



Special Edition Conaway Chronicle: The State of Our Union
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Last night, I sat amongst my colleagues as President Bush gave his final State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress. President Bush reiterated to the American people that although our country continues to face serious challenges, we as Americans have much to be thankful for.

The President addressed the major issues facing our country and discussed a domestic agenda for America, including energy, health care, spending reform, education and immigration. He also spoke of his international agenda, including: the War on Terror, Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and trade with Colombia, Panama and South Korea.



As always, the number one priority continues to be keeping our homeland secure. U.S., Iraqi and Afghan troops are providing noteworthy successes in the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to achieve significant results, meaning future deployment will be decreased. One Army brigade combat team and one Marine Expeditionary Unit have already come home and will not be replaced. In the next few months, four more brigades and two Marine battalions will return home as well, which means that more than 20,000 of our troops are coming home. The President outlined specific benchmarks that have been reached since last year's speech, and discussed what else needs to be done to ensure victory, including the deployment of 3,200 Marines to the forces in Afghanistan to ensure the progress that has been made toward a stable Afghan democracy is not reversed.

Although the immediate future of our economy is unsure, President Bush urged Congress to implement an economic growth package including making the current tax rates permanent. If Congress delays, letting the tax cuts expire, approximately 116 million Americans will see an increase of \$1800 in tax dollars. He also pushed the issue of entitlement reform on the joint session, stating the importance of saving important programs such as Social Security and Medicare. Failing to reform these programs will cause massive tax hikes for hard working Americans and puts Medicare and Social Security at risk of extinction. It is imperative that these important programs be preserved for our children and grandchildren. He also discussed the significance of domestic energy exploration and creating renewable energy sources, nuclear and clean coal initiatives, as well as the creation of a new \$2 billion international clean technology fund.

With regard to all of the issues that the President outlined in last night's speech, I anticipate working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to accomplish our mutual goals and keep our nation secure.

[Click here](#) to read a copy of the President's speech.

[Click here](#) to listen to my podcast on the President's speech and the economic

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stimulus package passed by the House this afternoon.

Due to the short legislative week in Washington, the Conaway Chronicle will return in two weeks. I hope that you will find it informative and will continue to stay informed with my recent legislative activities in Washington. In the meantime, if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for future issues of the Conaway Chronicle, please visit the website at www.house.gov/conaway or don't hesitate to call me at (202) 225-3605. Check out my blog at www.conawayblog.com!

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