

life and the future? Can you provide guidance for me?” And so we’ve got a \$300 million initiative I put before Congress to help with these prison reentry programs, all of which will give our faith community a chance to heal the broken heart.

One of the things—I’ll never forget this—when I was the Governor of Texas, one of the early initiatives in my governorship, one of the faith-based initiatives, was to turn over a part of the prison unit to a faith program, Chuck Colson’s program. He convinced me that this would be a great opportunity to change lives. And it would be better than stamping license plates. And so we put a voluntary program in the prison unit in Fort Bend County, Texas—the Sugarland, Texas, area. And I went over to see the program, and sure enough, I was talking about it on the microphones and out comes the prison choir. Now, this wasn’t exactly a really large choir. It was probably 10 people. And I got in the mood and starting singing “Amazing Grace” with the Sugarland Prison choir, from this unit that was a faith-based unit. And I’m rocking back and forth with a guy, and on the front page of the Houston Chronicle is a picture—[laughter]—is a picture of me and a guy who has been in prison for 19 years for murder. [Laughter] The other day, we have a meeting in the White House, in the Roosevelt Room, and sure enough, sitting next to me is the guy who I rocked with who is now—[laughter]—whose life was changed and saved because of faith.

I’m telling America we need to not discriminate against faith-based programs. We need to welcome them so our society is more wholesome, more welcoming, and more hopeful for every single citizen.

I want to thank you all for coming. Thank you all. One last word: I want to thank you for coming. It warms my heart to know that I am the President of a country full of so many decent, caring people. The strength of this country is not our military or the size of our wallets. The strength of this country is the hearts and souls of the American people. That is the thing, in my judgment, that makes this country unique and different and strong. My job as the President of the United States is understand that and, as best as I humanly can, to elevate the spirit of the

country, to call upon people to follow their hearts, to say to the Federal Government, “Stand beside these soldiers, not against them. Be a wind at their back, not at their face, so that America can reach its full potential, so every citizen, regardless of race, creed, background, can have a chance to realize the full promise, the full extended promise of the greatest country on the face of this Earth.”

May God bless you and your works, and may God continue to bless the United States of America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. at the Washington Hilton and Towers. In his remarks, he referred to Charles W. Colson, founder, Prison Fellowship Ministries.

**Executive Order 13342—  
Responsibilities of the Departments  
of Commerce and Veterans Affairs  
and the Small Business  
Administration With Respect to  
Faith-Based and Community  
Initiatives**

*June 1, 2004*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to help the Federal Government coordinate a national effort to expand opportunities for faith-based and other community organizations and to strengthen their capacity to better meet America’s social and community needs, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1.** *Establishment of Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives at the Departments of Commerce and Veterans Affairs and the Small Business Administration.*

(a) The Secretaries of Commerce and Veterans Affairs and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall each establish within their respective agencies a Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (Center).

(b) Each of these Centers shall be supervised by a Director, appointed by the agency head in consultation with the White House

Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (White House OFBCI).

(c) Each agency shall provide its Center with appropriate staff, administrative support, and other resources to meet its responsibilities under this order.

(d) Each Center shall begin operations no later than 45 days from the date of this order.

**Sec. 2. Purpose of Executive Branch Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.** The purpose of the agency Centers will be to coordinate agency efforts to eliminate regulatory, contracting, and other programmatic obstacles to the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in the provision of social and community services.

**Sec. 3. Responsibilities of the Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.** Each Center shall, to the extent permitted by law:

(a) conduct, in coordination with the White House OFBCI, an agency-wide audit to identify all existing barriers to the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in the delivery of social and community services by the agency, including but not limited to regulations, rules, orders, procurement, and other internal policies and practices, and outreach activities that either facially discriminate against or otherwise discourage or disadvantage the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in Federal programs;

(b) coordinate a comprehensive agency effort to incorporate faith-based and other community organizations in agency programs and initiatives to the greatest extent possible;

(c) propose initiatives to remove barriers identified pursuant to section 3(a) of this order, including but not limited to reform of regulations, procurement, and other internal policies and practices, and outreach activities;

(d) propose the development of innovative pilot and demonstration programs to increase the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in Federal as well as State and local initiatives; and

(e) develop and coordinate agency outreach efforts to disseminate information more effectively to faith-based and other community organizations with respect to pro-

gramming changes, contracting opportunities, and other agency initiatives, including but not limited to Web and Internet resources.

**Sec. 4. Reporting Requirements.** (a) *Report.* Not later than 180 days from the date of this order and annually thereafter, each of the three Centers described in section 1 of this order shall prepare and submit a report to the President through the White House OFBCI.

(b) *Contents.* The report shall include a description of the agency's efforts in carrying out its responsibilities under this order, including but not limited to:

(i) a comprehensive analysis of the barriers to the full participation of faith-based and other community organizations in the delivery of social and community services identified pursuant to section 3(a) of this order and the proposed strategies to eliminate those barriers; and

(ii) a summary of the technical assistance and other information that will be available to faith-based and other community organizations regarding the program activities of the agency and the preparation of applications or proposals for grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and procurement.

(c) *Performance Indicators.* The first report, filed pursuant to section 4(a) of this order, shall include annual performance indicators and measurable objectives for agency action. Each report filed thereafter shall measure the agency's performance against the objectives set forth in the initial report.

**Sec. 5. Responsibilities of the Secretaries of Commerce and Veterans Affairs and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration.** The Secretaries and the Administrator shall:

(a) designate an employee within their respective agencies to serve as the liaison and point of contact with the White House OFBCI; and

(b) cooperate with the White House OFBCI and provide such information, support, and assistance to the White House OFBCI as it may request, to the extent permitted by law.

**Sec. 6. Administration and Judicial Review.** (a) The agency actions directed by this executive order shall be carried out subject

to the availability of appropriations and to the extent permitted by law.

(b) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers, employees or agents, or any other person.

### George W. Bush

The White House,  
June 1, 2004.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:10 a.m., June 2, 2004]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on June 3.

## The President's News Conference

June 1, 2004

### *Iraqi Interim Government*

**The President.** Good morning. Today in Baghdad, U.N. Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi and Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Alawi announced the members of Iraq's new interim government. Consulting with hundreds of Iraqis from a variety of backgrounds, Mr. Brahimi has recommended a team that possesses the talent, commitment, and resolve to guide Iraq through the challenges that lie ahead.

On June 30th, this interim government will assume full sovereignty and will oversee all ministries and all functions of the Iraqi state. Those ministries will report to Prime Minister Alawi, who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of Iraq's interim government. Dr. Alawi is a strong leader. He endured exile for decades and survived assassination attempts by Saddam's regime. He was trained as a physician, has worked as a businessman, and has always been an Iraqi patriot.

Prime Minister Alawi and Mr. Brahimi announced Iraq's interim President, Ghazi al-Yawr, an engineer from northern Iraq. They also announced two Deputy Presidents, Dr. Ibrahim Jafari, who is a physician born in Karbala, and Dr. Rowsch Shaways, a prominent political and military leader who also

has been a longtime opponent of Saddam's tyranny.

The new 33-member cabinet announced today reflects new leadership, drawn from a broad cross section of Iraqis. Five are regional officials, six are women, and the vast majority of government ministries will have new ministers. The foremost tasks of this new interim government will be to prepare Iraq for a national election no later than January of next year and to work with our coalition to provide the security that will make that election possible. That election will choose a transitional national assembly, the first freely elected, truly representative national governing body in Iraq's history.

Earlier today I spoke to Secretary-General Kofi Annan. I congratulated him on the U.N.'s role in forming this new government. We also discussed the preparation for national elections and our common work on a new Security Council resolution that will express international support for Iraq's interim government, reaffirm the world's security commitment to the Iraqi people and encourage other U.N. members to join in the effort of building a free Iraq.

Last week, I outlined the five steps to helping Iraq achieve democracy and freedom. We will hand over authority to a sovereign Iraqi government, help establish security, continue rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure, encourage more international support, and move toward a national election that will bring forward new leaders empowered by the Iraqi people. The naming of the new interim government brings us one step closer to realizing the dream of millions of Iraqis, a fully sovereign nation with a representative government that protects their rights and serves their needs.

Many challenges remain. Today's violence underscores that freedom in Iraq is opposed by violent men who seek the failure not only of this interim government but of all progress toward liberty. We will stand with the Iraqi people in defeating the enemies of freedom and those who oppose democracy in Iraq. The killers know that Iraq is the central front in the war on terror. The return of tyranny to Iraq would embolden the terrorists, leading to more bombings, more beheadings, and more murders of the innocent around the world.