

### Remarks on Signing Agriculture Economic Assistance Legislation in Crawford, Texas

August 13, 2001

Please be seated. Thanks. I want to thank you all for coming. And I have the honor of signing a piece of legislation that was passed out of the House and the Senate in record time. It's a piece of legislation to provide economic assistance to the ag communities all across America. It's \$5.5 billion in total. This money is on top of the monies in the 2001 farm bill. And it's necessary. It's necessary for our ranchers and our farmers.

First, I want to thank my neighbors for coming. This is, I guess, maybe the first bill signing ceremony ever in Crawford, Texas. [Laughter] I don't think it will be the last. It's a meaningful piece of legislation for this part of the country because a lot of people make their living on the farm and on the ranch. And we want our families to be on the farms and ranch. After all, farm families represent the best of America. They represent the values that have made this country unique and different: values of love of family; values of respect for nature—I always tell people that every day is Earth Day when you own your farm, when you're working the land—values in understanding that there's some things beyond our control, that the Almighty controls the weather, sometimes in ways we like, and sometimes in ways we don't like; values of hard work; values of the entrepreneurial spirit; and values of private property. These are really important values that make America different and America unique, and values that we need to keep intact.

I'm worried about the fact that the ag economy suffers, because agriculture is a part of our national security mix. If we can't grow enough food to feed our people, we've got a problem. It will complicate our foreign policy, needless to say. Well, we've got to make sure our ag economy stays strong and healthy, and this supplemental is a way to help do that.

And so I want to thank you all for coming. I was hoping it would start raining in the middle of this little talk—[laughter]—and then I could take credit for it.

I think one of the things, as well, that I really appreciate about the Crawford area is the fact that there is a concept of neighborliness. People say, well—I go downtown, and I have a nice burger the other day with some people, and they say—they walk up and say, "I'm your neighbor." That's an important concept for our country because a neighbor means more than just somebody living next door to somebody else. A neighbor means that there's somebody around willing to help somebody.

I tell people all the time that the great strength of this country is in the fact that we've got such loving and decent people all across America who, when they find a neighbor in need, are willing to help out, are willing to help that neighbor. And that doesn't require any Government law; you can't pass a law that says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," or, "You will be neighborly." That's because America is full of just such decent people.

And so I want to welcome my neighbors, and I want to thank you all for coming. And it is my honor now to sign this piece of meaningful legislation that should make the lives of the people who farm and the people who ranch much better off.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon at the Bush Ranch. H.R. 2213, approved August 13, was assigned Public Law No. 107-25.

### Exchange With Reporters Following the Agriculture Economic Assistance Legislation Signing Ceremony in Crawford

August 13, 2001

#### Stem Cell Research/Macedonia

**Q.** Mr. President, some people in Congress are talking about passing legislation to allow stem cell research on embryos that are still in fertility clinics—

**The President.** I've said all I'm going to say for a while.

**Q.** Would you veto legislation like that?

**The President.** The statement I laid out is what I think is right for America. And any