

## UPHOLDING AMERICA'S VALUES

*Americans are generous and strong and decent, not because we believe in ourselves, but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves. When this spirit of citizenship is missing, no government program can replace it. When this spirit is present, no wrong can stand against it.*

President George W. Bush  
Inaugural Address, January 2001

When President Bush took office in 2001, he put forward an aggressive agenda to address the challenges to those values that help define us as a Nation. Too many children were not getting the quality education they deserved. Too many seniors were without a means of receiving the prescription drugs they needed. The Nation's environmental efforts frequently resulted in lawsuits instead of common-sense solutions. And in the face of so many unmet challenges, some of America's most capable social service providers were being systematically excluded from working with the Federal Government to help our neediest citizens.

From the beginning, this Administration has pursued a new approach to America's challenges. This approach focuses on achieving results for all Americans. Those Government programs that work well will be supported, and those that need strengthening will be reformed.



Caring for our seniors. President Bush meets with 94 year old Anna Tovcimak after a roundtable discussion on Medicare Liability Reform in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

## NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

In an increasingly complex and competitive world, the education of our children has never been more important. And yet when President Bush entered office, two-thirds of all low-income fourth graders could not read at grade level, and the achievement gap between rich and poor students was growing. Since the President signed into law the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in January 2002, parents, teachers, and principals have begun to see the first signs of progress that come from insisting on results. The Act raised standards for students and put the focus on achievement. By 2003, all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had put into place plans to ensure that all students become proficient at reading and math and that schools close the achievement gap between students of different socio-economic backgrounds.

By increasing flexibility and local control, and providing parents more choices, NCLB gives every school in every community the chance and the funds to improve. Schools struggling to meet high

standards are getting help, but they are also being held accountable for increasing the achievement levels of their students. Under NCLB, States and school districts are publishing report cards that show how well students in each socio-economic group are achieving. Furthermore, NCLB provides funds for tutoring, so that parents of students in schools needing improvement can select from over 1,600 supplemental service providers approved by the State and find a program that is directed at the specific needs of their child.



Ready to read. President Bush helps a child with a reading assignment at Sullivant Elementary School in Columbus, Ohio.

The President has also worked to secure the funding necessary to implement these critical improvements in our education system. With the increases proposed in this year's Budget, the Administration will have increased funding for Title I grants for low-income students by \$4.6 billion, or 52 percent, since 2001. Over the same time frame, Special Education funding will have increased by \$4.7 billion—75 percent higher than in 2001. We have also helped nearly 10 million students each year fulfill their dream of attending college by annually providing more than \$60 billion in student aid through grants, loans, and work-study support.

Central to the President's education agenda is the belief that all children can and must be taught to read. In 2005, the President will continue this commitment by providing over \$1.2 billion for reading programs—an increase of \$138 million—for a total that is over four times the amount spent in 2001. Under this Administration, all 50 States have received grants, totaling \$1.8 billion, to improve reading instruction and ensure all students are reading at grade level by the third grade. Last year, the Department of Education awarded a \$37 million contract to establish the National Center for Reading First Technical Assistance. The Center will provide ongoing, high-quality

### Spreading the Word on “What Works” in Education

It is no coincidence that the No Child Left Behind Act uses the phrase “scientifically-based research” over 110 times. Evidence-based research is critical to ensuring that parents, teachers, schools, and States have the necessary information to raise student achievement.

Early in his administration, the President pledged to reform Federal education research so that practitioners and policymakers have quality, evidence-based research to help guide their decision-making. Through passage of the Education Sciences Reform Act, the President met his pledge and created the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), a new office dedicated to improving research standards and the dissemination of results to parents and teachers.

IES is committed to the President's vision for research, and is helping to fill critical gaps in research knowledge on subjects like math education while finding new ways to help teachers apply findings to classroom instruction. Through programs like the What Works Clearinghouse, which distills research knowledge into a usable format, IES is transforming education research into an evidence-based field—one which promises to help leave no child behind. To ensure that IES has the necessary resources to make these efforts a success, the President's Budget provides a 12-percent increase for core Education Department research activities.

technical assistance to States, districts, and schools for the implementation of scientifically-based reading instruction.

