

[*Laughter*] I appreciate Congressman Dave Hobson joining us as well.

I want to thank the State attorney general, Jim Petro, for joining us; U.S. Attorney Greg Lockhart. I want to thank Director Ken Morckel for joining us today. Thank you, Ken, for being here. Paul McClellan, State and local officials, most of all, people who wear the uniform, I'm proud you're here.

Today when I landed at the airport, I met Dianne Garrett, who is with us today. Dianne has been a volunteer with the Whitehall Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association for 8 years. She represents thousands of people across our country who are working hand in glove with their local law enforcement to make the police stations work better. She's a part of the citizen corps. She's a part of the emergency response team in Whitehall community.

The reason I bring up people like Dianne is, it's important for us to always remember that the great strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. The true strength of this country lies in the hearts of those who are willing to help volunteer to make our communities a more compassionate, decent, and safe place. If you want to serve Ohio, if you want to serve America, help feed the hungry, find shelter for the homeless, volunteer to help our law enforcement do their job. Love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself, and you're making a big contribution to America. Dianne, thank you for coming. Go ahead and stand up.

My most solemn duty as the President is to protect the American people. And I'm honored to share that responsibility with you. We have a joint responsibility. As sworn officers of the law, you're devoted to defending your fellow citizens. Your vigilance is keeping our communities safe, and you're serving on the frontlines of the war on terror. It's a different kind of war than a war our Nation was used to. You know firsthand the nature of the enemy. We face brutal men who celebrate murder, who in-

cite suicide, and who would stop at nothing to destroy the liberties we cherish. You know that these enemies cannot be deterred by negotiations or concessions or appeals to reason. In this war, there's only one option, and that option is victory.

Since September the 11th, 2001, we have gone on the offensive against the terrorists. We have dealt the enemy a series of powerful blows. The terrorists are on the run, and we'll keep them on the run. Yet they're still active; they're still seeking to do us harm. The terrorists are patient and determined, and so are we. They're hoping we'll get complacent and forget our responsibilities. Once again, they're proving that they don't understand our Nation. The United States of America will never let down its guard.

It's a long war, and we have a comprehensive strategy to win it. We're taking the fight to the terrorists abroad so we don't have to face them here at home. We're denying our enemies sanctuary by making it clear that America will not tolerate regimes that harbor or support terrorists. We're stopping the terrorists from achieving ideological victories they seek by spreading hope and freedom and reform across the broader Middle East. By advancing the cause of liberty, we'll lay the foundations for peace for generations to come.

And one of the great honors as the President is to be the Commander in Chief of a fantastic United States military, made fantastic by the quality and the character of the men and women who wear the uniform. Thank you for serving.

As we wage the war on terror overseas, we'll remember where the war began, right here on American soil. In our free and open society, there is no such thing as perfect security. To protect our country, we have to be right 100 percent of the time. To hurt us, the terrorists have to be right only once. So we're working to answer that challenge every day, and we're making good progress toward securing the homeland.

We've enhanced security at coastlines and borders and ports of entry, and we have more work to do. We've strengthened protections at our airports and chemical plants and highways and bridges and tunnels. And we got more work to do. We've made terrorism the top priority for law enforcement, and we've provided unprecedented resources to help folks like yourselves do their jobs.

Since 2001, we've more than tripled spending on homeland security; we've increased funding more than tenfold for the first-responders who protect our homeland. Law enforcement officers stand between our people and great danger, and we're making sure you have the tools necessary to do your job.

We've also improved our ability to track terrorists inside the United States. A vital part of that effort is called the USA PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act closed dangerous gaps in America's law enforcement and intelligence capabilities, gaps the terrorists exploited when they attacked us on September the 11th. Both Houses of Congress passed the PATRIOT Act by overwhelming bipartisan majorities. Ninety-eight out of 100 United States Senators voted for the act. That's what we call bipartisanship. The PATRIOT Act was the clear, considered response of a nation at war, and I was proud to sign that piece of legislation.

Over the past 3½ years, America's law enforcement and intelligence personnel have proved that the PATRIOT Act works, that it was an important piece of legislation. Since September the 11th, Federal terrorism investigations have resulted in charges against more than 400 suspects, and more than half of those charged have been convicted. Federal, State, and local law enforcement have used the PATRIOT Act to break up terror cells in New York and Oregon and Virginia and in Florida. We prosecuted terrorist operatives and supporters in California, in Texas, in New Jersey, in Illinois, and North Carolina and Ohio. These efforts have not always made

the headlines, but they've made communities safer. The PATRIOT Act has accomplished exactly what it was designed to do: It has protected American liberty and saved American lives.

The problem is, at the end of this year, 16 critical provisions of the PATRIOT Act are scheduled to expire. Some people call these "sunset provisions." That's a good name, because letting that—those provisions expire would leave law enforcement in the dark. All 16 provisions are practical, important, and they are constitutional. Congress needs to renew them all, and this time, Congress needs to make the provisions permanent.

We need to renew the PATRIOT Act because it strengthens our national security in four important ways. First, we need to renew the critical provisions of the PATRIOT Act that authorize better sharing of information between law enforcement and intelligence. Before the PATRIOT Act, criminal investigators were separated from intelligence officers by a legal and bureaucratic wall. A Federal prosecutor who investigated Usama bin Laden in the 1990s explained the challenge this way: "We could talk to citizens, local police officers, foreign police officers; we could even talk to Al Qaida members. But there was one group of people we were not permitted to talk to, the FBI agents across the street from us assigned to parallel intelligence investigations of Usama Bin Laden and Al Qaida. That was a wall."

Finding our enemies in the war on terror is tough enough; law enforcement officers should not be denied vital information their own colleagues already have. The PATRIOT Act helped tear down this wall, and now law enforcement and intelligence officers are sharing information and working together and bringing terrorists to justice.

In many terrorism cases, information sharing has made the difference between success and failure. And you have an example right here in Columbus, Ohio. Two years ago, a truck driver was charged with

providing support to Al Qaida. His capture came after an investigation that relied on the PATRIOT Act and on contributions from more than a dozen agencies in the Southern Ohio Joint Terrorism Task Force. And members of that task force are with us today. I want to thank you for your contribution to the safety of America, and you'll understand this story I'm about to tell.

For several years, Iyman Faris posed as a law-abiding resident of Columbus. But in 2000, he traveled to Afghanistan and met Usama bin Laden at an Al Qaida training camp. Faris helped the terrorists research airplanes and handle cash and purchase supplies. In 2002, he met Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the September the 11th attacks, and he agreed to take part in an Al Qaida plot to destroy a New York City bridge.

After Faris returned to the United States, Federal investigators used the PATRIOT Act to follow his trail. They used new information-sharing provisions to piece together details about his time in Afghanistan and his plan to launch an attack on the United States. They used the PATRIOT Act to discover that Faris had cased possible targets in New York and that he'd reported his findings to Al Qaida. In the spring of 2003, the FBI confronted Faris and presented the case they had built against him. The case against him was so strong that Faris chose to cooperate, and he spent the next several weeks telling authorities about his Al Qaida association. Faris pled guilty to the charges against him. And today, instead of planning terror attacks against the American people, Iyman Faris is sitting in an American prison.

The agents and prosecutors who used the PATRIOT Act to put Faris behind bars did superb work, and they know what a difference information sharing made. Here is what one FBI agent said—he said, “The Faris case would not have happened without sharing information.” That information sharing was made possible by the PA-

TRIBUT Act. Another investigator on the case said, “We never would have had the lead to begin with.” You have proved that good teamwork is critical in protecting America. For the sake of our national security, Congress must not rebuild a wall between law enforcement and intelligence.

Second, we need to renew the critical provisions of the PATRIOT Act that allow investigators to use the same tools against terrorists that they already use against other criminals. Before the PATRIOT Act, it was easier to track the phone contacts of a drug dealer than the phone contacts of an enemy operative. Before the PATRIOT Act, it was easier to get the credit card receipts of a tax cheat than an Al Qaida bankroller. Before the PATRIOT Act, agents could use wiretaps to investigate a person committing mail fraud but not to investigate a foreign terrorist. The PATRIOT Act corrected all these pointless double standards, and America is safer as a result.

