

period. We join our fellow Americans in praying for his full recovery.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of G. Steven Agee as United States  
Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit  
May 20, 2008

Today Members of the Senate voted unanimously to confirm Justice Steven Agee to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. I appreciate their work on his nomination. Justice Agee is a man of integrity who is respected for his sound legal judgment and commitment to equal justice for all Americans. His work on the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Virginia Court of Appeals demonstrates that his rulings are based on the letter of the law. I am confident that he will serve on the fourth circuit with the same level of dedication and professionalism.

After I nominated Justice Agee on March 13, 2008, he received a hearing and a confirmation vote in less than 3 months. Unfortunately, many of my other judicial nominees have not received a timely confirmation process, and their nominations have been pending before the Senate Judiciary Committee for significantly longer.

Since the beginning of the 110th Congress, the Senate has only confirmed eight circuit court nominees. In the last 2 years of the past 3 administrations, the Senate has confirmed an average of 17 circuit court judges. I encourage the Senate to provide all judicial nominees with a swift and fair confirmation process.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With  
Respect to the Stabilization of Iraq  
May 20, 2008

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication. This notice states that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13303 of May 22, 2003, as modified in scope and

relied upon for additional steps taken in Executive Order 13315 of August 28, 2003, Executive Order 13350 of July 29, 2004, Executive Order 13364 of November 29, 2004, and Executive Order 13438 of July 17, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond May 22, 2008.

Obstacles to the orderly reconstruction of Iraq, the restoration and maintenance of peace and security in the country, and the development of political, administrative, and economic institutions in Iraq continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Accordingly, I have

determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to this threat and maintain in force the measures taken in response to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
May 20, 2008.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Remarks on the Situation in Cuba May 21, 2008

Thank you all. *Bienvenidos*. Thanks for coming to mark this Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People. This is a day of pride, as we honor the culture and history of a noble nation. It's a day of sorrow, as we reflect on the continued oppression of the Cuban people. Most of all, this is a day of hope. We have hope because we see a day coming when Cubans will have the freedom of which they have dreamed for centuries, the freedom that is the eternal birthright of all mankind. And many of you here are working to hasten that day, and I thank you for your efforts.

I particularly thank the members of my Cabinet who've joined us. Madam Secretary, thank you for coming and being a staunch friend of the Cuban people. *Mi amigo* Carlos Gutierrez *y su familia*—for those of you in Cuba who are listening to this broadcast, I think it is important for you to know that Carlos is a Cuban American. He's now in the Cabinet of the President of the United States. All things are possible in a free society. Secretary Kempthorne, Secretary Chao, and Secretary Leavitt: Thank you all for coming as well. I appreciate Acting Secretary Bernardi of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

I'm particularly thankful for Members of the United States Congress: Mel Martinez—all things are possible in a free society; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; *los hermanos* Balart, Lincoln Diaz-Balart *y tambien* Mario Diaz-Balart. Thank you for coming. Congressman Chris Smith, Congressman

Darrell Issa, Congressman John Campbell, Congressman Gus Bilirakis: Thank you all for coming. Appreciate you all coming.

I appreciate the members of the diplomatic corps who've joined us. Thank you for being such good friends of the Cuban people. I want to thank the family members of the Cuban dissidents who are here. Welcome to the White House. Thank you for coming. *Y por fin*, Willy Chirino and his wife Lissette Alvarez, thank you all for coming.

This time of year holds great significance for the Cuban people. One hundred and thirteen years ago this week, Cuba lost its great poet and patriot Jose Marti. And 106 years ago this week, Cuba achieved the independence for which Marti gave his life. Jose Marti knew that true liberty would come to Cuba only with a just government of its people's choosing. He warned, "A regime of personal despotism would even be more shameful and more calamitous than the political despotism [Cuba] now endures."

Marti's warning proved truer than anyone could have imagined. Today, after nearly a half-century of repression, Cuba still suffers under the personal despotism of Fidel and Raul Castro. On the dictators' watch, Cuba's political freedoms have been denied. Families have been torn apart. The island's economy has been reduced to shambles. Cuba's culture has been drained of artists and scholars and musicians and athletes. And like the once grand buildings