By insisting on results and holding schools accountable, we are making significant progress in upholding our Nation's commitment to educating all children. The President's 2005 Budget builds on recent accomplishments by targeting resources to education programs that are most effective in educating our children.

## MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS: FULFILLING A COMMITMENT TO OUR NATION'S SENIORS

*Our nation has the best health care system in the world. And we want our seniors to share in the benefits of that system. Our nation has made a promise, a solemn promise to America's seniors. We have pledged to help our citizens find affordable medical care in the later years of life. Lyndon Johnson established that commitment by signing the Medicare Act of 1965. And today, by reforming and modernizing this vital program, we are honoring the commitments of Medicare to all our seniors.*

President George W. Bush  
December 2003

The Congress has been debating a Medicare prescription drug benefit for a decade. In 2003, the President and the Congress were finally able to break the logjam that had blocked this benefit for America's seniors and secure the passage of a bipartisan solution that will allow seniors to share fully in the benefits of the best health care system in the world.

For the first time, all 40 million seniors and disabled Americans in Medicare will have the option of prescription drug coverage. Beginning in 2004, seniors will be able to save 10 to 25 percent off the retail price of most medicines through a Medicare-approved drug discount card. In 2006, seniors who want prescription drug coverage will have the choice of remaining in the traditional Medicare system and joining a prescription drug plan, or enrolling in a Medicare-approved plan. For beneficiaries who currently do not have any prescription drug coverage, this could cut their annual drug costs roughly in half, in exchange for a modest monthly premium. Low-income seniors will receive additional help paying for their medicines. And seniors enrolled in private or employer-sponsored coverage will be allowed to stay in their current plan if they so choose.

Private plans will also be encouraged to compete for seniors' business. Not only will seniors benefit from this competition through greater flexibility and innovation in coverage, but Medicare, seniors, and the Government will also benefit from more efficiency and potentially lower-cost health services.

Medicare is being strengthened in other ways. In 2005, seniors will receive a "welcome to Medicare" physical that will include screening for cancer, diabetes, and heart disease, as well as immunizations



Listen first, then act. President Bush takes a private moment to discuss Medicare. In December 2003 the President signed into law the first major improvement in Medicare since 1965.

### Prescription Drug Assistance

President Bush has visited with seniors around the country and heard many of their stories. With the enactment of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003, those seniors finally have the prescription drug benefit they need.

One senior, from Midlothian, Virginia, has a modest income and drug bills of nearly \$500 a month. Things became so difficult that she had to use the same needles two or three times for her insulin shots. With the new Medicare law, she will not have to go to such extremes. In exchange for a monthly premium of about \$35 in 2006, this senior will save nearly \$2,700 in annual prescription drug spending.

Another senior, in Culpeper, Virginia, takes 15 medications costing him at least \$700 a month. To afford all those medications he has to keep working. Thanks to the new Medicare law, once this senior has the drug benefit, he will be able to cut back his work hours and enjoy his retirement more because he will have coverage that saves him about \$4,700 a year.

against pneumonia and the flu. A Medicare ombudsman will assist beneficiaries who have complaints or need information on Medicare providers and program rules. And new fiscal safeguards will give Medicare a stronger financial footing by alerting the Congress and the President when Medicare's revenues fall below adequate levels.

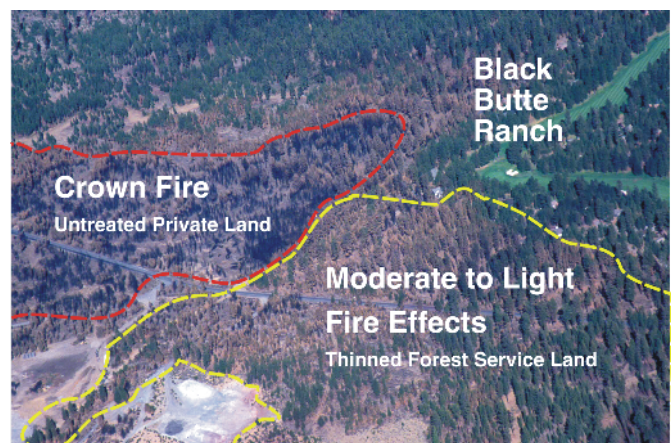
## HEALTHY FORESTS AND CLEAR SKIES: BEYOND THE ADVERSARIAL APPROACH

America's air and water are cleaner than they were 30 years ago. But more work needs to be done to protect our health and the environment. New technologies and better science are enabling us to develop more effective approaches than the command-and-control policies of the past. The President has pursued a bold environmental agenda to better safeguard our health and ecosystems while allowing for growth and innovation.

### *Healthy Forests Initiative*

Catastrophic fires have plagued the West for years and threatened lives, land, buildings, air quality, endangered species, and the health of our forests. Habitats for endangered species and other wildlife have been devastated by severe fires.

In August 2002, in the midst of one of the worst fire seasons in recent history, the President launched his Healthy Forests Initiative. The initiative focuses on reducing the risk of catastrophic fire while upholding environmental standards. This is accomplished by permitting the thinning of dense undergrowth and brush in priority locations on a collaborative basis with Federal, State,



Taming Wildfire. At the top, untreated forest is scorched by violent crown fires. At the bottom, healthy treated forests burn more naturally.

### **Saving Black Butte Ranch**

As fire blazed through the dense areas of the Deschutes National Forest in Central Oregon, residents of Black Butte Ranch, a private community adjacent to the forest, were alarmed at its intensity. However, the U.S. Forest Service, in cooperation with State and local officials, had implemented a hazardous fuels reduction program in the wildland-urban interface surrounding the community. The Forest Service had thinned and limbed trees, mowed shrubs, and removed ground fuels, effectively creating a fire buffer adjacent to the community.

When the fire reached the treated area, the intensity lessened dramatically, dropping out of the crowns to the ground, where crews were able to stop the fire by hand. Result? Only two homes were lost while many others were saved. Had fuel treatments not been performed, the entire community most likely would have been destroyed.

tribal, and local officials. The initiative also permits more timely responses to disease and insect infestations that threaten to devastate forests.

Last December, the Congress passed and the President signed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. This law strengthens public participation in the development of high-priority forest health projects; reduces the complexity of environmental analysis, allowing Federal land agencies to use the best science available to actively manage land under their protection; and provides a more effective appeals process encouraging early public participation in project planning. Overall, the Act established a more effective and timely process to protect communities, wildlife habitats, and municipal watersheds from catastrophic fires.

The President's Budget continues to support fire fuels reduction efforts, which reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Funding for these efforts will increase by an additional \$58 million in 2005, for a total that is more than four times the funding in 2000. The President's Budget also provides funding for fire suppression at the 10-year average, \$685 million, and supports front-line firefighting resources with \$660 million for fire preparedness.

### ***Clear Skies***

America has made extraordinary progress in cleaning up the air we breathe. Still, we can do more by employing proven tools for reducing pollution. In 2002, the President proposed the Clear Skies Initiative which would employ the successful "cap-and-trade" approach responsible for reducing more pollution in the last decade than all other Clean Air Act command-and-control programs combined.

The Clear Skies Initiative would create a mandatory program to dramatically reduce power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), and mercury by setting a national cap on each pollutant. Over the next 10 years, Clear Skies would achieve substantially greater reductions in pollution from power plants than are attainable under current law. The Clear Skies approach would deliver guaranteed emissions reductions of SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and mercury at a fraction of command-and-control costs, increasing certainty for industry, regulators, consumers and citizens, while maintaining energy diversity and affordable electricity. Under Clear Skies, tens of



A clear day. President Bush calls on the Congress to pass Clear Skies legislation on September 16, 2003.

millions of people who would have otherwise been exposed will be protected from unhealthy amounts of ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter, which cause respiratory and cardiovascular distress.

Clear Skies will also benefit our wildlife habitats and ecosystem health by reducing acid rain, nitrogen and mercury deposition. Clear Skies will cut pollution further, faster, more cheaply, and with more certainty.

Because the Congress has not yet acted, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has moved forward to implement a cap-and-trade plan to reduce emissions. In December 2003, the EPA proposed the Interstate Air Quality rule. This rule would establish an innovative cap-and-trade system to reduce power plant emissions of SO<sub>2</sub> by approximately 70 percent, and NO<sub>x</sub> by about 65 percent when the rules are fully implemented. The Administration will continue to work with the Congress to enact Clear Skies legislation.

#### **Clear Skies: A Clear Improvement**

Clear Skies will produce dramatic improvements in air quality, reducing power plants' emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury by 70 percent from 2000 levels.

EPA estimates that Clear Skies annually could prevent up to:

- 14,100 premature deaths;
- 23,000 heart attacks;
- 30,000 hospitalizations and emergency room visits; and
- 180,000 asthma attacks.

## **COMPASSIONATE RESULTS: HELPING AMERICANS MOST IN NEED**

President Bush is committed to helping Americans in need by reaching out to and expanding the role of faith-based and community organizations. To achieve this goal, the President has directed Federal agencies to remove barriers that prevent faith-based and grassroots groups from doing more to help their fellow citizens.

One of the President's first official acts was to create the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The Office was tasked with leading a "determined attack on need" by strengthening and expanding the role of faith-based and community organizations in addressing the Nation's social problems. The Office was charged with leveling the playing field for faith-based and community groups that want to partner with the Federal Government.

In September 2003, regulations went into effect allowing faith- and community-based charitable organizations to compete fairly for billions of dollars in Federal money. The Administration has proposed additional regulations to ensure that all groups competing for Federal grant funds are treated fairly. Due to these efforts, faith-based organizations previously denied Federal grants are finding it easier to apply for and obtain the resources that will enable them to further help those in need.

In the 2005 Budget, the President again proposes to encourage more people to contribute to their communities through charitable giving by extending the availability of the tax deduction for charitable contributions to those who take the standard deduction. In order to support charitable efforts further, the President also proposes to increase the Compassion Capital Fund in 2005 to \$100 million so that charitable organizations can improve and expand their services.

*[O]ur government must not fear the application of faith into solving social problems. We must not worry about people of faith receiving taxpayers' money to help people in need. In my judgment, that doesn't obscure the line of church and state; it enhances the capacity of state to save lives, by tapping into this fundamental powerful resource of ours, the heart and soul of the American people.*

*The discrimination against faith-based programs at the Federal level prevents us from using all our resources to save lives. And for those who hurt, we need to use every resource we have. For those who are lonely, we need to use every resource. For those who are hungry, we need to use every resource. For those who look for housing, we need to use every resource. And so one of my missions is to work with people to end the discrimination in Washington, D.C. against faith-based programs.*

President George W. Bush  
September 2003



Good company. President Bush visits the St. Augustine Parish Hunger Center in Cleveland, Ohio in May 2001.

The Administration is also working to mobilize the armies of compassion to help at-risk children most in need. In 2005, the President's Budget provides \$50 million in competitive grants to train adult volunteers as mentors to children whose parents are incarcerated, and \$100 million to schools and community-based organizations for school-based mentoring.

The President's Budget also proposes \$300 million over four years to fund an initiative to help communities impacted by the ever-growing number of released inmates. This initiative will help released inmates—estimated to be in excess of 600,000 in 2004—turn to religious and community charities for assistance

in finding work, staying out of prison, and starting new lives. These funds will supplement resources already available in the Department of Labor's budget for these purposes.

