

Rosario mentioned my appointments to my Government. I am proud to serve many, many exceptional Hispanic Americans. One of my jobs is to put the best people in the right jobs in every branch of Government. I've done so in the executive branch, and I'll do so in the judiciary branch as well. Right now the Senate Judiciary Committee is now considering a friend of mine, a guy named Mike—Miguel Estrada. He's my nominee for the DC Circuit Court of Appeals. If confirmed, he'll be the first Hispanic ever to serve on this important court.

No one can deny that he's well-qualified. No one can deny he's a great lawyer and that he's highly skilled. Yet unfortunately, there are Senators who play politics with Miguel Estrada's nomination. There are Senators searching for any reason to defeat him.

I call upon the Senate leadership to treat Miguel Estrada with dignity and respect and to bring his nomination up for the full Senate to confirm him before they adjourn. He's an American success story. He's an inspiration to many Americans, and he'll be an outstanding judge.

And so I appreciate all of you all who are there today. I appreciate so very much Elizabeth and George and the many of you there today to bear witness to the great opportunities found in this country, opportunities borne of freedom and equality. These values make us strong, and we will defend them, no matter how long it takes.

Gracias por su dedicacion a la excelencia. Gracias por demostrar que el sueno Americano es posible para todos los que lo desean en su corazon. Y aprecio su amor por esta gran nacion.

Y Dios los bendiga a todos, y que Dios los bendiga a Los Estados Unidos.

NOTE: The President spoke by satellite at 4:19 p.m. from Read-Pattillo Elementary School, New Smyrna Beach, FL, to the meeting in Los Angeles, CA. In his remarks, he referred to Rosario Marin, U.S. Treasurer; and Elizabeth Lisboa-Farrow, chair of the board of directors, and George Herrera, chairman and chief executive officer, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Proclamation 7611—Year of Clean Water, 2002–2003

October 17, 2002

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

On October 18, 2002, our Nation marks the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act and begins the Observance of the Year of Clean Water. This landmark environmental legislation has been central to the important progress we have made as a Nation in improving the quality of our drinking water and the health of our waters, wetlands, and watersheds. During this time, we renew our commitment to building on these successes and to developing new approaches and partnerships to meet our environmental challenges.

The Clean Water Act of 1972 and the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 have helped our citizens enjoy one of the safest and cleanest water supplies in the world. Under the Clean Water Act, the Federal Government has provided more than \$80 billion in wastewater assistance to the States and localities. This fundamentally important investment has ensured that 165 million citizens now benefit from modern sewage treatment, up from 86 million in 1968. The important advances in waste water treatment since the Clean Water Act's passage constitute one of the major achievements in modern American public health.

In the last 30 years, the overall health of our marine waters, lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands has also dramatically improved. The Federal Government has cooperated with States, tribes, local communities, businesses, and concerned individuals to reduce significantly all forms of water pollution, making our waters better suited for recreation and other pursuits and more hospitable to aquatic life. Recent studies show that we are close to achieving our goal of halting overall wetlands loss, and we are hopeful that in the near future we will begin increasing the overall function and value of our wetlands. As we look to the challenges ahead, the Clean

Water Act will be an important mainstay and tool for further progress.

As part of our Nation's long-term commitment to protecting our environment and natural resources, we must continue to focus on cleaner air, water, and land; healthier citizens, and vibrant ecosystems. We will continue to collaborate with private organizations, landowners, and all levels of government to encourage the development of new technologies and innovative approaches to protecting our environment. Through policies and programs that recognize regional differences, employ market forces, and empower individuals to be good stewards of the earth, we can and will meet the environmental challenges of the future.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the year beginning October 18, 2002, as the Year of Clean Water in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. I call upon all Americans to observe this year with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and to join in setting good examples of environmental stewardship in our daily lives.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 21, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 18, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 22.

Remarks at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri October 18, 2002

Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm honored to be here at the—on the campus of this fine university. I'm proud to be here in southwest Missouri. I

love the values of the heartland represented in this part of our country, the values of faith, the values of family, the love of our country. I appreciate you coming out to say hello. These are the values which make Missouri a great State and make our Nation a great nation.

I want to thank you for your friendship. I want to thank you for your prayers. I want to thank you for your concern about our political process. I appreciate your interest. I appreciate your willingness to take a stand. And I am here in the State of Missouri to take a stand: The best person running for the United States Senate is Jim Talent.

I need him in the Senate to work with him. We've got some big problems facing our country. But there's no doubt in my mind that we can achieve anything we put our mind to. There's no doubt in my mind that no matter how high the hurdle, the United States of America, when we put our mind to something, can cross that hurdle.

Jim Talent shares my optimism about the future of this country because he knows what I know: This country is blessed with the finest people on the face of the Earth, and that, by trusting the people and calling upon the best of America, we can achieve anything—I mean anything—we set our mind to.

I appreciate Jim Talent's values. He's a family man. He's got his priorities straight. He's a man who doesn't need a focus group or a poll to tell him what to think. He's more than happy to stand on principle. He's more than happy to say, "This is what I believe, and I'm not changing." And I appreciate a man who's willing to take those values, the Missouri values, and the sense of purpose to Washington, DC.

He's also got a record. See, he's already been up there once. He's shown us what he can do. And when he was up there, he wasn't afraid to take the lead. He is one of the key authors of one of the most important pieces of social legislation in the last decade, and that is the welfare reform bill that transformed millions of lives in America, because he knows what I know, that dignity is found when you find work, that work is the cornerstone of any life that has got dignity.

I appreciate his understanding of small business. See, he is an advocate for small