

[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,