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talents and experiences to enrich the lives of young people and demonstrate the compassionate spirit of America.

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 January 2007 as National Mentoring Month. I call upon the people of the United States to recognize the importance of mentoring, to look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities, and to observe this month with appropriate activities and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:49 a.m., December 28, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 27, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on December 29.

Remarks on the Death of Former President Gerald R. Ford From Crawford, Texas

December 27, 2006

My fellow Americans, all of us are saddened by the news that former President Gerald R. Ford passed away last night. I spoke with Betty Ford. On behalf of all Americans, Laura and I extend to Mrs. Ford and all President Ford's family our prayers and our condolences.

President Ford was a great man who devoted the best years of his life in serving the United States. He was a true gentleman who reflected the best in America's character. Before the world knew his name, he served with distinction in the United States Navy and in the United States Congress.

As a Congressman from Michigan and then as Vice President, he commanded the respect and earned the good will of all who had the privilege of knowing him. On August 9th, 1974, he stepped into the Presidency without ever having sought the office. He assumed power in a period of great division and turmoil. For a nation that needed healing and for an office that needed a calm and steady hand, Gerald Ford came along when we needed him most.

During his time in office, the American people came to know President Ford as a man of complete integrity who led our country with common sense and kind instincts.

Americans will always admire Gerald Ford's unflinching performance of duty and the honorable conduct of his administration and the great rectitude of the man himself. We mourn the loss of such a leader, and our 38th President will always have a special place in our Nation's memory.

President Ford lived 93 years, and his life was a blessing to America. And now this fine man will be taken to his rest by a family that will love him always and by a nation that will be grateful to him forever.

May God bless Gerald Ford.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:56 a.m. at the Bush Ranch. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Proclamation 8093—Announcing the Death of Gerald R. Ford

December 27, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

To the People of the United States:

It is my sad duty to announce officially the death of Gerald R. Ford, the thirty-eighth President of the United States, on December 26, 2006.

President Ford was a great man who devoted the best years of his life to serving the United States of America. He was also a true gentleman who reflected the best in America's character. Before the world knew his name, he served with distinction in the United States Navy and the United States House of Representatives. As a congressman from Michigan, and then as Vice President, he commanded the respect and earned the