

Congress to reauthorize and strengthen the No Child Left Behind Act this year.

My administration has offered several proposals to strengthen this law. By giving local leaders more flexibility and resources, we can help them turn around troubled schools. By giving families with children stuck in low-performing schools the opportunity to choose someplace better, we can raise student achievement. At the same time, we need to increase access to tutoring programs for students who struggle and make sure these children get the special help they need. We need to reward good teachers who improve student achievement in low-income schools. We need to make sure that our country is more competitive and that our children can take advantage of the best jobs this new century has to offer by expanding access to Advanced Placement courses and strengthening math and science education.

As we move forward, we'll continue to welcome new ideas. And I appreciate the ideas I heard today. Yet there can be no compromise on the basic principle: Every child must learn to read and do math at or above grade level. And there can be no compromise on the need to hold schools accountable to making sure we achieve that goal. I'll call on Members of Congress to come together to pass bipartisan legislation that will help us achieve this goal. By working together, we can raise standards even higher, expand opportunity for all Americans of all backgrounds, and build a future where no child is left behind.

Thank you very much. Thank you all for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:13 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

## Remarks on Intelligence Reform Legislation *October 10, 2007*

Good morning. In August, Congress passed the Protect America Act, a bill to modernize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978. This new law strengthened our ability to collect foreign intelligence on terrorists overseas, and it closed a dangerous gap in our intelligence. Since this important measure took effect, our intelligence professionals have been able to gather critical information that would have been missed without this authority. And keeping this authority is essential to keeping America safe.

Unfortunately, when Congress passed the Protect America Act, they set its provisions to expire in February. The problem is, the threat to America is not going to expire in February. So Congress must make a choice: Will they keep the intelligence gap closed by making this law permanent, or

will they limit our ability to collect this intelligence and keep us safe, staying a step ahead of the terrorists who want to attack us?

My administration will work with Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to reach an agreement on a bill that will allow us to protect our country. The final bill must meet certain criteria. It must give our intelligence professionals the tools and flexibility they need to protect our country. It must keep the intelligence gap firmly closed and ensure that protections intended for the American people are not extended to terrorists overseas who are plotting to harm us. And it must grant liability protection to companies who are facing multibillion-dollar lawsuits only because they are believed to have assisted in the

efforts to defend our Nation following the 9/11 attacks.

When Congress presents me with a bill, I will ask the Director of National Intelligence whether it meets these criteria. And if it does, I will sign it into law.

Today the House Intelligence and Judiciary Committees are considering a proposed bill that instead of making the Protect America Act permanent would take us backward. While the House bill is not final, my administration has serious concerns about some of its provisions, and I am hopeful that the deficiencies in the bill can be fixed.

Congress and the President have no higher responsibility than protecting the American people from enemies who attacked our country and who want to do so again. Terrorists in faraway lands are plotting and planning new ways to kill Americans. The security of our country and

the safety of our citizens depend on learning about their plans. The Protect America Act is a vital tool in stopping the terrorists, and it would be a grave mistake for Congress to weaken this tool.

On another issue before Congress, I urge Members to oppose the Armenian genocide resolution now being considered by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. We all deeply regret the tragic suffering of the Armenian people that began in 1915, but this resolution is not the right response to these historic mass killings, and its passage would do great harm to our relations with a key ally in NATO and in the global war on terror.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H. Res. 106.

## Remarks at a Reception Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month October 10, 2007

*The President.* Thank you all. Please be seated. *Sientese. Gracias. Bienvenidos a la Casa Blanca, tambien el jardin de las rosas.* It's a beautiful day. I'm glad you're here. Thanks for coming as we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. Every year at this time, we recognize the rich cultural traditions of the Hispanic American community and the great contributions of Hispanic Americans to our country and our character. That's why we're here.

I appreciate so very much Ambassador Sue Schwab, who is the U.S. Trade Representative, for joining us. We're proud you're here, Madam Ambassador. I'm going to say something positive about trade, so I'm glad you came. I appreciate my friend—my dear friend former Attorney General of the United States Al Gonzales. I appreciate Anna Cabral, U.S. Treasurer,

and Victor. Thank you all for coming. I'm proud that other members of my administration have joined us. Sarah, it's good to see you; thank you for being here.

I thank my friend Emilio Estefan, who has provided the entertainment. I'm going to say something about the entertainment a little later, but Israel, we're glad you're here.

I appreciate the members of the diplomatic corps. I appreciate the Ambassadors coming. We're proud you're here. Thanks for taking time.

I have just met a remarkable woman that I want to introduce to you. Yamile Llanes Labrada and her daughter Shirlen Garcia have joined me in the Oval Office. Yamile is the wife of a political prisoner in Cuba, Dr. Jose Luis Garcia Paneque. The doctor was a plastic surgeon. He did nothing more