

December 6, 2004

Dear Leaders and Conferees:

My most solemn duty is protecting the American people, and reforming and strengthening our Nation's intelligence capabilities will help ensure the safety of our country. I call on Congress to pass an intelligence reform bill this week. An overarching principle for these needed reforms has been to create a strong Director of National Intelligence with full budget authority while preserving the chain of command within departments and agencies. We are very close to a significant achievement that will better protect our country for generations to come, and now is the time to finish the job for the good of our national security. Therefore, I want to reiterate my views on some issues of concern to Members.

When I met with the Congressional Bipartisan Leadership at the White House on September 8, 2004, I stated that the country needed a strong Director of National Intelligence with full budget authority. At the same time, I have stated that we need a bill that respects the chain of command within departments and agencies, including the Department of Defense, so as to ensure that all of the war-fighters' needs will be met. As Commander-in-Chief, it is ultimately my responsibility to ensure that both of these goals are realized, and they are captured in the attached formulation.

Accordingly, in developing implementing guidelines and regulations for this bill, it is my intention to ensure that the principles of unity of command and authority are fully protected. It remains essential to preserve in the heads of the executive departments the unity of authority over and accountability for the performance of those departments. In particular, as we continue to prosecute the global war on terrorism, the integrity of the military chain of command and the principle of battlefield unity of command must continue to be respected and in no way abrogated. These guidelines will also honor my commitment to provide the Director of National Intelligence full and meaningful budget authority over the National Intelligence Program. This is critical to make certain that the intelligence community is more effectively managed. The guidelines will also help ensure that the Director of National Intelligence has enhanced management authorities, including the ability to oversee and integrate all the foreign and domestic activities of the intelligence community, to achieve the unity of purpose needed to win the global war on terrorism.

With regard to other provisions in the legislation, I want to congratulate the Conference for adopting important and time-sensitive law enforcement provisions that:

- Strengthen current laws to make certain we can arrest those aiding terrorists, including those who have received military-style training in terror camps.
- Increase our ability to target terrorism financing.
- Ensure that dangerous terrorists are lawfully detained while awaiting trial.
- Help prevent attacks by shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, known as MANPADs, and weapons of mass destruction by mandating appropriate penalties.
- Provide authority to help stop “lone wolf” terrorists.
- Expand our jurisdiction to prosecute those who seek weapons of mass destruction.

It is imperative that Congress act this week to guarantee these vital tools become part of our arsenal immediately.

I also believe the Conference took an important step in strengthening our immigration laws by, among other items, increasing the number of border patrol agents and detention beds. There were other measures proposed that were not incorporated into the bill. My positions on these provisions were detailed in a letter from the Office of Management and Budget to Conferees on October 17, 2004. However, these omissions from the final bill should not prevent the Congress from passing this historic legislation now. I look forward to working with the Congress early in the next session to address these other issues, including improving our asylum laws and standards for issuing driver’s licenses.

I appreciate all the work done to date by this Congress and the September 11<sup>th</sup> Commission. These are some of the most challenging, complicated, and important issues facing our government. The Leaders and Conferees deserve great credit for working together to protect the safety of the American people.

Sincerely,

/s/

George W. Bush

Attachment:

*The President shall issue guidelines to ensure the effective implementation within the executive branch of the authorities granted to the Director of National Intelligence by this title, which guidelines shall respect and not abrogate the statutory responsibilities of the heads of the departments of the United States Government concerning such departments, including, but not limited to:*

- (a) the authority of the Director of the Office of the Management and Budget; and*
- (b) the authority of the principal officers of the executive departments as heads of their respective departments, including, but not limited to, under—*
  - (1) Section 199 of the Revised Statutes (22 USC 2651);*
  - (2) Title II of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 USC 7131);*
  - (3) State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956, as amended;*
  - (4) Section 102(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 USC 112 (a)); and*
  - (5) Sections 301 of title 5, 113(b) and 162(b) of title 10, 503 of title 28, and 301(b) of title 31, United States Code.*