



WHITE HOUSE WOMEN'S INFORMATION NETWORK

Women Leaders From Around the World Celebrate Democracy



Laura Bush greets Afghan Ministers during her visit to the State Department for an International Women's Day Forum in Washington, D.C., Tuesday, March 8, 2005. White House photo by Susan Sterner

Mrs. Laura Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice co-hosted the Conference of Women Leaders at the U.S. Department of State on International Women's Day, March 8, 2005.

Selected remarks from Mrs. Bush

"America supports societies around the world that are moving toward democracy and greater political participation for women.

America has become a world leader because of our commitment to freedom, but our own history isn't perfect. For decades, women fought for the right to vote and to hold office. Yet even while they were denied access to the ballot box, women made their voices heard on issues like slavery, workers' rights, the protection of children, the intellectual life of their country, and good government. The perseverance of early women leaders was realized when American women gained the right to vote early in the last century.

We all have an obligation to speak for women who are denied their rights to learn, to vote or to live in freedom. We may come from different backgrounds, but advancing human rights is the responsibility of all humanity, a commitment shared by people of goodwill on every continent."

For more information, please visit www.whitehouse.gov.

Mrs. Bush Highlights Women's Achievements in Afghanistan

*Selected remarks by Mrs. Bush at the Women's Teacher in Training Institute, March 30, 2005
Kabul, Afghanistan*

"The United States Government is wholeheartedly committed to the full participation of women in all aspects of Afghan society, not just in Kabul, but in every province.

We must be mindful though, that democracy is more than just elections. The survival of a free society ultimately depends on the participation of all its citizens, both men and women. This is possible if institutions like this exist to give women the basic tools they need to contribute fully to society-and the most critical tool of all is an education.

These are more than just development projects-they also signify the bond between the American and Afghan people. They are symbols of our shared hopes and dreams for the future. That dream is of a prosperous, peaceful, and above all, a free Afghanistan, where both men and women stand upright in equality.

As we have worked together these past years, we have accomplished much and launched projects that will yield great results in the coming years. We have also learned a great deal about each other. We have come to know what is in each other's hearts, and is so doing, come to understand that we are very much alike."

For full text, please visit www.whitehouse.gov.



Mrs. Laura Bush is joined by Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education, during a visit Tuesday, March 29, 2005, to the Women's Teacher's Training Institute in Kabul, Afghanistan. White House photo by Susan Sterner

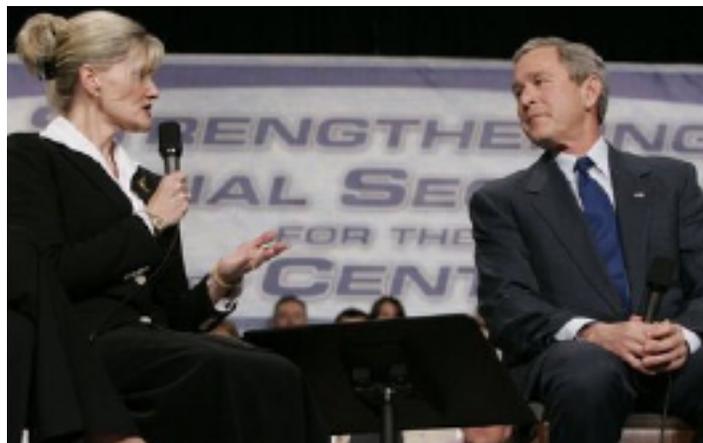
Strengthening Social Security for Future Generations

President Bush is traveling around the country to discuss the importance of Social Security and the need to fix the system for future generations of Americans. Social Security was one of the great moral successes of the 20th century by providing a critical foundation of income for retired and disabled workers and the President wants to ensure this success continues.

For one-third of Americans over 65, Social Security benefits constitute 90% of their total income, and the President has assured Americans that he will not change the Social Security system in any way for those born before 1950. Social Security is sound for today's seniors and for those nearing retirement, but it needs to be fixed for younger workers — our children and grandchildren. The government has made promises it cannot afford to pay for with the current pay-as-you-go system.

In 1950, there were 16 workers to support every one beneficiary of Social Security, compared to today where there are only 3.3 workers supporting every Social Security beneficiary. In 2008 — just three short years from now — baby boomers will begin to retire. And over the next few decades, people will be living longer and benefits are scheduled to increase dramatically. By the time today's youngest workers turn 65, there will only be 2 workers supporting each beneficiary. Under the current system, today's 30-year-old worker will face a 27% benefit cut when he or she reaches normal retirement age.

If we do not act to fix Social Security now, the only solutions will be dramatically higher taxes, massive new



President George W. Bush participates in a discussion on strengthening Social Security at Montgomery County Community College in Blue Bell, Pa., Feb. 10, 2005. White House photo by Eric Draper

borrowing or sudden and severe cuts in Social Security benefits or other government programs. The fact is Social Security will go broke when our young workers get ready to retire. Every year we wait the problem becomes worse for our children. President Bush has pledged to work with Congress to find the most effective combination of reforms. He will listen to any good idea that does not include raising payroll taxes.

For more information regarding the President's Plan to Strengthen Social Security please visit the White House website at www.whitehouse.gov.

Making a Difference for America's Youth

On March 7th, the President and Mrs. Laura Bush highlighted the need to volunteer to help children and teens reach their full potential. The President and Mrs. Bush believe every American has an opportunity to help children and youth in their families and communities to avoid trouble and lead more hopeful lives. Faith-based, community, and volunteer organizations across the Nation are involved in efforts to reach at-risk youth and get them involved in their communities. The Federal government plays an important role by pursuing policies that help the good

works of these organizations.

This fall, Mrs. Bush will convene the first-ever White House Conference on Helping America's Youth. The Conference will promote public awareness of the various problems facing at-risk youth in our Nation, and it will bring together policymakers, research experts, foundations, faith-based and volunteer organizations, educators, coaches, and parents to share examples of what is already working to make a difference in the lives of young Americans, and to generate new ideas that can be used across the country.



Laura Bush talks with Providence Family Support Center after-school program participants Isaiah Baynes, right, and Carlaija Whitehead during her visit and President Bush's to Pittsburgh to highlight the program's efforts to help area youth Monday, March 7, 2005.

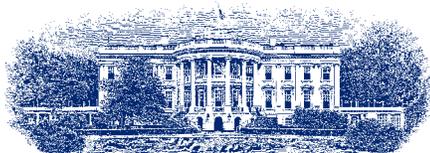
President Bush Celebrates Women's History Month

During Women's History Month, we celebrate the achievements of our Nation's women. For generations, American women have helped build our great Nation through their leadership as writers, teachers, artists, politicians, doctors, and scientists, and in other professions. As mothers, daughters, and sisters, women have supported and strengthened American families and communities. Women are at the forefront of entrepreneurship in America, creating millions of new jobs and helping to build our Nation's economic prosperity.

As we commemorate Women's History Month, I encourage all Americans to celebrate the extraordinary contributions and accomplishments of American women and to continue our progress in making our society more prosperous, just, and equal.



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