

## Remarks on Arrival in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma September 12, 2008

I'm privileged to be the President of a country that produces citizens such as these. The United States is a country of volunteers, and three such volunteers are with us, Oklahoma citizens who serve in a variety of ways.

Karen has produced a tie to—a way to keep our—to help our soldiers stay cool in Iraq. She is supportive of our troops. She and her organization have done fine work.

The major here, a golf pro, who is going to go on his third tour in Iraq, has used his position in the golfing industry to raise money to help Gold Star families. How cool is that? This guy is going to Iraq on Monday, and yet he has—he served that way, but he also serves in a very compassionate way.

Captain Castleberry and some of his folks he works with out at sheriff's department pulled up stakes and headed down to Morgan City, Louisiana, in the wake of Gustav. Nobody made him do it; he just decided to do it on his own.

Our country is better off because millions of citizens, such as these three folks, have heard the call to serve something greater than themselves. And I urge our fellow citizens all around the Nation to find ways to serve. It turns out that when you help somebody in need, you help yourself even more.

I am deeply concerned about Hurricane Ike. It is a major storm headed toward a large population center. I was on the phone this morning with Secretary Chertoff and Director Paulison of FEMA. I spoke to my friend, Governor Perry, yesterday. The State of Texas is preparing for this emergency. I suspect there's going to be some Texans headed for Oklahoma. And I know that they're going to find good people up here who want to help them.

And so I want to thank the citizens of Oklahoma for getting ready to help a Texan in need. I urge my fellow Texans to listen carefully to what the authorities are saying in Galveston County or parts of Harris County, up and down the coast. Now, we'll be monitoring the situation very carefully. The Federal Government will not only help with the prestorm strategy, but once this storm passes, we'll be working with State and local authorities to help people recover as quickly as possible.

Thank you all for what you're doing; God bless your work. Good luck to you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. at Tinker Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Karen Stark, founder, HUGS Project; Daniel M. Rooney, founder, Folds of Honor Foundation; Capt. Joe Castleberry, Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office; and Gov. J. Richard Perry of Texas.

## Remarks Following a Discussion on Health Savings Accounts and an Exchange With Reporters in Oklahoma City September 12, 2008

*The President.* I want to thank our participants for joining me here in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. I want to thank the mayor, Members of Congress, United States Sen-

ator. Most importantly, I want to thank women entrepreneurs. Seventy percent of all new jobs in America are created by small-businesses owners. Today with us are

small-business owners, people who've taken risk in order to realize dream, and in so doing have provided job opportunities. These are the job creators of the vibrant economy here in Oklahoma.

One of the real issues—there's a couple of issues that face obviously a small-business owner. One, are they—do they have a product anybody wants to buy? But also taxes, high taxes make it harder to stay in business. I strongly urge the Congress to make the tax relief we passed permanent so that taxes won't increase on small businesses.

But another issue that I hear all the time when I'm talking to small-business owners is the issue of health care costs. If you listen to anybody who owns a small business, they will tell you that the rising cost of health care is troubling not only to their balance sheet, but to their soul, because they want their employees to have the best. A small-business owner really does care a lot about their employees.

Today we're talking about a way for small businesses and individuals—and large businesses, for that matter—to help to deal with rising health care costs. Our goal is to make sure health care is available and affordable. And once—one way to help deal with rising health care costs is what's called health savings accounts. These are ingenious products to help people save, incent people to, you know, take care of their bodies, and also make sure that if there's a catastrophic illness, they're taken care of. These are products that enable somebody to, you know, move from one job to the next and keep their health care with them, which is important in the 21st century. They're ways for employees to take care of their employees.

In Oklahoma, a lot of people don't know about health saving accounts, and one of the reason I've come down to this part

of the country is because I do want people to understand they're available and they're good. About 6 million people across the country are using health savings accounts. The biggest increase is with small-business owners.

And so today we've had a good discussion with owners who've got a health savings account, people who are looking at health savings account. I introduced Sandy, head of the SBA here, to folks, and if somebody wants to really learn about an HSA, just go on [hsa.gov](http://hsa.gov), which is an SBA site, so people can see whether or not it makes sense for your business or your family.

Anyway, I do want to thank you all very much for, one, being pioneers; two, being risk takers; and three, giving me a chance to hear your thoughts and concerns and—about a very innovative way for small businesses and individuals to be able to better afford health care.

Thank you, all.

Guy was trying to ask a question, but he was in violation of the no question policy. [Laughter] Right, Deb [Deb Reichmann, Associated Press]?

*Republican Vice Presidential Nominee  
Sarah Palin*

Q. Did you watch the Palin interview?

*The President.* As I said, no question policy. [Laughter] She did just fine.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:33 a.m. at the Presbyterian Health Foundation Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Mick Cornett of Oklahoma City, OK; Sen. Thomas A. Coburn; and Sandy K. Baruah, Acting Administrator, Small Business Administration. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Remarks on Hurricane Ike Recovery Efforts *September 13, 2008*

Good morning. I just finished a video conference with Secretary Chertoff, Director Paulison, and other people about Hurricane Ike.

Obviously, this is a huge storm that is causing a lot of damage not only in Texas, but also in parts of Louisiana. The storm has yet to pass, and I know there are people concerned about their lives. Some people didn't evacuate when asked, and I've been briefed on the rescue teams there in the area. They're prepared to move as soon as weather conditions permit. Obviously, people on the ground there are sensitive to helping people and are fully prepared to do so.

Secondly, I've asked Secretary Chertoff to go down as soon as weather conditions permit. I suspect he'll be able to get down to Texas this afternoon and will be in the Gulf Coast region, hopefully, within a reasonable period of time to help the State of Texas officials, as well as local officials, begin the recovery effort. There's going to be a need for Federal, State, and local coordination as this storm moves through east Texas.

Obviously, there will be concerns about electricity. We've got generators in place, generators moving into the area to help. They'll be concerned about water and ice. They'll be concerned about energy, and I'm concerned about energy.

Now, this administration has moved quickly. Last night, we suspended EPA waivers on certain reformulated gasolines, which will make it easier for imports from abroad to make it into our markets. In the meantime, the Department of Energy, the Federal Trade Commission, and, I know, State authorities will be monitoring gasoline prices to make sure consumers are not being gouged, make sure consumers are being treated fairly.

As this massive storm moves through the Gulf Coast, people of that area can be rest assured that the American people will be praying for them and will be ready to help once the storm moves on.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:39 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## The President's Radio Address *September 13, 2008*

Good morning. This week, Americans marked 7 years since the terrorist attacks that shook our Nation on September the 11th, 2001. On that day, we witnessed unspeakable destruction perpetrated by evil men, but we also witnessed selfless acts of valor and compassion performed by courageous citizens. And we saw the strength of the American people as they rallied in defense of the Nation.

On Thursday, I dedicated a new 9/11 memorial at the Pentagon. In the years to come, parents will visit this site to remember children who boarded Flight 77 for a field trip and never emerged from the wreckage. Husbands and wives will visit the memorial to remember spouses who left for work one morning and never returned home. And people from across our Nation