

President George W. Bush



EDUCATION

No Child Left Behind requires states to set high standards for schools and ensures accountability so that all students meet those standards, including Limited English Proficient, and Hispanic students. The law requires schools to measure performance of all students to make sure every child completes school able to read, write, add, and subtract. The law also empowers parents to make choices: if a school is not improving, parents have the option to transfer their children to better performing public schools or select tutors paid for with Federal funding. We have also supported these reforms with historic increases in Federal education funding, including a 49% increase for elementary and secondary education in 2005, and a 52% increase for Title I funding for low-income schools since 2001. And No Child Left Behind requires participating Title I schools to provide equitable services to eligible children attending private schools and to their teachers and families.

CIVIL RIGHTS and JUSTICE

My Administration has worked to level the playing field for minority and low-income Americans by breaking down the barriers to affordable housing, health insurance, education, and economic prosperity. We are creating an environment in which Americans of all backgrounds share equal opportunities to achieve. And to ensure that equal justice is available to every American my Administration is the *first* to ban racial profiling in Federal law enforcement.

I support equal opportunity and equal rights for all. I also support affirmative access, a policy that aggressively reaches out to minorities, is inclusive of people of all races, provides equal opportunity, and promotes diversity, without resorting to quotas.

POLITICAL ACCESS

The best way for any American to make his or her voice heard is to vote on Election Day. And to ensure that the voting process is fair and legal, the Department of Justice is vigorously enforcing the Voting Rights Act so that every voice is heard.

It is important that government includes people from all walks of life. My Adminis-

tration includes many prominent Hispanics like my Counsel, Judge Alberto Gonzales, and Small Business Administrator Hector Barreto.

ECONOMIC POWER

We have created almost 1.5 million new jobs since last August, and the current unemployment rate (5.5%) is lower than the average rate during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. And the Hispanic unemployment rate (6.8%) is lower than the average rate during the previous Administration.

We are also creating an environment ripe for economic growth. There are millions of new small businesses owned by members of the Hispanic community. Hispanic-owned companies employ about 1.4 million Americans and carry a payroll of nearly \$30 billion. To continue expanding financing opportunities for small businesses, we have increased the number of government-guaranteed loans granted under the Small Business Administration's 7(a) program by over 50% from 2000 to 2003. Loans to Hispanic Americans increased by 42% from 2002-2004.

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

America is a stronger and better Nation because of the hard work and entrepreneurial spirit of immigrants. The jobs being generated in our growing economy that are not being filled by American citizens represent an opportunity for workers from abroad who want to work and fulfill their duties as a husband, wife, parent, son, or daughter. In order to make our immigration system safe, orderly, humane, and legal, I have proposed a new temporary worker program that offers legal status as temporary workers to the millions of undocumented men and women employed in the United States as of January 7, 2004, allowing them to come out of the shadows and seek protection from abuse and exploitation. Participation in this program should not preclude a worker from obtaining green card status through the normal

Takes the LULAC Challenge

process, but participants should not gain advantage in that process over those who have followed the rules. I favor increasing the availability of green cards to help make the opportunity to become a citizen more realistic.

ENVIRONMENT

Our air and water are cleaner today than they were ten years ago, but we can do even better. My Clear Skies Initiative is the most aggressive presidential effort since the 1970s to improve America's air quality. It will reduce power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and, for the first time ever, mercury, by approximately 70%. My Administration has also implemented the Clean Air Nonroad Diesel Rule, which will promote public health by cutting emission levels from construction, agricultural, and industrial diesel-powered equipment by more than 90%, and will also cut sulfur levels in diesel fuel by more than 99% over current levels. These efforts will also improve the health of all Americans and reduce the number of hospitalizations related to pollution.

Fulfilling a promise, I signed and implemented historic Brownfields legislation to clean up our Nation's urban areas by restoring more than 1,000 old industrial sites in our urban communities. We are converting them to safe, viable, and usable properties in our cities.

HOUSING

For the first time the majority of minority households are homeowners. I am committed to closing the minority homeownership gap by helping at least 5.5 million minority families buy a home by 2010. Through the American Dream Downpayment initiative, we will help an estimated 40,000 families with a down payment every year. My Zero Downpayment Initiative would help 150,000 families yearly, and the Affordable Housing Tax Credit would provide \$2.5 billion over five years to increase the supply of affordable homes.

HEALTH

My Administration is making health care more affordable and more accessible for every American. We have expanded Medicare to provide prescription drug coverage to seniors and established new health savings accounts (HSAs) so that Americans can pay for routine medical expenses and save for future medical expenses in a tax-free account. To help extend care to more low-income, rural, and minority communities, I have committed to a five-year plan to open and expand 1,200 new community health centers to serve an additional 6.1 million individuals (we are already serving 3 million more patients than in 2001). We have approved Medicaid and SCHIP changes that will extend eligibility to 2.6 million more Americans. I have also asked Congress to approve refundable tax credits worth up to \$3,000 per family to subsidize health insurance coverage for workers and their families. We have proposed to allow small businesses to band together to purchase more affordable coverage for their employees, and to reduce frivolous lawsuits that drive up costs and drive good doctors out of medicine. These combined efforts are putting health care control back into the hands of patients and doctors.

LEARNING ENGLISH

No Child Left Behind provides more support for English language acquisition than ever before at the same time that it values and supports native tongues. Under my Administration, funding to support English Language Acquisition programs has increased nearly 50% to \$681 million to ensure that Limited English Proficiency students are able to meet high standards in reading and math.

WOMEN'S ISSUES

We are working to ensure that all Americans are secure during their retirement. I am working to keep Social Security sound and reliable without changing benefits for retirees or near retirees and without raising payroll taxes. As we work together to strengthen Social Security we must offer younger workers a chance to invest in personal savings accounts, which for the first time, would provide many low-income and minority Americans with the opportunity to build a nest egg that could be passed along to their spouses and families.

We are also funding programs committed to eliminating disparities in health care. Through targeted programs, we are working to fight diseases like diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and HIV/AIDS, all conditions and diseases that adversely affect minority populations.

I support flexible work options for families. I support the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to employees in certain situations, including birth and adoption. And I have asked Congress to enact flex-time and comp-time to allow parents to choose more flexible schedules and spend more time with their children.