

## Remarks on the National Economy May 5, 2006

*The President.* Listen, I thank you for your hospitality. I'm here to talk about our economy. Today we've got some good news: 138,000 additional Americans found jobs over the last month, which is good. The national unemployment rate is 4.7 percent. This economy is strong.

And one of the hopeful things about our economy is, small businesses are doing well. Small businesses provide most of the job growth in our country. The small-business sector is doing well; so is the American economy.

One thing we've got to make sure is that we keep the people's taxes low to keep this economy growing. Raising taxes will hurt small businesses; raising taxes will hurt consumers; raising taxes will particularly affect working people, now that the price of gasoline has gone up. So one of the things Congress has got to do is be mindful that the economic growth we're seeing, the strong economic growth, is dependent upon good tax policy.

At the same time, Congress should be wise about how they spend the people's money. They've got to make sure the supplemental comes to me at a rate that I'll accept—\$92.2 billion—plus money for the pandemic flu.

We've got a plan to make sure this economy keeps growing, but today's news is good news for the American people.

And I want to thank you—let me thank you for coming by here to say hito you.

*John Weintraub.* All right, I thank you.

*The President.* It's a good place to shop, by the way. I just spent some of my hard-earned money on Barney. I bought him a couple of toys to chew on—but don't let him know until I get over there; it's a surprise. [*Laughter*] Thanks for letting me come by.

*Mr. Weintraub.* Okay. Thank you, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. Participating in the visit was John Weintraub, coowner, Frager's Hardware.

## Remarks Announcing the Resignation of Porter J. Goss as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency May 5, 2006

*The President.* This morning Director Porter Goss offered his resignation as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I've accepted it.

During the course of his tenure, I've established a very close personal relationship with Porter, which is very important for the Director of the CIA. He's spent a lot of time here in the Oval Office. He's told me—he's given me his candid advice. I appreciate his integrity. I appreciate the

honor in which—that he brought to the job.

Porter's tenure at the CIA was one of transition. He's helped this Agency become integrated into the intelligence community, and that was a tough job. And he's led ably. He's got a 5-year plan to increase the number of analysts and operatives, which is going to help make this country a safer place and help us win the war on terror. He's instilled a sense of professionalism. He honors the proud history of

the CIA, an organization that is known for its secrecy in accountability. I am confident that his successor will continue the reforms that he's put in place, and as a result, this country will be more secure.

We've got to win the war on terror, and the Central Intelligence Agency is a vital part of that war. And so I want to thank you for your service.

[At this point, Director Goss made brief remarks.]

*The President.* God bless. Thank you. I appreciate you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:44 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Director Goss.

## The President's Radio Address May 6, 2006

Good morning. Today I want to talk with you about the new Medicare prescription drug coverage that went into effect at the start of this year. Everyone on Medicare is eligible for this new coverage, but the enrollment deadline of May 15th is just over a week away. For those of you with Medicare who have not yet signed up, it is important for you to review your options and choose a plan. By enrolling before the deadline, you can ensure the lowest possible premiums and start saving on your prescription drug bills.

Many of you have already made the wise decision to enroll. Since the new coverage went into effect, more than 30 million Americans now have prescription drug coverage through the Medicare program, and more are enrolling each week. Recent surveys show that the vast majority of seniors are satisfied with the program and for good reason.

Competition in the prescription drug market has been stronger than expected, and costs for seniors are lower than expected. The average premium that seniors pay is a third less than had been expected—just \$25 per month instead of \$37 per month. The typical person with Medicare who previously had no drug coverage will now spend about half of what he or

she used to spend on prescription drugs, saving an average of \$1,100 per year.

Low-income seniors receive extra help. For them Medicare will now cover, on average, more than 95 percent of the costs of their prescription drugs. Thanks to this new coverage, America's seniors are now getting the modern medicine they need at prices they can afford.

Prescription drug coverage under Medicare is also giving our seniors more and better choices for their health care. Instead of having to accept a one-size-fits-all plan, seniors are now choosing from a variety of drug plans, and they're finding the one that best fits their needs. Most seniors are able to choose their plans that have low premiums, low or no deductibles, fixed copayments for most drugs, and affordable coverage to fill in coverage gaps.

Medicare prescription drug coverage is a great deal for seniors. So today I am encouraging those of you who still have not enrolled to take a look at your options and sign up before the May 15th deadline, in order to ensure the lowest premiums. Even if you do not have significant drug expenses now, you should consider joining a Medicare drug plan to protect yourself against high prescription drug bills down the road.