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Mayor Rudy Giuliani's Remarks in Tampa, FL

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As Delivered

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MAYOR GIULIANI: Thank you. Tested. Ready. Now. America needs a leader. I am running for President of the United States because I believe that I can lead America into a new era with bold leadership, optimism, determination, and distinctly American solutions. If you're looking for perfection, you're not going to find it. Not in me, not in any candidate. But if you're looking for a leader who has been tested in times of crisis; a leader who's ready to lead right now; a leader who's achieved results – results that some people thought were impossible --a leader who believes that there is no problem too difficult for American solutions and a free, American spirit. I believe I am that leader.

I've met adversity before. I've led in situations that seemed hopeless and dire, in need of a miracle. I don't just pray for miracles. I don't just hope for miracles. I expect miracles.

Some people look at the challenges we face as a nation and they fear the future. I welcome it. I welcome the opportunity to keep America safe and secure. We will win the Terrorists' War on Us.

I welcome the opportunity to restore fiscal discipline to Washington D.C.

While we empower millions of people to move out of poverty and achieve the American dream. And I welcome the opportunity to win this election.

Leading a revitalized, 50-state Republican Party into the White House.

But as I travel across our land, I've begun to hear a murmur that America somehow has lost the ability to achieve great goals. Some good people have come to believe that our country is on the wrong track. Middle Class families feel that the American Dream may be slipping away. They're worried about the future. They're worried that the future may not be as bright as the past. They're worried that this may be the time where the next generation of Americans doesn't do as well as the last generation. It doesn't have to be that way. We — we, you and I — can decide America's direction. We can determine America's future. After all, that's what an election is all about. So let's decide for optimism, not pessimism; for hope, not despair; for strength, not weakness; for victory, not defeat.

We can't afford a crisis of confidence at the time we need our confidence the most because our country does face real crisis right now. We're at war. The American people want to see victory in Iraq and Afghanistan, not humiliation and defeat.

They want their children to live free from the fear of terrorism. They're telling us, get it done. And we will.

Washington's culture of wasteful spending is out of control. Everyone knows that. The American people want to see real fiscal discipline. They're telling us, get it done. And we will.

Americans have heard presidents talk about energy independence for three decades. Now they're paying more at the

pump and they're seeing their money go into the pockets of some of our enemies. They're telling us, get it done. Get energy independence done. We will.

The American people are angry that the federal government has failed to protect and secure our borders. And they're telling us, get it done. And we will.

What America needs in 2008 is a proven leader who will get things done. I've been tested. I'm ready. And the time is right now.

This is a time for leadership. A leader is someone who combines vision for the future with the ability to get things done. It's a person who can dream about a better future and then help bring it into reality, actually make [is] it possible. So today, I'm going to share with you my vision for our future, for America's future. This summer, we presented a bold agenda for the future. It was my 12 Commitments to the American people.

But today I want to explain it in a slightly different way. I want to explain it by describing my vision of the America that I want to hand over to my successor if you give me the honor of being your president. Because we all believe that everyone of us, no matter what our role or who we are in this country, all of us has an obligation, a responsibility to hand our nation to the next generation better than it was handed to us.

We're about improving our country for the next generation. We've always been about that. This generation has to be about that.

So we'll hand over an America where our schools are the best in the world – not 21st in Science, not 25th in Math like we are today. I've got a goal for America. How about being # 1?

We can reform education—primary and secondary education in this country and we can do it by creating and expanding school choice. We'll empower parents – not government bureaucrats – let the parents choose where their child goes to school. Who knows better?

All children – rich and poor, middle class or otherwise – all children deserve a quality education: whether it's public, private, parochial, charter or home-school. To me, this is the great civil rights issue of our time. Our children, all of our children, not just yours, not just mine, all of our children need a good education and if the parents are making the choice, if that's the rule in this country and not the exception, I'm confident that the decisions will be made in their interest. They're going to do it better than some bureaucrat who has never met their child, doesn't know their child. So let's give the power here, the main power to the parents.

