a payroll, even a small change at the pump can have a big impact.

America's prosperity depends on reliable, affordable, and secure sources of energy. And today, our energy needs are growing faster than our domestic sources are able to provide. Demand for electricity has grown more than 17 percent in the past decade while our transmission ability lags behind. And we continue to import more than one-half of our domestic oil supply.

In the coming days and weeks, I'll talk more about what we need to do in Washington to make sure America has an energy policy that reflects the demands of a new century. The first order of business is for Congress to pass an energy bill. Next week Congress begins debate on energy legislation, and they need to send me a bill that meets four important objectives.

First, the energy bill must encourage the use of technology to improve conservation. We must find smarter ways to meet our energy needs, and we must encourage Americans to make better choices about energy consumption. We must also continue to invest in research, so we will develop the technologies that would allow us to conserve more and be better stewards of the environment.

Second, the energy bill must encourage more production at home in environmentally sensitive ways. Over the past 3 years, America's energy consumption has increased by about 4 percent, while our domestic energy production has decreased by about 1 percent. That means more of our energy is coming from abroad. To meet our energy needs and strengthen our national security, we must make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Third, the energy bill must diversify our energy supply by developing alternative sources of energy like ethanol or biodiesel. We need to promote safe, clean nuclear power. And to create more energy choices, Congress should provide tax credits for renewable power sources such as wind, solar, and landfill gas. We must also continue our clean-coal technology projects so that we can use the plentiful source of coal in an environmentally friendly way. The bill must also support pollution-free cars and trucks, powered by hydrogen fuel cells instead of gasoline.

Finally, the energy bill must help us find better, more reliable ways to deliver energy to consumers. In some parts of the country, our transmission lines and pipelines are decades older than the homes and businesses they supply. Many of them are increasingly vulnerable to events that can interrupt and shut down power in entire regions of the country. We must modernize our infrastructure to make America's energy more secure and reliable.

Every source of power that we use today started with the power of human invention, and those sources have served us well for decades. Now it's time to apply our knowledge and technology to keep the American Dream alive in this new century. There is nothing America cannot achieve when we put our mind to it. And I urge Congress to work out its differences and pass an energy bill that will help make America safer and more prosperous for the years to come.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:45 a.m. on April 15 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary

also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Strengthening Social Security in Columbia, South Carolina *April 18, 2005*

Thank you all very much. Mr. Speaker, thank you for that kind and short introduction. *[Laughter]* I appreciate Governor Sanford being here. I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor. I appreciate President Pro Tem McConnell, Majority Leader Leatherman, members of the South Carolina legislature.

I appreciate my traveling party from Washington. Hope you appreciate them, too. That would be Senator Lindsey Graham, Senator DeMint, Members of the United States House of Representatives from the great State of South Carolina.

I appreciate the justices of the South Carolina Supreme Court being here. I thank those of you who have taken time to come and listen. I appreciate your warm welcome.

It is an honor to be speaking in this chamber. It is great to be back in the capital of South Carolina. The last time I came to this city, I gave the commencement speech at USC. I was proud to have received an honorary degree. When I told Laura about it, she said, "I thought your first degree was honorary." *[Laughter]* She sends her best, and she sends her love. She's, by the way, a fabulous First Lady. She is—*[applause]*.

I appreciate our escort committee. I told the Members that this is the first time I have spoken to a legislative body, State legislative body since I was the Governor of Texas. So thank you for having me. It's—there's some differences, of course. There are a lot of cowboy hats back in Austin. *[Laughter]* And I'll be honest with you, a lot of us didn't know anything about dancing the shag. *[Laughter]* And I imagine we

could have a pretty good debate about which of our States has the best barbecue. *[Laughter]* Now is not the time. *[Laughter]*

But one thing is, no matter whether you serve at the Federal level or the State level, we share serious responsibilities. See, our constituents have put us into office to solve problems now. That's what they've done. They said, "We've elected you to go to your statehouse"—or in my case, Washington, DC—"to solve problems." The people expect us to confront problems without illusion. They expect us to lead with conviction and confidence, not by reading the latest poll or listening to the latest focus group, and above all, they expect us to deliver results.

And here in South Carolina, you've delivered results. You've faced serious challenges, especially in your economy. Listen, we've had a stock market decline. We've had a recession. We've had corporate scandals. We had a terrorist attack on September the 11th, 2001. We've had the demands of war. And all these have tested our Nation's economy, and they hit particularly hard here in your State. South Carolina's economic growth slowed. Small businesses moved out or shut down. Workers lost their jobs, and State finances were headed toward a free fall.

The people of South Carolina looked to you and they looked to your Governor for leadership. And you delivered. You set clear priorities for your budget, and you made hard decisions when it came to spending. To rein in the rising costs of health care, you became one of the first States in the Nation to offer health savings accounts to State employees. To reward hard-working