

Remarks at a Dinner for the National Governors Association Conference February 25, 2007

Laura and I are honored to have you here. Welcome. This is really one of the dinners that we look forward to the most. And we welcome the Governors and their spouses. We welcome Governors without their spouses. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate members of my Cabinet for joining us. I also thank very much Governor Napolitano, who is the chairman of the Governors Association—National Governors Association, and Tim Pawlenty, the vice chairman of the Governors Association, for joining us.

I thank the former Governors who are in my Cabinet who have joined us: Secretaries Kempthorne, Johanns, and Leavitt. There's life after being a Governor. [*Laughter*]

I'm looking forward to our meetings tomorrow. It's a really good chance to talk about important issues for the country. I'm—I believe that Governors add a lot to the worth of our Nation. And I believe

if we work together, we can do a lot of good things. I'm looking forward to talking about the issue of homeland security. We need to protect our country. I'm looking forward to talking about education and health care and good, sound immigration policy. I'm looking forward to reminding me and you that when we work together, we can do big things, that we have an obligation to serve all the people.

And so tonight is a night to—a festive night. Our friend, Ronan Tynan, is going to entertain you. I'm looking forward to it. I hope you are as well.

And before I call up Janet, I'd like to offer a toast to the Nation's Governors.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Janet A. Napolitano of Arizona and Gov. Timothy J. Pawlenty of Minnesota.

Remarks During a Meeting With the National Governors Association Conference February 26, 2007

Thank you all. Please be seated. I'm looking for some of the crumbs that got dropped last night here. [*Laughter*] Glad you're here; thanks for coming. I hope you enjoyed the dinner as much as we did last night. It was a—[*applause*]. I thought it was a good, relaxing evening. And I thank you all for joining us today.

I want to thank the members of my Cabinet for talking to the Governors about how important it is for us to work together. I do want to spend some—a little time talking about some issues here, and then I'll answer questions from you.

First, obviously—well, I don't know if it's obvious to you or not, but my biggest concern is protecting this country. You got to know something; that a lot of my thinking was defined on September the 11th. I wake up every day thinking about another attack. And that's my job. It's what the people expect. I think about how to have the best intelligence possible to find out where the enemy is and what they're thinking so we can react.

I think about making sure that Homeland Security and our States work closely together. I wish that wasn't the way it was,