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Week Ending Friday, August 2, 2002

The President's Radio Address

July 27, 2002

Good morning. This week, the Federal Government took decisive action against corporate fraud and abuse. The Justice Department arrested several executives who used a public company as a personal loan agency, while hiding their actions from investors and employees. Additional investigations coordinated by our Corporate Fraud Task Force are underway across the country. It should be clear to every shareholder, investor, and employee in America that this administration will investigate, arrest, and prosecute corporate executives who break the law.

During the last several months, I've called on Congress to pass strong reforms to hold corporate officers accountable for their actions. This week, Members of Congress responded to that call. The House and the Senate passed bipartisan reforms, increasing the penalties for corporate wrongdoers and creating tougher standards for corporate auditors, so that investors and employees can trust the accounting statements of their public companies. This legislation will help reassure Americans that our economic system is sound and fair. I thank the Congress for their hard work, and I look forward to signing the bill next week.

Members of the United States Senate have one more week before they head home for August recess. I urge them to take up several important issues. The Senate should pass trade promotion authority, which will give me a stronger hand in negotiating foreign trade agreements. Trade agreements create good jobs and economic growth, because they open new markets to America's farmers and ranchers and manufacturers. I urge the Senate to get a final bill to my desk so I can immediately take action that will create jobs and strengthen the economy.

The Senate should pass the defense appropriations bill, which includes the largest increases in defense spending since the Reagan years. Our military needs to plan for a long war on terror and prepare for all the missions that lie ahead. The House passed its defense appropriations bill in June. Now the Senate must make the defense of our country a top priority.

The Senate should not go home before approving a new Department of Homeland Security. This Department will coordinate our Nation's response to grave national threats, to anticipate our enemies, analyze our vulnerabilities, and act forcefully to address them. And the Senate must give the Department of Homeland Security all of the authority and flexibility it needs to protect the American people.

And the Senate should protect the retirement security of American workers. In April, the House passed pension reforms based on my proposals, to give workers more timely information and greater control over their own retirement funds as well as access to professional investment advice. America's retirement security is too important to fall victim to political game playing, and the Senate must act now.

By taking action on these issues, the Senate can advance our national priorities of defending freedom, protecting our homeland, and strengthening our economy. The Senate now has one week left to make progress for the American people, and I urge them to seize the opportunity.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:45 p.m. on July 26 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 27. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on Congressional Action on Trade Promotion Authority Legislation

July 27, 2002

For nearly 10 years, America has lacked trade promotion authority and the ability to fully take advantage of trade opportunities. I commend the House and Senate conferees for their leadership in reaching a landmark agreement on TPA, which will open markets, expand opportunity, and create jobs for American workers and farmers. The House has shown a commitment to getting something done on behalf of the American people, and I urge the Senate to vote on this good bill before the Senate goes home for the August recess.

Remarks at West Ashley High School in Charleston, South Carolina

July 29, 2002

Thank you all very much. It's great to be back in Charleston. I want to thank you for taking time out of your day to come by and say hello. It's good to be back to the place where my mother graduated from high school. She must have learned there that if you ever get to be a mother, make sure you tell your oldest son what to do all the time. [*Laughter*] I'm still listening.

I am so honored that Tommy traveled down with me. You know, Tommy and I were fellow Governors. I knew he had a good record as the Governor of Wisconsin in helping move people from welfare to work. So that when I—one, I asked Tommy to join us as the Cabinet Secretary for the Department of Health and Human Services, because I know—I know his passion for helping people in need, and I know his philosophy. And so I want to thank Tommy for agreeing to leave the life he had there in Wisconsin and moving to Washington, DC, and serving our Nation with such class and such distinction. I appreciate you, Mr. Secretary.

I want to thank some of the members of the mighty South Carolina congressional delegation who have joined us here today, Congressmen Brown, Wilson, Graham, and DeMint, who represent your State with such class. And I appreciate you all coming. And it's good to see that my friend the Lieutenant Governor, Bob Peeler, is here with us as well. Thank you, Bob, appreciate you coming.

And I want to give a special thanks to Bob Olson, the principal of this high school. I know it's not easy to host a Presidential visit. The entourages are quite large. But you all have done a fabulous job. It's such an honor to be here in this high school. I want to thank you for—Bob, you and the teachers, all the folks who work here—for being involved in education. There's nothing more important to make sure that every single child in America gets a quality education.

I just had what they call a roundtable discussion about some of the programs that are taking place here in South Carolina, programs all aimed at helping people help themselves. I don't have time to go through all the stories, but there are some remarkable people that joined us today, those who have worked hard to get off welfare to succeed and those kind, compassionate souls who are helping them. And I want to thank the participants for coming today. I really appreciate our discussions.

I also met Steve Riggs, who is a volunteer here in South Carolina. He came out to Air Force One. Steve's job is to—as a volunteer is to work with the South Carolina military department, which reenacts moments of American history. Steve believes it's important to teach history—live history, or history that—through people wearing uniforms, so they can see history come to life. He believes it's important to teach our youngsters values that they can hold dear for the rest of their life. Steve decided to do this on his own. It didn't require any Government edict or any proclamation. He's a volunteer to make South Carolina the best State it can be. And I'm honored you're with us today, Steve. Thank you for coming.

The reason I like to talk about people like Steve—and many of the people I met this morning share the same concept that one person can do something to help change America, and each of us have got to be a person helping to change America. If you want to fight evil, if you want to join the war on terror, do some good in your society. If you want to send a message to the evil ones