

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.

To meet this goal, we must set priorities for Government spending. My top priority will continue to be keeping America safe and winning the war against extremists who want to destroy our way of life. The budget I will submit to Congress includes the cost of funding the global war on terror, including in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our troops deserve our full support, and this budget gives them the resources they need.

Cutting the deficit during a time of war requires us to restrain spending in other areas. One good way to help eliminate wasteful spending is to pass earmark reform. Earmarks are special interest items that are often slipped into bills at the last hour. Even worse, more than 90 percent of earmarks never make it to the floor of the House and Senate for a vote. They are dropped into committee reports that are not even part of the bill that arrives on my desk, yet they are treated as if they have the force of law. The time has come to end this practice. So I will work with Democrats and Republicans in Congress to continue reforming the budget process, expose every earmark to the light of day and a vote in Congress, and cut the number and cost of earmarks at least in half.

Another important tool for eliminating wasteful spending is the line-item veto. Today, when lawmakers tack porkbarrel spending onto large bills, the President is left with an all-or-nothing choice: either sign the bill with the wasteful spending or veto the whole bill and deny funding for vital programs. With the line-item veto, the President can sign the funding for necessary programs into law and send the unnecessary provisions back to Congress for

a prompt up-or-down vote on whether to uphold the spending. Forty-three Governors have a line-item veto. I urge Congress to pass the line-item veto, so we can work together to control Federal spending.

Controlling spending also requires us to address the unsustainable growth of entitlement programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Spending for these programs is growing faster than inflation, faster than our economy, and faster than our ability to pay for it. Unless we act, we will saddle our children and grandchildren with tens of trillions of dollars of unfunded obligations. They will face three bad options: huge tax increases, huge budget deficits, or huge and immediate cuts in benefits. Republicans and Democrats need to come together to confront the challenge of entitlement spending and ensure that these vital programs are there when our children and grandchildren need them.

I look forward to working with Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to address these challenges. Together, we can pass a budget that keeps our economy strong, keeps America safe, and makes deficit spending a thing of the past.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:35 a.m. on February 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 2, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to the House Democratic Caucus Issues Conference in
Williamsburg, Virginia
February 3, 2007

Thank you all. It's nice to be here. Thank you very much. The last time I looked at some of your faces, I was at the State of the Union, and I saw kind of a strange expression when I referred to something as the "Democrat Party." Now, look, my diction isn't all that good. [*Laughter*] I have been accused of occasionally mangling the English language. [*Laughter*] And so I appreciate you inviting the head of the Republican Party.

Thanks for having me, Madam Speaker. I'm proud to be here. I'm proud to have met your grandchild. I know the mother well. [*Laughter*] If the child has as much spunk as the mother, she's [he's]* going to have a fantastic life. And so thank you for having me.

I want to thank the members for allowing me to come. I'm looking forward to visiting with you. I particularly want to thank your families. I know how hard it is on a family to support a loved one in public life. It takes a lot of sacrifice to encourage your spouse to serve the country. Politics can be ugly. Sometimes they say not nice things about you in the local newspaper. You're traveling a lot. Campaigns are rough on a family. And so I really want to thank—I thank the members for serving, but I know full well that you couldn't serve without the love and support of your family members. So I really appreciate your contribution to the country.

Madam Speaker, I thank you very much for your leadership. I was genuinely touched when I thought about how your dad would be reacting to seeing you sitting up there in the House Chamber. It was an historic moment, and I know you're proud of the accomplishments, and I appre-

ciate you all supporting this fine woman into a really important leadership role.

On the way in, we spent a little time talking about Florida, and I talked to the Governor yesterday. The Speaker was concerned, as am I, to make sure that the folks get the help they need down there. And, Madam Speaker, you and I, and every member here, shares concerns for those whose lives were turned upside down by that storm. And as I told you earlier, and told the Governor, whatever Federal response is needed, we will make it quick and sure. And so thank you for your concerns.

I'm glad to be here with Steny Hoyer. Good to see you. Thank you, Steny. He is a down-to-earth, no-nonsense guy. I'm looking forward to working with you. James Clyburn and Rahm Emanuel and John Larson and all the leadership, I'm looking forward to working with you. I know you've probably heard that, and you doubt whether it's true. It's true. We can do some big things together. In order to do big things, we're going to have to do it together.

So I'd like to share some of the thoughts about the big things I'd like to see us try to accomplish. First, balancing the budget—that's a big thing. Rob Portman is going to submit a budget tomorrow. Some of it you'll like; some of it you won't like; but it achieves the goal that we have said, which is to balance the budget. And we will show you how to do so in 5 years. You will have your own ideas, and we can work together, hopefully, to achieve that big goal.

Inherent in the budget issue is whether or not—is unfunded liabilities as a part of entitlement programs. This is a difficult issue for members of both parties. I fully understand it's hard to come to the table to address Social Security or Medicare, the

* White House correction.