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06/24/2004 - Video Taping: U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Convention [767892]

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COLLECTION TITLE:

Staff Secretary, White House Office of the

SERIES:

Kavanaugh, Brett - Speech Files

FOLDER TITLE:

06/24/2004 - Video Taping: U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Convention [767892]

FRC ID:

10457

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Collection Code: **SECLOG**

Staff Name: **PRESIDENT**

Document Date: **06/24/2004**

Correspondent:

Subject/Description: **PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: VIDEO TAPING: U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS ANNULA CONVENTION - JUN 24 04**

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BY
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6/24/04

Video Taping: U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Convention
Thursday, June 24, 2004
Draft #7

Greetings to everyone gathered for the 72nd Annual Conference of Mayors. I have seen many of you as I've traveled the country, and I thank you again for your warm welcome and hospitality.

America's towns and cities are the bedrock of our democracy. As mayors, you serve at the level of government closest to the people. You encourage local business growth and help keep our neighborhoods safe. And you are the first to hear the concerns of your constituents.

I salute you for your service to your communities, and I pledge to continue to work with you.

On the economic front, I have good news to report. Our economy is strong and growing stronger. We have added over 1.4 million new jobs since last August, with nine straight months of job gains. Manufacturing jobs have been on the rise for four consecutive months, with over 90,000 jobs created. Unemployment rates have fallen in 46 out of the 50 states over the past year. And our economy has grown at the fastest rate in nearly 20 years.

Our economy is changing, and I have a plan to make sure workers have the skills to fill the jobs of the future. My Jobs for the 21st Century initiative will fund partnerships between community colleges and local businesses, so that workers get the education and training they need.

The Environmental Protection Agency recently announced more than 75 million dollars in Brownfields grants to revitalize former industrial sites and spur economic growth in more than 200 communities.

My HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson is with you to talk about my housing initiatives. Homeownership rates are at record highs, and I am especially proud that minority homeownership is at its highest rate ever. But we will not rest until we narrow the minority homeownership gap, and every American has a chance to own their home and realize the American Dream.

On education, we passed a bipartisan law – the No Child Left Behind Act – which is bringing higher standards and accountability to every public school. And my budget for 2005 would increase federal spending on education forty-nine percent since 2001. The federal government is sending more money, and asking for results. We are challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations, and we will continue until no child is left behind.

We are helping faith-based programs apply for federal grants on an equal basis so we can unleash the armies of compassion to help people in your communities. I congratulate you for establishing the Mayors' Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives this year. I have also proposed a four-year, 300 million dollar Prisoner Re-entry Initiative that will expand job training, placement services, transitional housing, and mentoring to help newly-released prisoners return to society.

When I met with you in January, I said that if federal resources were not reaching America's first responders and law enforcement officials, I would get them "unstuck." At my directive, Secretary Ridge has established a Task Force on State and Local Homeland Security Funding. Its members recently delivered their report, recommending reforms to help move funds more quickly to states and local governments. The federal government has responsibility to help local officials build the capacity to prevent acts of terror and respond to danger – and we will meet that responsibility.

My most solemn duty is to protect the American people. Thanks to the brave service of our men and women in uniform, we are making progress in the war on terror. We have captured or killed many key leaders of the al-Qaida network. And the rest of them will learn that there is no cave or hole deep enough to hide from American justice.

We will continue to fight terrorists in places like Afghanistan and Iraq so we do not have to fight them in our own cities and towns. By helping democracy and freedom rise in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and throughout the Middle East, we are advancing hope as an alternative to terrorism. As freedom takes hold, the world will be more peaceful, and America will be more secure.

Thank you again for your leadership and your dedicated public service. I look forward to continuing to work with you. My Office of

Intergovernmental Affairs and its Director, Ruben Barrales, stand ready to assist you. Best wishes to everyone for a successful conference.

Drafted by: **Suzy DeFrancis, White House Communications**
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Video Taping: U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Convention
Thursday, June 24, 2004
Draft #2

Greetings to everyone gathered for the 72nd Annual Conference of Mayors. I have seen many of you as I've traveled the country, and I want to thank you again for your warm welcomes and hospitality.

America's towns and cities are the bedrock of our democracy. As mayors, you serve at the level of government closest to the people. You are charged with tasks that affect the daily lives of our citizens. You encourage local business growth and help keep our neighborhoods safe. And you are the first to hear the concerns of your constituents.

I salute you for your service to your communities and pledge to continue to work with you at the national level.

On the economic front, we have good news to report. Our economy is strong and getting stronger. We have added over 1.4 million new jobs since last August, with nine straight months of job gains. And unemployment rates have fallen in 46 out of the 50 states over the past year.

My Administration will continue to create the conditions for economic growth. My Jobs for the 21st Century initiative will fund partnerships between community colleges and local businesses, so that workers get the education and training they need to fill the jobs of the future.

Last week, my Administration acted to help communities like yours spur greater economic growth. The Environmental Protection Agency announced more than \$75 million in Brownfields grants to revitalize former industrial sites.

When I met with you in January, I told you that if Federal resources were not reaching America's first responders and law enforcement officials, we would get them "unstuck." Secretary Ridge followed my directive and established the Task Force on State and Local Homeland Security. Last week, its members delivered their report, along with concrete recommendations to move funds more quickly to the local level, so local officials can better protect their communities.

At home, my Administration will continue working with you to strengthen the economy, secure our homeland, and extend hope to all Americans.

And abroad, we will continue to fight terrorists in places like Afghanistan and Iraq so we do not have to fight them in our own cities and towns. Because of the brave service of our men and women in uniform, we are making progress in the War on Terror. And by helping the rise of democracy in Iraq, in Afghanistan and throughout the world, we are undermining the appeal of terrorism, and that is essential to making the world more peaceful and America more secure.

Thank you again for your leadership and your dedicated public service. And best wishes for a successful conference.

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