

of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks in Xenia, Ohio

September 27, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. There you go. Thanks, Mr. Mayor. Listen, thank you all for coming out to say hello. As you can see, I'm taking a bus trip. *[Laughter]* It's a fantastic way to see your beautiful State. I get to wave to people, shake some hands, and tell people that I'm running for a reason. I want this country to be a safer country, a stronger country, and a better country.

I'm proud to be with Mike and Fran DeWine and Congressman Dave Hobson. I want to thank you for coming out to say hello. I'm asking for your help. I'm asking for your vote. We've going to win Ohio again. We're going to win in November.

God bless you all. Thanks for coming. Great to see you all. Thanks for being here. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. at the Greene County Courthouse. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor John Saraga of Xenia, OH; and Senator Mike DeWine of Ohio and his wife, Fran. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in West Chester, Ohio

September 27, 2004

The President. Thanks for coming. Thank you all. Thanks for coming.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all for coming. That's what I'm here to tell you: I'm ready to lead this Nation for 4 more years. And I'm here to ask for your vote.

I think you've got to get out among the people and give them a reason. That's what I'm here to do today. I'm here to give you a reason why you ought to put me back in office for 4 more years. I not only want your vote; I want your help. I'd like for you to register your friends and neighbors, tell them we have a duty in this country to participate in democracy. Register your Republican friends; register your independent friends;

register your discerning Democrat friends, people like Zell Miller. And then when it's voting time, head them to the polls and tell them if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

Thanks for coming. It's a good sign when this many people come here for a rally. Let me tell you what I think. I think we're going to carry Ohio again, and I think we're going to win a great victory in November.

I wish Laura were here today to see this crowd. I'm going to have dinner with her tonight, and I cannot wait to tell her what I saw. As you might remember, she was a public school librarian. I asked her to marry me. She said, "Fine, just so long as I don't ever have to give a speech." *[Laughter]* I said, "Okay." *[Laughter]* Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. The American people got to see her in New York City a while ago, saw what a strong, compassionate, great lady she is. I love her dearly. Perhaps the most important reason to put me back into office is so that Laura is First Lady for 4 more years.

I'm proud of my runningmate. Dick Cheney is a fine man. Listen, I admit it, he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. *[Laughter]* I didn't pick him for his hair. I picked him because of his experience, his sound judgment. I picked him because he can get the job done for the American people.

I'm proud to be on this stage with John Boehner. What a fine man he is and a great United States Congressman. I'm proud to have worked with him on important legislation, and I'm proud to call him friend. I'm honored that Mike DeWine is with me today, the fine United States Senator from the State of Ohio. I appreciate you coming, Mike. Speaking about Senators, I hope you put George Voinovich back in office. He's a fine leader, good man.

I appreciate Congressman Rob Portman, Dave Hobson, who is with us, Mike Turner, Steve Chabot. I want to thank you all for coming. I'm proud you're serving the people of the great State of Ohio so well.

I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here. I know the Lieutenant Governor and the State auditor. My friend

Joe Deters is here. Write him in. Make sure you write him in. He's a good one.

I want to thank all the grassroots activists. I see my friend Anthony Munoz is here. I appreciate you.

Audience members. Munoz!

The President. Yes. He can still play, I agree. [Laughter] Fortunately, he's on my team. I need him, and I appreciate his hard work.

I want to thank Darryl Worley. I'm honored you're here, Darryl. I hope you like his music as much as I do.

Lakota East High School and Lakota West High School, thank you all for being here.

Most of all, thank you all for coming. It lifts my spirits to see so many people. I'm honored you're here, and I appreciate your interest in this campaign. You know, I'm looking forward to campaigning. I like it. I like to tell people what I believe, where I stand, and where I intend to lead this Nation for the next 4 years.

I believe every child can learn and every school must teach. I went to Washington to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. I didn't like a system that had low expectations and just shuffled kids through school year after year, grade after grade without teaching the basics. That's not right. That's not the America we know. So I worked with John Boehner to change the laws. We've raised the standards. We now measure so we can solve problems early, before they're too late. We trust the local people to run their schools. We're making progress in America. An achievement gap is closing, and we're not going to turn back.

I believe we have a moral responsibility to honor our seniors with good health care. I went to Washington to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents. I felt like we had a problem in Medicare. Medicare was modernizing, but Medicare wasn't. Take, for example, the fact that Medicare would pay some \$100,000 for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drugs that would prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That wasn't fair to our seniors. It's not fair to the taxpayers. We brought people together. We've strengthened and modernized medicine. Our seniors will be getting prescription drugs in Medi-

care in 2006, and we're not going to turn back.

