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[9-13-04 Victory-04 Rally - Des Moines, IOWA - PREPARED.doc](#)

Similar to remarks for rallies last week. One major change - addition of Medicare reimbursements. Many thanks.

Remarks for Mrs. Laura Bush
Victory 04 – Des Moines, Iowa
Monday, September 13, 2004

AS PREPARED

Thank you, Senator Lamberti, for your kind introduction and for your leadership as Senate President. Special thanks to all of the State Senators and Representatives here with us today, including Senators Nancy Boettger [BUTT-ger] and Patricia Ward, and Representatives Carmine Boal [BOWL], Jodi Tymeson [TIE-muh-son], and Linda Upmeyer. Thanks also to Doug and Eileen Gross, and to the many volunteers who are working o hard to ensure that President Bush leads this country for four more years! [REDACTED] b(6)

[REDACTED] b(6) The President was here last month., and we were both in Cedar Rapids. We love visiting the heartland of America, and we'll be here a lot in the next few weeks. Four years ago, we lost this state by a little more than four thousand votes.

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b(6) The President and I first traveled together on the campaign trail when he was running for Congress in Midland in 1978. Newly married, we spent all of our time in the car driving up and down the panhandle of West Texas. Believe me you learn a lot about your husband when you spend that much time in a car with him. By the end of the campaign he had even convinced me to vote for him! This time I don't need any convincing. I've watched my husband lead this country with strength and conviction through some of our generation's greatest struggles. I've watched him take decisive action to lead us out of recession with the largest tax relief in a generation. Thanks to my husband's commitment to tax relief, we've added 1.7 million jobs since last August – that's more than Germany, Japan, England, Canada, and France combined. The unemployment rate has fallen to 5.4 percent, nationally, and to 4.4 percent here in Iowa. And today, more families than ever before, especially minority families, own their own homes. I've watched as our schools have improved with higher standards of accountability and with increased funding, so that every child in every neighborhood has a chance to succeed. And I've watched my husband make the tough decisions that have helped to safeguard our children from terror and liberate people from tyranny.

We've been through historic times together in the last four years. And these are also times of change that require new ideas to move America forward. We know that families face new challenges, and that government should respond to these changing times. Compared to just a few decades ago, we have more parents working full time today than ever before. Two thirds of all moms work outside the home and more single mothers are doing double duty alone. More entrepreneurs are starting their own businesses – while workers are changing jobs more often and going back to school to keep up with our evolving workforce. We're also living longer and we have more opportunity than ever before. My husband wants to extend this opportunity to every corner of America, so that all Americans have a chance to participate in an ownership society. Last week in New York, President Bush outlined his agenda for a new term. Helping families face the challenges of our changing world is at the heart of the President's plan.

Opportunity starts with education. We all want our children to go to the best schools and to learn the skills they need. And we especially want our students in high school to be well prepared to go on to college or to join the work force. President Bush believes we need to strengthen math and science education and broaden Internet learning so that young people can compete in our technology-driven world. For workers who want to go back to school to learn new skills, the President will work with community colleges to make career training more available. And because higher education is the dream of so many, he will make Pell grants more available so more Americans can get their college diploma.

And when these graduates enter the workforce, many of them will go to work for a woman. Ten million women own their own business in America, and this sisterhood just keeps growing. Women are opening businesses at twice the rate of men, and they employ more than 19 million employees. In August, I met Carmela Chiafos (SHY-FUSS) who is the only woman in Iowa to own a towing company. Carmela spent nearly two decades with her father building their company from a part-time hobby with one truck to a full-time business with two-dozen trucks. Carmela told me, and I love this quote, "If you're determined and you want to work hard, you can do anything you want to. That's the beautiful thing about America." Small business owners like Carmela are some of the hardest working people in our country, and my husband wants to enable all Americans to share in their success.

The President knows that this starts with making tax relief permanent! Already, small business owners have each saved an average of \$3,000 this year alone. Owners are investing this extra money, expanding their operations, and strengthening our economy. With the capital gains tax relief passed last year, Carmela was able to buy the business from her father and someday she hopes to pass her company on to her two children. My husband also wants to enable all business owners to provide their workers with something we never have enough of, and that's time – time to play with our kids, to take care of our parents, or to volunteer in our communities. President Bush will work with Congress to make flex-time and comp time available so more Americans can better manage the demands of work and family.

