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Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much. Good morning.

You know, I woke up to the commentary—that one of the commentators was saying that the only reason that Hunter beat all of those guys in South Carolina is because his Marine son has been there for a week. