

Remarks on Signing the Energy Policy Act of 2005 in Albuquerque, New Mexico

August 8, 2005

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks very much for the warm welcome. I appreciate you treating a neighbor from Texas so kindly. *[Laughter]* I'm really proud to be here with the men and women of the Sandia National Laboratory. We just had a fascinating tour of the facility. It was a little quick, but I learned a lot, and I want to thank Tom Hunter for his hospitality and his enthusiasm for the projects that go on here and his praise for the people who work here.

I thank you for coming, and it's such an honor to be here. I know full well that the work you do here keeps our military strong, it keeps our Nation competitive, and our country is really grateful for your dedication and for the fact that you lend your expertise into helping Americans.

It is such an honor to be in New Mexico, the home State of Pete Domenici as well as Jeff Bingaman, to sign this bill. This bill will strengthen our economy, and it will improve our environment, and it's going to make this country more secure. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is going to help every American who drives to work, every family that pays a power bill, and every small-business owner hoping to expand.

The bill is the result of years of effort. It is the result of good folks coming together, people who have made a commitment to deliver results for the American people. This bill launches an energy strategy for the 21st century, and I've really been looking forward to signing it.

I appreciate Pete Domenici's leadership on this bill. You know, he's the kind of fellow, when he makes up his mind to do something, it's hard to stop him. And as Pete said he's worked on a lot of energy bills in the past. Some of them were signed by Presidents, and some of them never

made it to the desk. But he's been dogged in his determination to get a bill done, and he found a really fine partner in Joe Barton.

Joe Barton did an outstanding job as the chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and he did a really good job as the conference chairman. This bill is here in New Mexico because of the fine work of Joe Barton and Pete Domenici. And as Pete mentioned, Senator Jeff Bingaman gets a lot of credit as well. He knows the subject matter in the bill, and he's a proven leader on issues such as conservation and efficiency and renewable fuels and research and development. And Jeff, I, like Pete, I want to congratulate you for a job well done, and thank you for being here—*[applause]*.

A member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee came on over, Ralph Hall, a great Congressman from the State of Texas. Ralph is a good friend. I think he came just to grab a cup of coffee on Air Force One, but—*[laughter]*—I'm proud to have him alongside. Thanks for coming, Ralph, and thanks for your vote.

I appreciate Congressman Steve Pearce from eastern New Mexico joining us. He and his wife, Cynthia, are with us. Thanks for coming, Steve. Appreciate your support on this bill. Good work. Thank you.

I put a good fellow to run the Energy Department in Sam Bodman. He's smart. He's capable. He's got a lot of experience. He knows what he's doing. He's going to be the right person to help implement this bill. And I want to thank Sam and his wife, Diane, for being here. Thank you all for coming.

I want to remind you about the fact that this economy of ours has been through a lot. And that's why it was important to get this energy bill done, to help us continue

to grow. We've been through a stock market decline. We went through a recession. We went through corporate scandals. We had an attack on our homeland, and we had the demands on an ongoing war on terror. And to grow this economy, we worked together to put together an economic growth policy, an economic growth package, the cornerstone of which was to cut the taxes on the American people. And that tax relief plan is working. This economy is strong, and it's growing stronger. And what this energy bill is going to do, it's just going to help keep momentum in the right direction so people can realize their dreams.

Last week we had some good news that America added just over 200,000 jobs—new jobs—in the month of July. Since May of 2003, we've added nearly 4 million new jobs. More Americans are working today than ever before in our Nation's history. Workers are taking more of what they earn—taking home more of what they earn. Inflation is low. Mortgage rates are low. Homeownership in America is at an alltime high. In other words, this economy is moving. And what this energy bill does is it recognizes that we need more affordable and reliable sources of energy in order to make sure the economy continues to grow.

It's an economic bill, but as Pete mentioned, it's also a national security bill. For more than a decade, America has gone without a national energy policy. It's hard to believe, isn't it? We haven't had a strategy in place. We've had some ideas, but we have not had a national energy policy. And as a result, our consumers are paying more for the price of their gasoline. Electricity bills are going up. We had a massive blackout two summers ago that cost this country billions of dollars and disrupted millions of lives. And because we didn't have a national energy strategy over time, with each passing year, we are more dependent on foreign sources of oil.

Now, solving these problems required a balanced approach. And that's the spirit

that Pete and Jeff and Joe took into the—on to the floors of their respective bodies. They recognized that we need a comprehensive approach to deal with the situation we're in. In other words, we need to conserve more energy. We need to produce more energy. We need to diversify our energy supply, and we need to modernize our energy delivery. And so they worked hard and listened to a lot of good ideas, and they've taken really important steps.

Now, one of the things that I appreciate about the people on the stage here is that they were able to set aside kind of the partisan bickering that oftentimes—too many times—deadlocks Washington, DC. In other words, they said, "Let's get something done for the good of the country." And that's an important spirit. That's what the American people expect. I know the people in New Mexico expect people to go up to Washington, DC, and work together for the common good. And that's exactly what this bill has done.

These Members, when they say they're going to strengthen our economy and protect our environment and help our national security, are telling it like it is. And let me tell you why. First, the bill makes an unprecedented commitment to energy conservation and efficiency—an unprecedented commitment. The bill sets higher efficiency standards for Federal buildings and for household products. It directs the Department of Transportation to study the potential for sensible improvements in fuel-efficiency standards for cars and trucks and SUVs. It authorizes new funding for research into cutting-edge technologies that will help us do more with less energy.

The bill recognizes that America is the world's leader in technology and that we've got to use technology to be the world's leader in energy conservation. The bill includes incentives for consumers to be better conservers of energy. If you own a home, you can receive new tax credits to install energy-efficient windows and appliances. If you're in the market for a car,

this bill will help you save up to \$3,500 on a fuel-efficient hybrid or clean-diesel vehicle. And the way the tax credit works is that the more efficient the vehicle is, the more money you will save. Energy conservation is more than a private virtue; it's a public virtue. And with this bill I sign today, America is taking the side of consumers who make the choice to conserve.

Second, this bill will allow America to make cleaner and more productive use of our domestic energy resources, including coal and nuclear power and oil and natural gas. By using these reliable sources to supply more of our own energy, we'll reduce our reliance on energy from foreign countries, and that will help this economy grow so people can work.

Coal is America's most abundant energy resource. It accounts for more than one-half of our electricity production. The challenge is to develop ways to take advantage of our coal resources while keeping our air clean.

When I ran for President in 2000, I promised to invest—or asked the Congress to invest \$2 billion over 10 years to promote clean coal technology. So far, working with the United States Congress, we've provided more than \$1.3 billion for research in the innovative ways to improve today's coal plants and to help us build even cleaner coal plants in the future. And the bill I sign today authorizes new funding for clean coal technology so we can move closer to our goal of building the world's first zero emission coal-fired powerplant.

Nuclear power is another of America's most important sources of electricity. Of all our Nation's energy sources, only nuclear powerplants can generate massive amounts of electricity without emitting an ounce of air pollution or greenhouse gases. And thanks to the advances in science and technology, nuclear plants are far safer than ever before. Yet America has not ordered a nuclear plant since the 1970s. To coordinate the ordering of new plants, the bill I sign today continues the Nuclear Power

2010 Partnership between Government and industry. It also offers a new form of Federal risk insurance for the first six builders of new nuclear powerplants. With the practical steps in this bill, America is moving closer to a vital national goal. We will start building nuclear powerplants again by the end of this decade.

Meeting the needs of our growing economy also means expanding our domestic production of oil and natural gas, which are vital fuels for transportation and electricity and manufacturing. The energy bill makes practical reforms to the oil and gas permitting process to encourage new exploration in environmentally sensitive ways.

The bill authorizes research into the prospects of unlocking vast amounts of now—energy now trapped in shale and tar sands. It provides incentives for oil refineries to expand their capacity, and that's consumer-friendly. The more supply, the more reliable your gasoline will be and the more—less pressure on price.

The bill includes tax incentives to encourage new construction of natural gas pipelines. It clarifies Federal authority to site new receiving terminals for liquified natural gas, so that consumers across this Nation can benefit from more affordable, clean-burning natural gas.

Thirdly, the bill I sign today will help diversify our energy supply by promoting alternative and renewable energy sources. The bill extends tax credits for wind, biomass, landfill gas, and other renewable electricity sources. The bill offers new incentives to promote clean, renewable geothermal energy. It creates a new tax credit for residential solar power systems. And by developing these innovative technologies, we can keep the lights running while protecting the environment and using energy produced right here at home. When you hear us talking about less dependence on foreign sources of energy, one of the ways to become less dependent is to enhance the use of renewable sources of energy.

The bill also will lead to a greater diversity of fuels for cars and trucks. The bill includes tax incentives for producers of ethanol and biodiesel. The bill includes a flexible, cost-effective renewable fuel standard that will double the amount of ethanol and biodiesel in our fuel supply over the next 7 years. Using ethanol and biodiesel will leave our air cleaner. And every time we use a home-grown fuel, particularly these, we're going to be helping our farmers and, at the same time, be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I used to like to kid, but I really wasn't kidding when I said, "Some day a President is going to pick up the crop report"—[laughter]—"and they're going to say, we're growing a lot of corn, and—or soybeans—and the first thing that's going to pop in the President's mind is, we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy." It makes sense to promote ethanol and biodiesel.

The bill I sign today also includes strong support for hydrogen fuel technology. When hydrogen is used in a fuel cell, it can power consumer products from computers to cell phones to cars that emit pure water instead of exhaust fumes. I laid out a hydrogen fuel initiative, and I want to thank the Members of Congress for adding to the momentum of this initiative through this energy bill. The goal of the research and development for hydrogen-powered automobiles is to make it possible for today's children to take their driver's test in a pollution-free car.

Fourth, the energy bill will help ensure that consumers receive electricity over dependable modern infrastructure. The bill removes outdated obstacles to investment in electricity transmission lines in generating facilities. The bill corrects the provision of the law that made electric reliability standards optional instead of mandatory. Most of you probably consider it mandatory that the lights come on when you flip a switch. [Laughter] Now the utility companies will have to consider it mandatory as well. [Laughter]

To keep local disputes from causing national problems, the bill gives Federal officials the authority to select sites for new powerlines. We have a modern interstate grid for our phone line and our highways. With this bill, America can start building a modern 21st century electricity grid as well.

The bill I sign today is a critical first step. It's a first step toward a more affordable and reliable energy future for the American citizens. This bill is not going to solve our energy challenges overnight. Most of the serious problems, such as high gasoline costs or the rising dependence on foreign oil, have developed over decades. It's going to take years of focused effort to alleviate those problems. But in about 2 minutes, we're going to have a strategy that will help us do that.

And as we work to solve our energy dependence—dependency, we've got to remember that the market for energy is global, and America is not the only large consumer of hydrocarbons. As the economies of nations like India and China grow rapidly, their demand for energy is growing rapidly as well. It's in our interest to help these expanding energy users become more efficient, less dependent on hydrocarbons. You see, by helping them achieve these goals, it will take pressure off the global supply, and it will help take pressure off price for American consumers.

And so, last month, I joined with the leaders of India and China and Australia and Japan and South Korea to create a new Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development. This is an innovative program which is authorized by this energy bill. And through it, our goal is to spread the use of clean, efficient energy technologies throughout the Pacific Rim.

After years of debate and division, Congress passed a good bill. It's my honor to have come to the great State of New Mexico to sign it. I'm confident that one day Americans will look back on this bill as a vital step toward a more secure and more

prosperous nation that is less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Schiff Auditorium at the Sandia National

Laboratory. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas O. Hunter, president, Sandia Corp., and director, Sandia National Laboratories. H.R. 6, approved August 8, was assigned Public Law No. 109–58.

Statement on Signing the Energy Policy Act of 2005 *August 8, 2005*

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 6, the “Energy Policy Act of 2005.” This legislation promotes dependable, affordable, and environmentally sound production and distribution of energy for America’s future.

The executive branch shall construe section 365(e)(2) of the Act, which purports to require disclosure of an internal executive branch recommendation, in a manner consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and preserve the confidentiality of its deliberations.

The executive branch shall construe the statement in section 110(d) of the Act, that the Congress reserves the right to revert to previous schedules for daylight savings time, as referring to reversion by enactment of a law in accordance with the bicameral passage and presentment requirements specified in the Constitution.

The executive branch shall construe the amendments to section 211 of the Energy Reorganization Act made by section 629 of the Act, as they relate to dissemination of official information by employees of the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, in a manner consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that purport to direct the conduct of communications, negotiations, and other relations with foreign governments and international organizations,

including sections 643(c)(2), 795(d), 814, 972, and 985 of the Act, and sections 732, 734(a)(2), 736, and 737 of the Global Environmental Protection Assistance Act as contained in section 1611 of the Act, in a manner consistent with the Constitution’s commitment to the President of authority to conduct the Nation’s foreign relations.

Provisions of the Act, including sections 342(j), 351(h)(3), 704(c), 706(e)(5), 957(a)(2)(C), 1221(b), 1234(c), 1272(2), 1509(b)(2), 1541(c)(6), 1831(c), 1835, and 1836(b)(2), section 543(a)(3) of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act contained in section 102(b), and section 170H(f)(3)(B) of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 contained in section 651(d)(1), purport to require executive branch officials to submit legislative recommendations to the Congress. The executive branch shall construe such provisions in a manner consistent with the Constitution’s commitment to the President of the authority to submit for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient and to supervise the unitary executive branch.

The executive branch shall construe the reference in section 631(b) of the Act, to awaiting action by the Congress, as providing for the Congress a reasonable period of time to consider the information furnished under section 631, as it is plain from the text and structure of section 631 that the reference is not intended to function as a prohibition.