I believe in the energy and innovative spirit of America's workers and small-business owners and farmers and ranchers. And that's why we unleashed that energy with the largest tax relief in a generation.

Listen, our economy has been through a lot. You might remember the stock market had been declining for about 5 months prior to our arrival in Washington, DC. And then when the recession came and hit us, and then some of our citizens forgot what it meant to be a responsible American. They didn't tell the truth to their shareholders and their employees. We passed tough laws in the face of those corporate scandals. We made it abundantly clear, we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. And then we got hit on September the 11th, and that hurt our economy as well.

When you're out there rounding up the vote, you remind people what this economy has been through. But our economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. Our economy has been growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, which is lower than the unemployment rate—average unemployment rate in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Still, parts of our country are lagging behind. You've got some people who are hurting here in Ohio. I know that. I'm not going to rest until every American who wants to work can find a job. We'll continue to promote pro-growth, pro-small-business, pro-farmer economic policy so everybody has a chance to be able to make a living.

I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty and weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This is not going to happen on my watch.

I'm running for President with a clear and positive plan to build a safer world and a more hopeful America. I'm running with a compassionate conservative philosophy that Government should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe this Nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership, and that is why, with your

help, we'll carry Ohio and win a great victory in November.

I understand the world we live in is changing. In the generation of our dads and granddads, a man generally had one job, one career, worked for one company that provided a pension plan and health care. This is a different world we're living in. Many people change jobs and careers during the course of a lifetime. Women work inside the house and now outside the house as well. Yet, the fundamental systems of our Government haven't changed. In a changing world—think about this—the fundamental systems, the Tax Code and health coverage and pension plans and worker training, were created for the world of yesterday, not tomorrow. I'm running for 4 more years to help transform these systems so that all citizens are equipped and prepared and thus truly free to make your own choices and pursue your own dreams.

A hopeful society is one that helps people realize their dreams. A hopeful society is one in which people can find work. I have a plan to make sure this recovery is lasting prosperity. If we want jobs to stay here in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. If we want jobs here, we've got to do something about these needless regulations that hamper our small-business owners. If you want jobs here in America, we must do something about the frivolous lawsuits that make it hard to expand the job base.

Listen, if you want jobs here, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. You cannot have a growing economy without a good energy plan. I submitted a plan that encourages conservation, a plan that uses renewables like ethanol and biodiesel, a plan that says we can use our coal in environmentally friendly ways by using clean coal technology, a plan that says we'll explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways using new technologies, a plan that modernizes our electricity grid, a plan that recognizes that in order to keep jobs here, America must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Listen, to create jobs, we've got to reject economic isolationism. We don't want to wall ourselves off from the world. One in five jobs in the manufacturing sector in this country

depend on exports. See, we've opened up our markets—I didn't open up the markets. Previous Presidents, both Republicans and Democrats, just like me realized it's to your advantage that you've got more products to choose from. See, when you get more products to choose from, you're going to find what you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the marketplace works. That's why I'm saying to places like China, "You treat us the way we treat you. You treat us fairly just the way we treat you fairly. You open up your markets to our people." And I say that because I know we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere if the rules are fair.

To create jobs, to make sure people can find work here, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. Taxes are an issue in this campaign. I'm running against a fellow who has proposed \$2.2 trillion in new Federal spending—so far.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Imagine what's going to happen when we get to October. [Laughter] Two-point-two trillion, that's a lot of money, even for a Senator from Massachusetts. [Laughter] So they asked him, "How are you going to pay for it?" He said, "Fine. We'll just tax the rich." You've heard that, haven't you? See, you can't raise enough money to pay—by taxing the rich to pay off \$2.2 trillion worth of new spending. There's a tax gap. You know who fills the tax gap.

Audience members. We do.

The President. Yes, you do. I'll tell you something else about that rhetoric, "tax the rich." The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason, to stick you with the bill. The good news is, he's not going to tax you, because we're going to win in November.

I'll say something else about the Tax Code.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I told you, our systems need to change. The Tax Code needs to change. It is a complicated mess. The Tax Code is a million pages long. Our people spend 6 billion hours a year filling out taxes. It's full of special interest loopholes. I'm going to bring Republicans and Democrats together in a new term to simplify this Tax

Code, to make it more fair for the people of America.

See, I've got a plan to make sure our workers have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. These are changing times, and the nature of jobs change with them. And sometimes people need help in order to get the skills necessary to fill the jobs for the 21st century. That's why I'm such a strong backer in the community college system. I also understand that most new jobs in a changing world are filled by people with at least 2 years of college, yet only one in four of our students gets there. That's why we'll fund early intervention programs to help students at risk in our high schools. That's why we'll emphasize math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools and expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, we will help more Americans start their career with a college diploma.

In a time of change, we need to do something about our health care system. When it comes to health care, I want you to listen to this debate now, coming down the pike. When it comes to health care, we have a philosophical divide. My opponent wants Government to dictate to you. I want you to decide. I want you to be the decisionmaker.

More than half of the Americans who are currently uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. In order to make sure these good folks have got health care, in order to make sure health care is more available and affordable for small-business owners, we must allow small businesses to pool together so they can buy insurance at the same discounts that big companies can. Under this plan, small-business owners and employees will be the deciders. My opponent opposes this kind of plan. He wants Government to decide on behalf of people.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. We need to expand tax-free health savings accounts. We'll give small-business owners tax credits to encourage them to put money in health savings accounts for their employees. We want people owning a health savings account so they can make medical decisions on the advice of a doctor,

not on somebody working for an HMO. We will expand community health centers to every poor county in America to help the indigent and the poor. We want people to have access to health care. We'll make sure that our low-income children's programs are fully enrolled in. We want people to—people who can't afford health care—we want to make sure health care is available for them.

But I'm going to tell you what else we need to do. In order to make sure health care is available and affordable, we've got to stop these junk lawsuits that are running good doctors out of practice and running up the cost of your health care. I've talked to too many ob-gyns in this country who are getting sued and having trouble practicing their medicine, and that hurts women. No, we need to make sure that we do something different than what we're doing in lawsuits—in the legal system today. See, you cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient, pro-hospital, and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. I think you have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a trial lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I made my choice. I'm for medical liability reform—now. Now, in all we do to make sure health care is available and affordable, we'll make sure that the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

Listen, in changing times, it helps people to have stability if they own something. The homeownership rate in America is at an all-time high under my administration. More and more people are owning their own home. We've got a plan over the next 4 years to continue to expand homeownership to every corner of this country. I want more people owning the—opening up that door of the house they live in and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

We've got to think differently about retirement systems too. Listen, if you're on Social Security, you don't have a thing to worry about. You might remember the campaign 4 years ago when they said, "If George W. gets elected, you're not going to get your check." Remember those ads? You got your check, didn't you? Don't listen to them this time, either. Baby boomers are in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. We need to think differently about retirement. I think younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their own money and set up a personal savings account to make sure Social Security meets its promise, a Social Security account you call your own, a Social Security account that Government cannot take away.

We have a difference of philosophy in this campaign. My opponent's programs expand Government. My programs expand freedom and opportunity for every American.

Listen, in changing times, things—some things won't change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In changing times, we'll support the institutions that gives our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. I stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

And we'll continue to work to spread the responsibility culture in this country. The culture of our country is changing from one that said, "If it feels, good do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. Since the terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we've fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We'll defend the homeland. We will transform our military. We'll strengthen our intelligence services. We will stay on the offensive. We will defeat the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will work to advance liberty and freedom throughout the world, and we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Four years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida; Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist

groups; Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising; Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons; Iraq was a gathering threat; Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we acted, the Government of a free Afghanistan is fighting terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting terror; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members have been brought to justice. We've led. Many have joined. And America and the world are safer.

We've still got hard work. This progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some hard decisions. The hardest came on Iraq. We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression. We knew he was a sworn enemy of America. We knew of his support for terror. After all, he harbored Abu Nidal, the leader of a terrorist organization that carried out attacks throughout Europe and Asia. Abu Abbas was in his country. He's the person that killed Leon Klinghoffer. Zarqawi, the beheader, had been in Baghdad prior to our arrival. We knew Saddam Hussein's long history of pursuing and even using weapons of mass destruction. We knew that. And we know that after September the 11th, our country must think differently. We must take threats seriously before they fully materialize.

In this dangerous world, we must never forget the lessons of September the 11th. We have a duty to protect the American people. We must take each threat seriously. So in Saddam Hussein, we saw a threat, and I went to the Congress. The Congress looked at the intelligence I looked at, remembered the same history I remembered, and voted overwhelmingly to authorize the use of force. My opponent looked at the same intelligence I looked at, and he voted "yes" when it came time to authorize the use of force.

Before the Commander in Chief commits troops into harm's way, he must try everything possible to prevent war. And so I went to the United Nations hoping that diplomacy would finally work with Saddam Hussein. That's why I went there. I have a duty to the moms and dads and husbands and wives

of those who wear the uniform to try everything to protect our country without the use of the military. And so I stood in front of the United Nations and made the case. They looked at the same intelligence I did. They remembered the same history, and they voted 15 to nothing to say to Saddam Hussein, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." I believe when an international body speaks, it must mean what it says.

Saddam Hussein didn't believe it. He didn't believe it. Why should he? After all, for 16 years, he had ignored the United Nations—excuse me, 10 years, 16 resolutions. That's resolution after resolution after resolution. As a matter of fact, when they sent inspectors into his country, he systematically deceived them. Diplomacy wasn't going to work. He wasn't about to listen to our demands. So we gave him a last chance. He ignored the last chance. And then I had a choice to make: Take the word of a madman, forget the lessons of September the 11th, or do what's necessary to defend this country. Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Because we acted to defend our country, 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq now live in freedom. Think about what happened in Afghanistan. That was a country run by the Taliban. They were barbarians. They think the exact opposite of the American people. They do not believe in freedom. Many young girls were not allowed to go to school in that country. Imagine a society that would not allow young girls to go to school, and then when their moms stepped out of line, they whipped them in the public square, sometimes killed them in a sports stadium. But today, the free people of Afghanistan are now able to register to vote. Ten million citizens, 41 percent of whom are women, have registered to vote in the upcoming October elections. It's a powerful statement of freedom.

It's in our interests that Afghanistan be free. There's no longer training camps there. Al Qaida can no longer find safe haven. Afghanistan is now an ally in the war on terror. And Afghanistan stands as a bright light, stands in contrast to that ideology of hatred spread by our enemies.

In Iraq, despite ongoing violence, they now have a strong Prime Minister, a National Council, and national elections will be held in January. I met with Prime Minister Allawi. He's a strong man. I wanted to make sure he was as committed to freedom as we were. He is. I looked him in the eye. He told me, he said, "Mr. President, we'll succeed if you don't let these terrorists shake your will." I told him, I said, "When America gives its word, Mr. Prime Minister, America will keep its word." A strong man, who knows that they can achieve their objective, which is a free society.

It's in our interest they achieve a free society. It's in our interest that Iraq be free. Iraq will be an ally in the war on terror. Iraq will be standing with the nations of freedom to stop these ideologues of hate from advancing their cause. You know, when the Prime Minister was here, he received great accolades, except there was one noticeable voice. My opponent criticized Prime Minister Allawi here in the United States.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He criticized a brave man who's risking his life for the freedom of his country and for our security. You cannot lead; you cannot lead a coalition; you cannot convince the Iraqi people that we stand with them if when their Prime Minister and their leader comes to U.S. soil, someone is willing to criticize him. He was wrong to question his credibility. America must stand with these people as they make the hard choices for freedom. It's in our interest.

The world will be more peaceful when Iraq is free, and Iraq will be free. And that's our mission. We will help train Iraqi citizens and Afghan citizens so they can do the hard work of defending their country against these terrorists who want to stop the march of freedom. We'll get them on the path to stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with honor they have earned.

Listen, we've got a great United States military. I'm proud to be their Commander in Chief. And I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. Thank you, sir.

And I want to assure the loved ones of those who wear the uniform, they'll have the full support of the Government. That's why I went to the Congress and asked for \$87 billion to provide vital equipment and fuel and ammunition, body armor for our troops in harm's way in both Iraq and Afghanistan. This was an important piece of legislation. Matter of fact, it was so important, we got great bipartisan support. Only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against the funding request, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When you're out rounding up the vote, remind people of this fact: Four Members of the United States Senate voted to authorize force and didn't vote to fund the troops, only four Members, two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember, they asked him, "How could you make that vote?" He said, "Well, I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." They kept pressing him. He said he's proud of his vote. And finally, he said, "The whole thing was a complicated matter." [Laughter] There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

I appreciate the contributions our friends and allies are making in our cause. They've been helping. We've got some 40 nations involved in Afghanistan, nearly 30 in Iraq, and I thank them. I'm not going to denigrate their service. I'm going to continue to thank their service in the cause of freedom. I believe they're doing useful, important work. Over the next 4 years, I'll continue to work with our allies and friends, but I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

Later this week, I'm going to have an opportunity to debate my opponent. It's been a little tough to prepare for the debates because he keeps changing his positions—[laughter]—especially on the war. I mean, after all, he voted for the use of force but against funding the troops. He said that we're not spending enough money to reconstruct Iraq, yet now says we're spending too much. He said it was the right decision to go into Iraq, yet now he calls it the wrong war.

