

[At this point, the First Lady made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In

his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Health and Human Services Michael O. Leavitt. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Statement on Senate Passage of Minimum Wage and Tax Relief Legislation February 1, 2007

Today the Senate has passed significant legislation that will benefit America's workers and small businesses. By working in a bipartisan way to match a minimum wage increase with tax relief for small businesses, the Senate has taken a step toward helping maintain a strong and dynamic labor mar-

ket and promoting continued economic growth. I strongly encourage the House to support this combined minimum wage increase and small-business tax relief.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 2.

Remarks Honoring the 2006 Stanley Cup Champion Carolina Hurricanes February 2, 2007

The President. Thank you all for coming. Have a seat. It's a pretty big deal for a guy that doesn't know how to ice skate—[laughter]—to welcome the Carolina Hurricanes to the White House. We appreciate you coming. You know, I'm not sure what is prettier, the Stanley Cup or Mike Commodore's hair. [Laughter] A little disappointed you got a haircut—[laughter]—but, welcome.

Mike Commodore. Thank you.

The President. The other thing, I was a little surprised to see that he's not wearing his robe. [Laughter]

At the start of this season, this team was ranked 28th out of 30 teams. I like to be around people that keep expectations low. [Laughter] Instead of listening to the prognosticators, this team had a 112-point season. They had 52 wins. They win the Stanley Cup. They're here at the White House. Congratulations to you.

I congratulate the owners, Peter Karmanos and his son, Jason. I'm sorry that Peter is not here. I understand he had an operation, and we send very best wishes. I thank Jim Rutherford, the president and general manager of the team. The guy has got a lot of—he's a pretty aggressive guy. I just met him, and he said: "I saw Barney outside. You're feeding him too much." [Laughter] Probably right. [Laughter]

I welcome the captain of this team, Rod Brind'Amour, and the players. I welcome their families. If your families are here, I want to thank you very much for enduring a long season. It's pretty hard to be married to a hockey player that's on the road a lot. But I know that you bring inspiration to the players. I appreciate the coach. Peter, you've done a heck of a good job. It's not easy to be a coach of a successful team, and I appreciate the spirit that you brought to this club. Mr. Commissioner,

thank you for coming. I'm proud that you're here. I really thank you for taking time—you and Bill taking time out of your day to be here—and Bernadette Mansur, who is with us as well.

I want to thank all the people associated with this club. I particularly want to pay tribute to the equipment managers and the locker room people. Players get all the credit and all the glory, but they would tell you firsthand, they wouldn't be able to skate every day if somebody wasn't there making sure that the uniforms were ready and doing all the hard work. The games end late; these folks are toiling long into the night preparing for the next day's practice. And so we welcome not only the players and the management and the coaches and the families, but all those who make a successful franchise run. We're really glad you're here at the White House.

You got a lot of fans here in Washington, DC. I know you got a lot of fans in Carolina, but you've got two United States Senators who've come to greet you: Senator Dole and Senator Burr. Thank you for coming. And Congressman Howard Coble, what's that hat say? That's a championship hat?

Representative Howard Coble. Championship hat.

The President. Fine looking lid, isn't it? [Laughter] I thought you might be wearing that to cover up your bald head. [Laughter] Yes. [Laughter] Now you know what I'm talking about. [Laughter]

I appreciate very much the rest of the National Hockey League personnel who've joined us. I want to welcome the young hockey teams that are here, the local youth teams—

Participant. Virginia State teams—

The President. —Virginia State teams. Good. Well, we're glad you're here. Thanks for coming to see what champs look like. [Laughter] And so the idea is to skate hard, work hard, and make the right choices, and someday, you'll be standing up here at the

White House. I'm probably not going to be here. [Laughter]

A lot of Americans don't know this, but the Stanley Cup is the oldest trophy in professional sports. It's also one of the toughest trophies to win. Listen to this: It takes 4 rounds in the playoffs, 16 wins, before an NHL player can skate with the Stanley Cup.

It's unique in another way. It is the only professional sports trophy that every player on the championship team gets to take home for a day, and this cup has had some amazing experiences. [Laughter]

It's been to the top of Mount Elbert in Colorado. It has taken a roller coaster ride at Universal Studios. [Laughter] It's been used as baptismal font, a popcorn holder—[laughter]—a feed trough for a winner of the Kentucky Derby. Players have tested its buoyancy by throwing it into pools and lakes—it does not float. [Laughter] The cup—this may be hard for you to believe—but it has been to a lot of bars. [Laughter] In case you're wondering, it holds 14 cans of beer. [Laughter]

Hurricane players took the cup on many adventures. It went to Russia, Ukraine, Sweden, the Czech Republic, of course Canada and the United States.

Goalie Cam Ward took the cup home to Canada, and he ate some corn pops out of it. [Laughter] And then he took it to visit his grandmother and the other residents at the seniors home where she lives. He used the cup to bring some joy in people's lives.

Other players did the same thing. Several players took the cup to children's hospitals in their hometowns. A captain of the team brought the cup to a charity golf tournament, where he helped raise \$112,000 for the fight against cystic fibrosis. Defenseman Glen Wesley took the cup to the Wounded Warriors Barracks at Camp Lejeune. Here's what he says: "What better way to thank the troops who fight for our country and defend our freedoms." And I appreciate you doing that, Glen.

A lot of people inspired the Carolina Hurricanes on their way to victory, but none more than a young girl named Julia Rowe. Julia lives just down the street from the coach; they're buddies. As the playoffs approached, she learned that she had suffered a relapse of childhood leukemia and would have to undergo intensive chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant. Inspired by Julia's fight, these tough guys launched a campaign to raise money and awareness for the fight against leukemia.

Julia followed every moment of the Stanley Cup finals from her bed in Duke University. She got to join the team on the victory parade. The coach reports that today she's back home and doing well. She's incredibly proud of her friends who won the Stanley Cup.

What I'm telling you is, this group of men, they're a class act. They're obviously great athletes—all you got to do is look at their noses to know that they're willing to—[laughter]. Appreciate you putting your false teeth in. [Laughter] But more important to me is the fact that they got good

hearts, and they bring class to their profession. They set an example for young folks who watch them perform on the ice.

One of the interesting things about this team is, they have a—they've got a sign in their locker room that says: It's not about me; it's about the guy in front of me. And one reason they're here is because they understand that when you serve something greater than yourself—the team or your community—you become a true champ.

And so on behalf of the White House people, we welcome you. Congratulations to true champs. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:13 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mike Commodore, defenseman, Jason Karmanos, vice president and assistant general manager, and Peter Laviolette, head coach, Carolina Hurricanes; and Gary B. Bettman, commissioner, Bill Daly, deputy commissioner, and Bernadette Mansur, senior vice president of communications, National Hockey League.

The President's Radio Address *February 3, 2007*

Good morning. This week was filled with more good news about America's economy. We learned that our economy grew at an annual rate of 3.5 percent in the fourth quarter of last year. Overall, our economy grew 3.4 percent in 2006, up from 3.1 percent in 2005. The Dow Jones reached an alltime high this week for the 27th time in the past 4 months. And we learned that America created 111,000 new jobs in January, which means we have added over 7.4 million jobs in the past 3½ years.

This good news is a result of the hard work of the American people and progrowth economic policies like tax relief. By cutting taxes, we put more money into

the hands of American families and small businesses. You have used this money to produce strong and lasting economic growth. And now Congress needs to make this tax relief permanent, so we can keep America's economy growing.

Progrowth economic policies also play a vital role in our plan to balance the Federal budget. Our growing economy has produced record levels of tax revenue. This increase in tax revenue has helped us cut the deficit in half 3 years ahead of schedule. And on Monday, we will take the next step when I submit to Congress a budget that will eliminate the deficit by 2012.