And the 2005 Budget continues funding for the President's Access to Recovery drug treatment voucher initiative. In 2005, the initiative will provide \$200 million in vouchers to those in need to obtain assistance from the most effective drug and alcohol treatment programs, including faith- and community-based organizations.

## **ANSWERING THE CALL TO SERVICE**

The response to the President's "Call to Service" has been tremendous. The overall ranks of America's volunteers increased from 59.8 million to 63.8 million from September 2002 to September 2003. The USA Freedom Corps created the largest ever clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities—millions of service options are available through more than 75,000 organizations according to interest and geographic location. The USA Freedom Corps has also helped channel this increase in volunteerism in such exemplary ways as the Business Strengthening America Initiative, where CEOs make long-term changes in corporate practices to facilitate employee participation in volunteer service activities.

America's need and potential for service remain great. The President's Budget addresses this need and this potential by requesting the highest funding level in history for the Corporation for National and Community Service. It includes \$442 million for AmeriCorps and \$225 million for SeniorCorps to meet the President's commitment of supporting 75,000 AmeriCorps members and 600,000 SeniorCorps volunteers. The Budget also includes \$20 million for Silver Scholarships for older Americans who volunteer 500 hours of service tutoring and mentoring students, in exchange for a \$1,000 scholarship. Seniors may transfer their scholarships to a grandchild or young person.



Putting it together. President Bush discusses his faith-based initiative with urban leaders gathered at the White House.

America's spirit of service extends around the world. The Peace Corps is currently active in 71 countries—14 more than in January 2002—and is enrolling 7,533 volunteers, the highest number in 28 years. The Budget continues the President's support for the Peace Corps by providing \$401 million in 2005.

*Nearly two years ago, I created USA Freedom Corps to continue the momentum generated by the countless acts of kindness we saw after the attacks of September 11, 2001. I asked every person in America to commit 4,000 hours over a lifetime, or about 100 hours a year, to serving neighbors in need.*

*The response was immediate and enthusiastic, and has remained strong. Over 75,000 service organizations now work with USA Freedom Corps, and a growing percentage of Americans have answered the call to service.*

*America's 63 million volunteers are setting a fine example for our Nation. They are meeting essential needs in their communities—and they know the fulfillment that only comes from serving a cause greater than self. And many volunteers got started in the same way: Because someone asked them.*

President George W. Bush  
December 2003

## EXTENDING AMERICA'S COMPASSION

The President's Budget includes approximately \$17 billion to fight HIV/AIDS in the United States. For example, the Budget provides over \$2.9 billion in care and treatment programs—including \$784 million for the Ryan White AIDS Drug Assistance Program—and over \$750 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. The Budget also includes nearly \$2.6 billion in HIV/AIDS research funding for the National Institutes of Health.

America's compassion does not stop at the water's edge. That is why in his 2003 State of the Union President Bush announced the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The scourge of AIDS is a global threat that the United States is leading the world to address. In 2003, AIDS claimed the lives of approximately three million people worldwide, and an additional five million people were infected. This disease is particularly insidious because the nations hardest hit by AIDS are also among the poorest—these nations have seen their labor productivity cut in half and their economic growth fall by 2.6 percent.



President Bush's plan will: provide \$15 billion over five years for 14 focus countries that are home to 70 percent of HIV infected individuals in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, and 50 percent of all cases worldwide; continue bilateral programs in over 75 countries; and include \$1 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This life-saving plan will prevent seven million new HIV infections, treat at least two million people with life-extending drugs, and provide care for at least 10 million people affected by AIDS. The President's 2005 Budget provides \$2.8 billion for the second year of the five-year Emergency Plan, an increase of over \$450 million.

## CONCLUSION

Improving education for all children, strengthening Medicare, working towards a cleaner environment, and extending compassion and a helping hand to those in need are key to supporting the values that make our Nation strong. The agency chapters that follow describe in more detail how President Bush's Budget proposes to address the challenges we face in upholding these and other important American values.