One tool that has been especially important to law enforcement is called a roving wiretap. Roving wiretaps allow investigators to follow suspects who frequently change their means of communications. These wiretaps must be approved by a judge, and they have been used for years to catch drug dealers and other criminals. Yet before the PATRIOT Act, agents investigating terrorists had to get a separate authorization for each phone they wanted to tap. That means terrorists could elude law enforcement by simply purchasing a new cell phone. The PATRIOT Act fixed the problem by allowing terrorism investigators to use the same wiretaps that were already being used against drug kingpins and mob bosses. The theory here is straightforward: If we have good tools to fight street crime and fraud, law enforcement should have the same tools to fight terrorism.

Third, we need to renew the critical provisions of the PATRIOT Act that updated the law to meet high-tech threats like computer espionage and cyberterrorism. Before the PATRIOT Act, Internet providers who

notified Federal authorities about threatening e-mails ran the risk of getting sued. The PATRIOT Act modernized the law to protect Internet companies who voluntarily disclose information to save lives.

It's commonsense reform, and it's delivered results. In April 2004, a man sent an e-mail to an Islamic center in El Paso and threatened to burn the mosque to the ground in 3 days. Before the PATRIOT Act, the FBI could have spent a week or more waiting for the information they needed. Thanks to the PATRIOT Act, an Internet provider was able to provide the information quickly and without fear of a lawsuit, and the FBI arrested the man before he could fulfill his threat.

Terrorists are using every advantage they can to inflict harm. Terrorists are using every advantage of 21st century technology, and Congress needs to ensure that our law enforcement can use that same advantage as well.

Finally, we need to renew the critical provisions of the PATRIOT Act that protect our civil liberties. The PATRIOT Act was written with clear safeguards to ensure the law is applied fairly. The judicial branch has a strong oversight role. Law enforcement officers need a Federal judge's permission to wiretap a foreign terrorist's phone, a Federal judge's permission to track his calls, or a Federal judge's permission to search his property. Officers must meet strict standards to use any of these tools, and these standards are fully consistent with the Constitution of the United States.

Congress also oversees the application of the PATRIOT Act. Congress has recently created a Federal board to ensure that the PATRIOT Act and other laws respect privacy and civil liberties, and I'll soon name five talented Americans to serve on that board. Attorney General Gonzales delivers regular reports on the PATRIOT Act to the House and the Senate. And the Department of Justice has answered hundreds of

questions from Members of Congress. One Senator, Dianne Feinstein of California, has worked with civil rights groups to monitor my administration's use of the PATRIOT Act. Here's what she said, "We've scrubbed the area, and I have no reported abuses." Remember that the next time you hear someone make an unfair criticism of this important, good law. The PATRIOT Act has not diminished American liberties; the PATRIOT Act has helped to defend American liberties.

Every day the men and women of law enforcement use the PATRIOT Act to keep America safe. It's the nature of your job that many of your most important achievements must remain secret. Americans will always be grateful for the risks you take and for the determination you bring to this high calling—you have done your job. Now those of us in Washington have to do our job. The House and Senate are moving forward with the process to renew the PATRIOT Act. My message to Congress is clear: The terrorist threats against us will not expire at the end of the year, and neither should the protections of the PATRIOT Act.

I want to thank you for letting me come and talk about this important piece of legislation. I want to thank you for being on the frontlines of securing this country. May God bless you and your families, and may God continue to bless our Nation. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:22 a.m. at the Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Bob Taft of Ohio; Kenneth L. Morckel, director, Ohio Department of Public Safety; Col. Paul D. McClellan, superintendent, Ohio State Highway Patrol; Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois and Department of Justice CIA leak investigation Special Prosecutor; and Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Judges for the United States Court of Appeals

June 9, 2005

I am pleased that the Senate voted today to confirm three distinguished and highly qualified judges to the United States Court of Appeals: Judge Bill Pryor, Judge Richard Griffin, and Judge David McKeague.

More than a year ago, I recess appointed Judge Pryor to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit to fill a vacancy that had been designated a judicial emergency by the Judicial Conference of the United States. Judge Pryor's recent service on the Eleventh Circuit has built on an impressive career of public service in which he has applied the law fairly and impartially to all people. I commend the Senate for fulfilling its constitutional responsibility to vote on Judge Pryor and for

confirming him so that he will continue his service on this court.

Both Judge Griffin and Judge McKeague have served on the Michigan courts for more than a decade, during which time each has demonstrated a strong commitment to the rule of law. Both are well qualified to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit and will fill vacancies that have been designated judicial emergencies by the Judicial Conference of the United States.

These three nominees have waited a combined total of over 8 years for their votes. I applaud the Senate for today giving these fine nominees the up-or-down votes they deserve.

Videotape Remarks to the People of Africa

June 8, 2005

For the past several years, the United States has worked with African leaders on bold initiatives to encourage reform within the continent. Our goal is to improve the lives of the African people, and our partnership is yielding results. The economies of many African nations are growing. And in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, economic growth is now at its highest level in 8 years.

The growth of your economies has been helped by strong trade ties between our continents. Last year, I signed the African Growth and Opportunity Acceleration Act, which will continue to reduce barriers to trade, increase exports, create jobs, and expand opportunity for Africans and Americans alike. This agreement is giving American businesses greater confidence to invest in Africa. It also encourages African nations to reform their economies. And the law

is producing results: Last year, U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa increased 25 percent, and America's imports from AGOA countries rose 88 percent.

This success reflects the growing consensus in both Africa and the United States that open trade and international investment are the surest and fastest ways for Africa to make progress. AGOA nations are strengthening the rule of law. They are lowering trade barriers. They are combating corruption and protecting workers and eliminating child labor. They are setting an important example for the entire continent, demonstrating that governments that respect individual rights and encourage the development of their markets are more likely to grow economically and achieve political stability.

As we increase trade, we are also reforming the way we deliver aid. For too many years, our assistance to Africa was sent without regard to results. Under my Administration, U.S. development aid to African nations has increased, but we are not just giving more aid; we are being wiser about how it is spent.

The idea is based on common sense: Aid works best in countries that are proving their commitment to govern justly, respect the rule of law, invest in their citizens, and open up their economies. When nations do these things and expand freedom and opportunities to all their citizens, entire societies can be lifted out of poverty and despair. In 2002, we launched the Millennium Challenge Account to provide aid to poorer nations based on these principles. In April, Madagascar became the first country to

sign a Compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and I am confident that other African nations will follow.

At a time when freedom is on the march around the world, it is vital that the continent of Africa be a place of democracy and prosperity and hope, where people grow up healthy and have the opportunity to realize their dreams. Africa is a continent of promise, and the United States wants to help the people of Africa realize the brighter future they deserve.

NOTE: The President's remarks were taped at 11:05 a.m. in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on Voice of America's radio and television stations beginning June 8. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 10.

Remarks on the PATRIOT Act in McLean, Virginia *June 10, 2005*

Thanks for the warm welcome. It is really exciting to come and spend time in this fine facility and to meet the men and women who work at the National Counterterrorism Center. I just met with some who spend long hours preparing threat assessments, and it was my honor to tell them how much I appreciate their hard work and appreciate the daily briefing I get every single morning.

I want to thank you all for taking on such demanding assignments and important assignments. My message to the folks here is, thanks for being on the frontline and protecting America during the war on terror. You know, it's a different kind of war. It's a war that seems like there's maybe no action taking place, that maybe the enemy is not active. You know, I was concerned after September the 11th that the tendency would be to forget the nature of the people with whom you deal on a daily

basis. But I understand that there is an enemy that still lurks, and you know it as well.

And so on behalf of a grateful nation, I want to thank you for working hard to protect America. I want to thank you for your dedication. I want to thank you for your service and sacrifice.

The NCTC plays a key part in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. It's a crucial part of making sure that we can say to the American people, we're collecting intelligence and information, and we're sharing intelligence and information across jurisdictional lines to better protect the people and do our most solemn duty, which is to protect America.

And I want to thank Ambassador and Director John Negroponte's leadership on this issue. I want to thank him for his willingness to step forward to serve. And I