We'll hand over an America that embraces [is] the global economy. That needs fairness. Of course we need a level playing field, but we should be less concerned about how much we buy from overseas, except from the point of view of safety and security, that's important. But on the economics of it, what we should really be focusing on is how much do we sell to overseas?

America is an entrepreneurial society. We should view the rise of China and India, the people moving out of poverty in China and India, we should view that as a great opportunity to find what America is always looking for: new customers. Right?

When they think of us as a country that's militaristic, they're wrong. The essential nature of Americans is not war. Americans only go to war when they have to and then of course we do it to win and to prevail and to be safe. So do it in a determined way. But here's the essential nature of America and Americans. Here's what we really want to do with you all around the world. We want to sell you something. Right?

Isn't that what America's all about. America is an entrepreneurial society. But we also need to keep our house in order here in the United States. We'll hand over a country that's more fiscally disciplined, with a government no larger than it has to be. It'll be a country where taxes, regulations, abusive lawsuits don't drive jobs and businesses out of the United States. And we'll create—

And we'll create hundreds of thousands of jobs, millions of jobs, in the process. We'll lower the income tax and the corporate tax rates.

We'll give the death tax the death penalty.

We'll find many ways to bring tax relief to middle class families where that tax relief is needed the most. And you know what else we're going to do? We're going to develop a single page, one-page optional tax form. How about being able to do it all on one page? Wouldn't that be great?

Ok. The print may be a little small.

But we'll work real hard to get it on one page. The Democrats running for president seem to want a nanny state. They want to run your life from the cradle to the grave. We don't want that kind of state. America's like a country that puts reliance on individuals, on people, what they can do, what they can accomplish. America's a country that works on initiative. And then we give people opportunity and help to have that initiative, but we don't try to direct their lives from the day [their] they're born until the day they die. We'll hand off a country that doesn't penalize success. We'll reward success. We want a country where the "sky's the limit". People can reach for the stars and they can have a hope that they can get there. We don't want to put a lid on their desires, on their ambitions. We want to encourage social mobility. What country has done it better than America in the history of the world? Move people out of poverty, create social mobility, have people in one generation go from the virtual bottom to the virtual top and all the places in between. We do that by being a country of initiative, a country that rewards success, not a country that penalizes success. So we want to encourage social mobility. That's how we move people out of poverty. That's how we strengthen the middle class and that's how we bring the American dream within the reach of every willing person in this country.

Now if you keep doing that, I'm going to stop giving this speech. I'm going to go out and play football.

We'll hand over a country where decisions about your healthcare are made between you and your doctor, not between you and a Hillary-care custodian.

We can make health care more affordable, portable. We can do that through tax cuts, not tax hikes and government mandates. We can open the market, we can increase choice, we can empower individuals and all of that, all of that will drive down the cost so that people can afford health insurance and good health insurance, quality health insurance. That has to be our goal. We do it through an America, we do it through private decision-making and private markets not through socialized medicine.

We'll hand over a country with 200 new federal judges - or 400, if you give me a second term. Well let's work on the first one first. Ok.

These judges will be responsible men and women, people who understand that their role is to interpret the Constitution, not social activists who legislate from the bench.

To do anything less is to deny us the defense of liberty that comes from the separation of powers. We'll hand over a country where we've ended illegal immigration where it has to be done - at the border.

And also a country who's arms are wide open to people who come here, people who come here legally and openly. We want them, we need them, we will accept them, and what we want them to do, if they want to become citizens, is meet all the requirements and then be able to read English, write English, and speak English.

Ending illegal immigration won't be easy. It requires changing human behavior - but it needs to be done for everyone's good. I have the will. I have the way to do it, the plan to do it, and I have the track record to bring safety and order and fairness to a situation that is now [our] out of control. I've done it before, I can do it again.

We'll hand over an America that is stronger, safer and more secure. We'll make every community better prepared, more prepared for terrorist attacks and natural disasters something you know about here in Florida. The hurricanes of a few years ago where you had to deal with four all in one short season. The way you did it was a really good emergency response. The rest of the country needs to be at at least that level of preparation and we all need to be at a higher level of preparation. And as we do that, we'll build a more resilient society - ready to withstand anything that comes our way and ready to help those in need, whenever and wherever they need it. We're one country. We're in this together. Natural disaster, terrorist attack, you learned here in Florida. I learned that in New York. We embrace each other.

We'll hand over an America that is achieving energy independence. We can do it by increasing the diversity of our energy sources. And we can do it by having both a healthy environment and a healthy economy. The two things are not inconsistent with each other. The two things compliment each other if you do energy independence the right way and you move toward the right sources and you support it. And most the most important thing is we'll approach this goal with the same single-mindedness that America used to put a man on the moon. Remember? Well, some of you don't remember. You're too young.

You remember. I remember. You don't remember. But you're going to read about this in history, because it's one of our great historical moments. The Apollo Mission, the mission to put a man on the moon, it was started by President Eisenhower, a Republican. It was advanced greatly by President Kennedy, a Democrat. It was brought almost to its final stages by President Johnson, another Democrat, and it was completed under President Nixon, another Republican. This wasn't a Republican success. This wasn't a Democratic success. This was an American achievement.

That's when we're at our best. That's when we're at our best, when we're thinking like Americans. We were at our best to put a man on the moon, we were at our best to deal with the horror and the shock and the pain and the suffering of September 11th, weren't we? No Republicans, no Democrats just Americans. That's what we need to achieve energy independence and then maybe we can take that sprit and we can apply it to some of these other big problems that we face. What we really need is to reaffirm and we need a new era, not of Republican success or Democratic success, how about we look for things where we can have American success.

Finally, and this is the big challenge of our generation, we'll hand over a country that is safer, that is more secure from the Terrorists who are at war with us and around the world. We'll do it the same way that Ronald Reagan accelerated the end of Cold War. President Reagan used to be asked in the early days of his presidency, when the Cold War was in some ways you know very intense, they'd say to him "You know this Cold War's been going on for a long time is it ever going to end, how is it going to end? People couldn't see an ending to it, it'd been going on for so long. Will it ever end, can it end? Ronald Reagan listened to them, paused the way he used to, put a little smile on his face and when they were asking him how would it end, he just had that little smile on his face and he said: "They Lose. We Win."

That's the same approach that we need to defeat these enemies that we have. We need to stay on offense in this Terrorist War against Us, achieving peace through strength, that's the only way you achieve peace, through great strength, by being on offense, by being strong, by being confident, by having a military that we expand, not contract. We have to rebuild our military.

I have a goal in Iraq it's not the Democrats goal, they tried to legislate loss in Iraq, they're still trying to legislate loss in Iraq. I have a different goal. It will be a very clear decision for the American people. Here's my goal for Iraq, victory, success for America and for our troops. Let's achieve the goal that we went there to achieve, a stable Iraq that will act as an ally for us in the ongoing Islamic Terrorist war against us. That is a victory for us and a defeat for them.

Our men and women there believe they can achieve that. They've shown us unexpected progress; many people even opponents of that war have been surprised at how exceptional the progress has been. So let's help them and support them. And let's do the same thing in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Let's make sure we finish the job and we eliminate Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

We will hand over an America that has stopped Iran from becoming a nuclear power.

And when we stop them we won't just be moderately confident but we'll be totally sure.