President Bush also wants to ensure that all families, especially in rural areas, have access to the best and most affordable health care. He knows that starts with bringing good doctors back to Iowa and making sure hospitals here continue to provide quality care. For too long, doctors in rural areas were paid less for their services under Medicare than doctors who performed the same services in bigger cities. Rural doctors were often forced to move their practice, and hospitals couldn't attract talented physicians. After Congress spent years arguing over how to improve Medicare, President Bush brought Republicans and Democrats together to increase reimbursements for doctors and hospitals in rural areas. Under the new Medicare law, hospitals in Des Moines will receive an additional fifty-six million dollars in Medicare payments over the next ten years – while hospitals across Iowa will receive an additional \$141 million in Medicaid payments. This is vitally important for medical centers like Broadlawns, where more than half of inpatient admissions and more than sixty percent of outpatients have no insurance. Medicaid and Medicare funding is essential to keeping Broadlawns open for Iowa families.

We have the best healthcare in the world, and my husband believes it's time to put care back into the hands of patients and doctors! That's why he's working to improve another issue that is of particular concern to doctors, and to women – medical liability reform. When I traveled to Philadelphia a few weeks ago, I met Erin Zezzo, who learned about junk lawsuits the hard way. Erin had a trusting relationship with her OB-GYN, who delivered her first two children. Shortly into her third pregnancy, Erin's doctor had to stop delivering babies because he couldn't afford his medical liability insurance. A few weeks later, her doctor was forced to close his practice. Erin had to find a new doctor while she was six months pregnant.

Frivolous lawsuits raise the costs of health care and drive good doctors out of practice. To help doctors, and women like Erin, President Bush will work to reform the medical liability system and reduce junk lawsuits.

All of these issues are important to the strength of our nation. But as we grieve for the families in Russia, and as we mark the third anniversary of September 11th – I believe what's most important is my husband's work to protect our country and to defeat terror around the world. The terrible acts of September 11th showed us the threat we face, but they also called us to the great work of promoting freedom and democracy in the far corners of the world. President Bush and I want all of our men and women in uniform and their families to know how much we appreciate their sacrifice. We appreciate the dedication of courageous Americans like retired Captain Kristin Macy of the 422nd 4th Army Reserve Unit who is with us today. Captain Macy, you and your comrades, and all of our military families are in our thoughts and prayers. As we do the hard work of confronting terror, you can be proud that today, fifty million more men, women and children live in freedom thanks to the United States of America and our allies.

After years of being treated as virtual prisoners in their homes by the Taliban, the women of Afghanistan are going back to work. After being denied an education, even the chance to learn to read, the little girls in Afghanistan are now in school. More than 10 million Afghan citizens have registered to vote in this fall's presidential election, and more than 40 percent are women. Because we acted, the people of Iraq are now free from the tyranny of a brutal dictator. The Iraqi interim government is preparing for national elections in January. We still face many challenges in Iraq everyday. But we know that the defeat of terror in Iraq is vital to the defeat of terror around the world. And we have pledged to stand with the Iraqi people during this historic and hopeful time for their nation.

As we stand with the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, we must remember that building a democracy takes time. Think of how long it took us in our country, even though we were given such a perfect document by our founders. It took almost 100 years after our founders declared that all men are created equal to abolish slavery – and not until 84 years ago did American women get the right to vote. Our nation has not always lived up to its ideals, yet those ideals have never ceased to guide us.

We are the beneficiaries of the works of the generations before us, and it's our responsibility to continue that work. My husband believes that there's more to do to make our country safer, stronger, and more hopeful. And he will continue the great and privileged work of leading America forward while holding true to our timeless ideals.

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These are times of change for our nation – and these are also years of promise. We have great confidence in our ability to overcome challenges. We've gained a new appreciation for the many blessings of America, and we've been reminded of our responsibilities to the country we love. George and I grew up in West Texas, where the sky seems endless, and so do the possibilities. Little did I know when I was growing up that I would literally marry the boy next door. But after 27 years of marriage, I can tell you that my husband brings that optimism, that sense of purpose, that certainty that a better day is before us, to his job every day.

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Thank you all, may God bless you and may God bless America.

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