

We've got to—I'm really grateful for the many talented and dedicated and patriotic men and women who have answered the call to service. And now my call to the United States Senate is this: Rise to your responsibilities, give these nominees the

vote they deserve, and confirm them as soon as possible.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks on Signing the Executive Order To Improve the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs

February 7, 2008

Thank you all. Thanks. Please be seated. I thank you for joining Laura and me. I've got two jobs. One is I'm going to sign an Executive order here in a minute. I'm making sure that all agencies involved with Helping America's Youth coordinate their activities. And then I've got to introduce Laura. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate very much those of you who are committed to helping our country by saving souls and by giving people hope. I think it's—I can't think of a more noble cause than to serve America. And there's all kinds of ways to serve America. One way is to wear the uniform. Another way is to find—somebody wonders whether or not there's a positive future in their lives, and put your arm around them and say, "I love you; what can I do to help you?"

That happens, by the way, all across America. And it doesn't take one single law to cause somebody to love a neighbor. It does take a law; it's just—it's a higher law. It's a law from a higher inspiration than government. And so today Laura and I welcome those who are neighborhood healers and helpers. We really appreciate your focus on helping our Nation's youth, particularly boys.

In my State of the Union a couple of years ago, I talked about the initiative that we're honoring today, and it's an initiative that says, there is a better future for America's young folks. And we've set some important goals. And one of the goals inside

this administration is to make sure that those people who are responsible for spending taxpayers' money on these programs actually coordinate their efforts and set high standards. A lot of times in government we don't do a very good job of measuring, and so the idea is to set standards and to coordinate, but the idea is also to empower those who are on the frontlines of saving lives.

I like to say, government is not really about love. There may be loving people in government, but government itself is laws and justice. Love is found in the hearts of our citizens who are in the neighborhoods.

And so the Executive order I'm going to sign is to—all aimed at kind of leaving behind a structure so that whoever is lucky enough to follow me—[*laughter*—will see a blueprint on how to help, really, people realize the great promise of the country.

I believe we solve—save souls one person at a time. And I like to remind our fellow citizens, while one person can't save every soul, one person can save a soul. And it's that cumulative effort of love and compassion and work that will define a hopeful future. And somebody who shares that same passion about recognizing the true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens, and someone who cares deeply about making sure the young in America have a bright future is our

speaker, my wife, the First Lady, Laura Bush.

[At this point, the First Lady spoke, a video was shown, and the President signed the Executive order.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Executive Order 13459, which is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Statement on Senate Action on Economic Growth Legislation February 7, 2008

Two weeks ago, my administration reached an agreement with Speaker Pelosi and Leader Boehner on a short-term economic growth package that would quickly put money into the hands of the American people and provide our economy the boost it needs. Today the Senate amended that bill in ways I can support.

This plan is robust, broad-based, timely, and it will be effective. This bill will help

to stimulate consumer spending and accelerate needed business investment.

This economic growth package is an example of bipartisan cooperation at a time when the American people most expect it. I thank members of both parties and both Houses for their efforts to advance this important legislation.

Remarks to the Conservative Political Action Conference February 8, 2008

The President. Thank you all. Good morning, and thank you all very much. I thank you for coming. I apologize to my friend; he likes to sleep in. [Laughter]

I really do want to thank you all for adjusting the schedule. Right after the speech, I'm going to get on an airplane and fly to Tennessee. I'll be taking the prayers of the American people to those who suffered from the devastating tornadoes.

Mr. Leader, thank you for that introduction, and I appreciate your outstanding leadership in the United States Senate. You know, Mr. Leader, I used to think that leading a group of strong-willed Senators was one of the toughest jobs in the country. I may have found one even tougher one: father of the bride. You know, I told Laura

I was going to say that, and she said, well, you might add another one: son-in-law to the President. [Laughter]

I thank you for the invitation. I appreciate the fact that you've invited our candidates to your forum, and thank you for the hearing you gave them. These are good, honorable people. And I appreciate the fact that you invited Vice President Cheney here. He is the best Vice President in history. Mother may have a different opinion. [Laughter] But don't tell her I said this, but my opinion is the one that counts.

Since I spoke with you last, some things have changed. It seems like my hair is little grayer. [Laughter] And my jokes are a little older. And some say my speeches are a little windier. Some things haven't changed: