

providing strong support for America's community colleges, where people of any age can go to learn new skills for a better, high-paying career.

Expanding trade will help our economy grow. By passing these trade agreements, we will also serve America's security and moral interests. We will strengthen our ties with our friends. We will help counter the false populism promoted by hostile nations. And we will help young democracies show their people that freedom, openness, and the rule of law are the surest path to a better life. So I call on Congress to act

quickly and get these agreements to my desk.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on October 12 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 12, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at Stribling Packaging, Inc., in Rogers, Arkansas October 15, 2007

The President. One of the reasons I've stopped by this facility here in Arkansas is to remind people that small business is the backbone of our economy. These good folks are making a living; more importantly, they're providing labor for people here in this facility. And that's what we want. We want people working in America. We've gone through now 49 consecutive months of uninterrupted job growth; that's a record for the United States.

And one of the reasons why is our small-business owners are working hard. And another reason why is we've got people in the United States Congress who understand the role of government, and that is not to get in the way of business, but it's to create an environment where businesses flourish. And when people are buying this

man's boxes, it also means they're buying product at the retail level.

And so I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come by.

Bill Stribling. Absolutely.

The President. And appreciate the opportunity to meet your workers. As I was walking around, I was shaking the workers' hands. He said, "That's good that you're meeting them. After all, they're the reason this business is growing." And I appreciate a man who understands that. Thanks for your hospitality.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Stribling, president, Stribling Packaging, Inc.

Remarks on the Federal Budget and a Question-and-Answer Session in Rogers

October 15, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Thank you very much. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. I may just take off my jacket, if that's all right. [Laughter] I hope I didn't spill any sauce on my shirt after I had barbecue at the Whole Hog. [Laughter] Thanks for coming. Thanks for giving me a chance to share some thoughts with you about what's going on in Washington, and then I'll be glad to answer some questions, if you have any.

First, I do want to say thank you to John Paul Hammerschmidt for a lot of things, one, being a good friend of my dad's and—but more importantly, setting such a fine example for what public service should be about, which is honesty, integrity, and the willingness to serve something greater than himself. John Paul, I'm honored you're here; thanks for—[applause].

And you got followed by a pretty good fellow there in John Boozman. I'm proud to call him friend. I hope you're proud to call him Congressman, because he's doing a fine job. And I—[applause].

I want to thank the mayor of Rogers, Steve Womack. Thanks for your service to your community; thanks for being in the United States military. I appreciate you joining me for lunch and enjoyed our conversation, Mr. Mayor. Thanks for what you're doing.

I want to thank members of the state-house who are here and local government who's here. I want to thank Raymond Burns, the president and CEO of the chamber of commerce, for hosting this event. I hope you find it to be informative. One of the things the President has to do is travel around the country explaining the situation and why things are happening, at least from my perspective. I'm looking forward to explaining it.

I do appreciate very much the members of the chamber of commerce who've enabled me to come by to visit with you. I want to thank the chancellor of the mighty University of Arkansas, John White, for being here today. He hosted—the guy keeps pointing to his Razorback—I understand. Look, I'm just a simple Texas guy who—[laughter]—who knows full well that it was a lot of times an unpleasant experience for the Longhorns to come up here and play. [Laughter] But we're not going to talk about those old games, are we? We're talking about the future.

I appreciate Bill Stribling. He's the president of Stribling Packaging. I went by earlier today to his business, and I had a chance to say hello to his employees. I did so because I wanted to remind America that in order for this economy to remain strong, we got to be mindful of the needs of small-business owners. He's expanding his job base, and he's like thousands of other entrepreneurs around the country who are wondering whether or not the Government is going to put policy in place that could affect his capacity to grow. And I want to spend a little time talking about that.

We've actually had an historic couple of days. We're now in our 49th consecutive month of uninterrupted job growth. That's the longest—[applause]. That's a record. That's the longest number of months in a row where new jobs have been created. And that's because our small businesses are doing well. And then the fundamental question is, are we wise enough to keep policy in place to keep the small-business sector strong?

The worst thing we could do is run up taxes as this economy is growing. It's the worst thing we could do to the small-business