

Remarks Following a Meeting With Chief Executive Officers of United States Automobile Manufacturers
November 14, 2006

The Vice President and members of my Cabinet—Secretary of Treasury, Secretary of Transportation—members of my staff, and I have just had a constructive and meaningful dialog with CEOs of the U.S. automobile manufacturers.

First, these leaders have—are making difficult decisions, tough choices to make sure that their companies are competitive in a global economy. And I'm confident that they're making the right decisions, and that's good news for the American people because the automobile manufacturers play such a significant part of our economy and a vital part of our employment base.

We've had a fascinating discussion about a lot of major issues that we share in common. One, of course, is rising health care costs. And I assured these leaders that the Government is addressing rising health care costs through a variety of initiatives that I think, over time, are going to make a significant difference in not only their cost but the cost to the U.S. taxpayer as well.

We talked about our mutual desire to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Obviously, as these automobile manufacturers begin to incorporate new technologies that will enable us to power our cars in different ways, it will make it easier for me to be able to tell the American people, we're using less foreign oil. And that's in our

economic interests as well as in our national security interests.

And finally, they've—these gentlemen are well aware that I'm on my way overseas this evening. And one of the issues I'll be talking about with our partners in APEC is free trade, but fair trade. And my message to our trading partners is, just treat us the way we treat you. Our markets are open for your products, and we expect your markets to be open for ours, including our automobiles.

And so we've found a lot in common. We'll have a continuing dialog. It's in our interest that in Government we find out ways that we'll be able to work to make sure that this industry is as vibrant and solid as possible. And so this is the beginning of a series of discussions we'll have, not only with me but also with people in our Government. I really do want to thank you all for coming. I appreciate you coming.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Participating in the event were Alan Mulally, president and chief executive officer, Ford Motor Co.; Thomas W. LaSorda, chief executive officer and president, Chrysler Group; and G. Richard Wagoner, Jr., chairman and chief executive officer, General Motors Corp.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the New Leaders of the Republican National Committee
November 14, 2006

I have just been meeting with the new team that's going to run the Republican

National Committee. I am so proud my friend Mel Martinez, Senator from Florida,