

Statement on the “Report to the President on Issues Raised by the Virginia Tech Tragedy”

June 13, 2007

Shortly after the tragic shootings at Virginia Tech, I directed Secretary Michael Leavitt, Secretary Margaret Spellings, and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales to examine the broad and complex issues raised by this tragedy. I asked them to determine how the Federal Government could best help to support State and local efforts to ensure that our communities, including college campuses, are safe. They responded quickly, traveling to a dozen States to hear from Governors, law enforcement officials, mental health professionals, educators, and other State and local officials.

They learned a great deal and today presented me with their key findings. I look forward to reviewing their recommendations in more detail, but a few points are

immediately clear: Information sharing among the health care, law enforcement, and education communities must improve; those groups must better understand the Federal laws related to information sharing; and accurate, complete information sharing between States and the Federal Government is essential in helping to keep guns out of the wrong hands and to punish those who break the law.

I thank Secretaries Leavitt and Spellings and Attorney General Gonzales for their fine work on this important report.

With the findings in this report in mind, I am closely following legislative efforts to strengthen the instant background check system. I look forward to working with Congress on this effort.

Remarks at the President’s Dinner

June 13, 2007

Thank you all. It’s good to be with you. Thank you for your warm welcome; appreciate it. Thank you. Please be seated. I remember back in 1997, when Corker hosted a deal for me. I was Governor, and he looked at me, and he said, “I don’t think you’ll ever be President.” Of course, I looked at him and said, “I don’t think you’ll ever be Senator.” [*Laughter*] But I appreciate you, Bob. Thank you for your strong friendship, and thanks for running and winning in the great State of Tennessee.

I’m proud to be with you. We have a goal, and that is to retake the House, retake the Senate, and keep the White House in 2008. And I appreciate you joining us tonight to see that that goal becomes reality.

I’m sorry Laura is not here. She is a patient woman. She’s also a fabulous First Lady. I appreciate the members of my Cabinet who’ve joined us tonight.

I want to thank my friend, Senator Mitch McConnell. The country will be better off with Mitch McConnell as leader of the United States Senate. And I thank John Boehner, the House Republican leader. And the country would be better off if he’s the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

I thank John Ensign, Senator Ensign from Nevada, Tom Cole from Oklahoma. These are the chairmen of the NRSC and NRCC. Their job is to field the candidates that are going to enable us to achieve our goal. Your job has been to make sure they