Audience members. Flip-flop! Flip-flop! Flip-flop!

The President. I think he can spend 90 minutes debating himself. [Laughter] You cannot lead if you don't know where you stand. I'm going to continue to speak as clearly as I can and tell the people what I believe. And I'm not going to change positions when times get tough.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I believe the wisest use of American strength is to advance freedom. I like to tell the people that one of my favorite leaders is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. I saw him in New York. I said, "Do you mind if I talk about you on the campaign trail?" He said, "Fine." I said, "All right. I'm going to tell them you like Elvis,"—[laughter]—which he does. [Laughter]

I want you to think about this when you're explaining to people about what I mean by the transformational power of liberty. Think about this fact, that it wasn't all that long ago that we were fighting Japan as a sworn enemy of America. Fifty-eight years ago, it seems like a long—if you're 58 years old, it seems like a long time. [Laughter] In the march of history, it really wasn't all that long. My dad was in the war. I suspect many people's relatives were in that war against a sworn enemy.

After we won World War II, Harry Truman said, "Why don't we help the Japanese become a democracy," because he believed in the transformational power of liberty. There were a lot of skeptics in our country then. They said, "Well, you know, they were an enemy. They can't be a democracy," or, "Why worry? They were an enemy. They inflicted too much harm on us." But fortunately, the President and others stood their line. They believed, and today, because of that belief, I sit down with Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to keep the peace we all want. Think about that. And that's what we want. We want our children and grandchildren to be able to grow up in a peaceful world.

I believe we have that obligation to work for that peaceful world. And when we succeed in Iraq—you see, Zarqawi has only got one weapon. He can't beat us militarily. The only thing he can do is shake our conscience

because we value human rights and human dignity. We weep when we see the brutality he inflicts on TV. It breaks our—that's the only weapon he has. We also understand that freedom will whip the Zargawis of the world in the long term. In the long term, free societies will make this world a peaceful place. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq, and they'll be talking about the peace. And our children and our grandchildren will be able to grow up in a better world.

I believe the women in the broader Middle East yearn to be free. I believe that moms in every society want to raise their children in a free society. I believe that if given the chance, people in the broader Middle East will choose the finest government ever devised by man, and that's democracy. I believe all these things not because freedom is America's gift to the world; I believe this because freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

This young century will be liberty's century. By promoting freedom at home and abroad, we'll build a safer world and a more hopeful America. By reforming our systems of Government, we'll help more Americans realize their dreams. We'll spread ownership and opportunity to every corner of this country. We'll pass the enduring values of our country to a new generation. We will continue to lead the cause of freedom and peace.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that makes us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget the day. I'll never forget the sights and sounds of standing in that rubble. I remember workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember doing my best to console those who had come out of the rubble, and a guy looked me right in the eye, and he said, "Don't let me down." I've waken up every morning since that day thinking about how best to protect America. I will never re-

lent in defending the security of this country, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, as I traveled your great State asking for the vote, I said if you—I made a pledge that if you gave me a chance to serve our great country, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help and with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thanks for coming. Thank you all. Thank you, firefighters.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:39 p.m. at Voice of America Park. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; Lt. Gov. Jennette Bradley and Auditor of State Betty Montgomery of Ohio; Ohio State Treasurer Joseph T. Deters, write-in candidate for county prosecutor, Hamilton County, OH; pro football Hall of Famer Anthony Munoz; country music entertainer Darryl Worley; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zargawi; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Budget Request To Support Comprehensive Response and Recovery Efforts After Hurricanes Ivan and Jeanne

September 27, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On September 8th, I signed into law Public Law 108-303, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, which provided \$2 billion in supplemental funds for hurricane-related disaster relief. On September 14th, I submitted a supplemental request totaling \$3.1 billion to continue immediate assistance to address the impact of Hurricanes Charley and Frances.

Due to Hurricanes Ivan and Jeanne and other hurricane-related needs, I am requesting additional emergency funds from the Congress. I now ask the Congress to consider the enclosed requests, totaling over \$7.1 billion, for additional emergency FY 2004 supplemental resources for the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Homeland