But we also need to win the war of ideas and the war of ideals. Strengthening our ties with the Middle East, embracing those people in the Middle East, in the Arab world, in the Islamic world. The overwhelming majority of people who want peace, who below the cultural differences share the same values that we have. We've got reach out to them; we've got to get to know them better. We've got to get them to know us better. We've got to do more business with them. That part of the world is filled with people with the same entrepreneurial spirit that we have. The same love for their children that we have, the same desire for a safe and secure life for themselves that we have. There are a few people and more than a few but by no means anything close to a substantial proportion of people, that have perverted the thinking and turned it into a political ideology now of hatred and anger and viciousness and aggression. But that shouldn't stop us from reaching out to all of the rest of those people who have the same desires that we have. We should actually be having more contact with,

doing more business with, having more cultural relationships with the Middle East now than we have ever had before. It is another way to win the Terrorist War against all of Us. And I will do that and I will make sure that we open up in the same way that we will be strong and on offense, we will also have a very big open arm for all those people who want to work with us. We'll embrace them, they'll embrace us, it's not the first time America has done that, it won't be the last and it will work. I guarantee you it will work.

So all of this is saying that America needs bold leadership to meet these very very big challenges that we have. But I know we have the strength to hand our nation to the next generation stronger than it's been handed to us. We have the capacity to improve things the way our fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, mothers, fathers, people all over have done for us. I have faith in the Genius of America: the power of free people to solve whatever problems they face. That's why my solutions all begin with a simple thought, a simple philosophy: Give people more power.

America's not unique because of its central government. America is great because of self-government. We unleash the genius of America when we increase freedom. The freedom to pursue success, prosperity, happiness, fulfillment, in the way that you choose, not the way that the government dictates to you. The genius of America is you. The individual American. When you decide how to spend your money, you'll spend it more productively than any government ever will.

When you're the one deciding what school your child should go to, you'll make a much better decision than some government bureaucrat can make for a child they never met or never known. And when you decide what kind of healthcare you should have, you will make a much better decision than some government custodian can make for you.

It's really simple. I believe in the strength and wisdom of the American people. Look at our history and you'll see why. Because no matter when or how your ancestors came to this country, we are all the proud descendants of pioneers and patriots. They created this for us, their optimistic American spirit, the defiant determination to do what some other people thought was impossible, that is our greatest inheritance. Each generation of Americans has been called to overcome great challenges. Previous generations fought for our independence, signed the constitution, ended slavery, healed the wounds of a Civil War, settled the West, overcame the Great Depression and secured civil rights. So when we see all of that, are our challenges any greater than theirs? They won the Second World War against Nazism and fascism and the Cold War against communism. That's the same strength that's in each of us. We inherited it, we have it. We've got to believe that we do. And now it is our generation's turn to make history in this new century. I know that this generation can overcome any challenge. I've seen your strength, I've been sustained by it.

I saw it on the morning of September 11th, 2001. There were points that day, that morning in particular where I wondered, I wondered whether we had the strength to deal with this[,] worst attack in our history, unprecedented, horrific, memories and images that will live with me until the day that I die. But immediately as I saw the courage and the strength of our citizens and our first responders, when I saw the picture of the firefighters who put the flag up at Ground Zero, just like the Marines at Iwo Jima, many years before, looked just the same didn't it? You know what I said to myself and this gave me great strength to get through everything. I said to myself this generation, this current generation, our generation, we've got the same strength, the same determination, the same patriotism because it comes from our fathers and grandfathers who won the Second World War and did all of these things. Maybe sometimes, maybe sometimes it happens when we're put under stress and we're put in a moment of terror and horror and it just comes out. But you know throughout history, people who live in freedom have much more strength than people who live in oppression. That's been the story of the Old Testament, it's been the story of the ancient world and the modern world. It was the story of the 20th century, people who live in freedom overcome oppression. We are on the right side of this. We have the strength, we have the ability. The 20th century taught us, if nothing else, that you have to stand up to tyrants, to bullies, to terrorists. It's in strength that you'll be able to achieve peace and vindicate freedom.

With bold leadership, America will meet and exceed any challenge we face. With bold leadership, America will face the future with confidence and reclaim our right to live in freedom from fear. With bold leadership, America will rise to new heights in this still very new century. This is a time for leadership. This is a time for strength. This is a time to roll up our sleeves, not wring our hands. I've been Tested in crisis. I'm Ready to lead. And the time is right Now.

Thank you.

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