

and Afghanistan and selected other international activities, including tsunami relief and reconstruction. The Act supports new benefits for service members who have suffered traumatic injury and for survivors of fallen service members. The Act also provides additional border enforcement resources, which will strengthen the Nation's ability to prevent foreign terrorists from operating in the United States.

The executive branch shall construe subsection 1025(d) of the Act, which purports to determine the command relationships among certain elements of the U.S. Navy forces, as advisory, as any other construction would conflict with the President's constitutional authority as Commander in Chief.

Provisions of the Act, such as sections 2104 and 6024, purport to require congressional committee approval prior to certain obligations or expenditures of funds appropriated by the Act. The executive branch shall construe such provisions to require only prior notification to congressional committees, as any other construction would be contrary to the constitutional principles set forth by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1983 in *INS v. Chadha*.

Section 6025 purports to regulate the content of the President's annual budget submission, which is a proposal for enactment of legislation to appropriate funds. In

addition, section 301 calls for submission of legislative recommendations by an executive branch official to the Congress. The executive branch shall construe these and any other similar provisions in a manner consistent with the Constitution's commitment to the President of exclusive authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President shall judge necessary and expedient.

Several provisions of the Act, including sections 6041, 6042, 6043, 6052, 6053, 6069, 6070, 6071, and 6072 make specified changes in statements of managers of the House-Senate conference committees that accompanied various bills reported from conference that ultimately became laws. As with other committee materials, statements of managers accompanying a conference report do not have the force of law. Accordingly, although changes to these statements are directed by the terms of the Act, the statements themselves are not legally binding.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 11, 2005.

NOTE: H.R. 1268, approved May 11, was assigned Public Law No. 109-13.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Central American Leaders May 12, 2005

Good morning. Thank you for coming. Welcome to the White House, and welcome to the Rose Garden.

I want to thank the six Presidents who have joined me today. We've just had a constructive dialog in the Cabinet Room about our mutual interests. Our mutual interests are prosperity for our people and peace in the region. I am honored to be

here with six really fine leaders, people who have stood strong for democracy and who care deeply about the people of their nations.

We're here today, as well, because the best way to achieve peace and prosperity for our hemisphere is by strengthening democracy and continuing the economic transformation of Central America and the

Dominican Republic. All of us agree that the Central American and Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement presents us with an historic opportunity to advance our common goals in an important part of our neighborhood.

CAFTA brings benefits to all sides. For the newly emerging democracies of Central America, CAFTA would bring new investment that means good jobs and higher labor standards for their workers. Central American consumers would have better access to more U.S. goods at better prices. And by passing this agreement, we would signal that the world's leading trading nation was committed to closer partnership with countries in our own backyard, countries which share our values.

For American farmers, businesses, and workers, CAFTA would create a more level playing field. Under existing rules, most of Central America's exports already enter the United States duty free. But our products still face hefty tariffs there. By passing CAFTA, we would open up a market of 44 million consumers who already import more of our goods and services than Australia or Brazil. And we would create incentives for factories to stay in Central America and use American materials rather than relocate to Asia, where they are more likely to use Asian materials.

Finally, for the Western Hemisphere, CAFTA would bring the stability and security that can only come from freedom. Today, a part of the world that was once characterized by oppression and military dictatorship now sees its future in free elec-

tions and free trade, and we must not take these gains for granted. These are small nations, but they're making big and brave commitments, and America needs to continue to support them as they walk down the road of openness and accountability. By transforming our hemisphere into a powerful free trade area, we will promote democratic governance, human rights, and economic liberty for everyone.

The United States was built on freedom, and the more of it we have in our own backyard, the freer and safer and more prosperous all of the Americas will be. I applaud these leaders for their vision. I thank them for working with Members of Congress from both political parties to persuade those Members about the importance of this piece of legislation. I assured them I will join in the efforts to get this bill passed. This bill is good for Central American countries; it is good for America.

I want to thank you all for being here. *Que Dios los bendiga.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:39 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. Participating in the meeting with the President were: President Abel Pacheco of Costa Rica; President Leonel Fernandez Reyna of the Dominican Republic; President Elias Antonio Saca Gonzalez of El Salvador; President Oscar Berger of Guatemala; President Ricardo Maduro of Honduras; and President Enrique Bolanos of Nicaragua. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks to the National Association of Realtors May 13, 2005

Thank you all. Thanks for the warm welcome. Sorry Laura is not here with me. [Laughter] As you know, we just got back from an overseas trip, and even President

Putin had heard about Laura's new job as the comedienne in chief. [Laughter] I'm really proud of her. She's a great First Lady. And she said, "Don't go over there