

This administration will soon issue regulations that require mortgage brokers to fully disclose their fees and closing costs. We're pursuing wrongdoing and fraud in the mortgage industry through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, and other Agencies. In other words, if you've been cheating somebody, we're going to find you and hold you to account. And we'll continue to do our part to help improve all aspects of the mortgage marketplace that is really important to this economy of ours.

With all the steps I've outlined today, we will deliver help and hope to American families who need it. We'll help guard against future problems in the housing sector. We'll reaffirm the vital place of home-

ownership in our Nation. When more families own their own homes, neighborhoods are more vibrant and communities are stronger and more people have a stake in the future of this country.

Owning a home has always been at the center of the American Dream. Together with the United States Congress, I will continue working to help make that dream a reality for more of our citizens. Thank you.

Banking Industry

Q. Sir, what about the hedge funds and banks that are overexposed on the subprime market? That's a bigger problem. Have you got a plan?

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks on the Resignation of Tony Snow as Press Secretary and the Appointment of Dana Perino as Press Secretary and an Exchange With Reporters *August 31, 2007*

The President. Thank you. Good afternoon to you.

Tony Snow informed me he's leaving. And I sadly accept his desire to leave the White House, and he'll do so on September the 14th. He is—it's been a joy to watch him spar with you. He's smart; he's capable; he's witty. He's capable of—he's able to talk about issues in a way that the American people can understand.

And I don't know what he's going to do; I'm not sure he does yet either. But whatever it is, it's going to be—two things: One, he'll battle cancer and win, and secondly, he'll be a solid contributor to society.

I do want to thank Jill and Kendall, Robbie, and Kristi. They have watched a man they love take on a big job and, at the same time, fight disease with a lot of

courage. And so I accept; I love you; and I wish you all the best.

And so I had to make a choice, who to replace Tony, and I've chosen Dana Perino. I did so because Dana is a smart, capable person who is able to spell out the issues of the day in a way that people listening on TV can understand. She can handle you all. [*Laughter*] She's capable of handling your questions.

Q. She has done—[*inaudible*].

The President. She has? Good. Okay. I'm glad to get a little—I'm glad to get that choir singing. [*Laughter*] So I'm not worried about her standing here at the podium. What I look for in somebody like Dana is somebody who can walk in that Oval Office and give me sound judgment and good advice. And I have found that over the course of the time I've known her, she's

capable of doing that. And she's also capable of running the shop that she'll be in charge of.

And so we say to the man we admire a lot, good luck, Godspeed. And to Dana Perino, I'm looking forward to working with you, and I'm looking forward to the American people to get to know you like I've gotten to know you.

Tony.

President's Staff

Q. You've lost a lot of members in your administration—

The President. Hold up there. We're not quite through yet. [*Laughter*]

[At this point, Press Secretary Snow and Press Secretary-designate Perino made remarks.]

The President. Thank you.

President's Staff

Q. How do you feel about losing everybody?

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Press Secretary Snow and Press Secretary-designate Perino.

Statement Following a Meeting With Military Leaders August 31, 2007

The Vice President and I met today with Secretary of Defense Gates and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We had a very productive discussion.

We discussed our commitment to provide our military all it needs to meet the challenges of this new century. This includes a larger Army and Marine Corps. In January, I accepted Secretary Gates's recommendation to increase the overall strength of the two services by 92,000 soldiers and marines over the next 5 years. This will strengthen our military and help reset our forces to respond to multiple contingencies around the world at any given moment. The effort is well underway, but there is more to do, and the Joint Chiefs are doing a terrific job monitoring the health of our All-Volunteer Force.

We also discussed military and civilian coordination. We now have joint civilian and military teams deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and the Philippines. In Iraq, we have more than doubled the number of civilian-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams this year, most of

which are embedded with U.S. combat brigades. These teams are a force multiplier for our men and women in uniform, and they are essential to the bottom-up political progress taking place in Anbar, Diyala, and other Provinces across Iraq. The Civilian Reserve Corps now being developed will enlarge the pool of civilian volunteers to support and enhance our missions.

The American people will soon hear an assessment of the situation on the ground in Iraq and recommendations from Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus. This status report comes less than 3 months since our new strategy became fully operational and will assess what is going well, what can be improved, and what adjustments might be made in the coming months. Congress asked for this assessment, and Members of Congress should withhold judgment until they have heard it.

The stakes in Iraq are too high and the consequences too grave for our security here at home to allow politics to harm the mission of our men and women in uniform. It is my hope that we can put partisanship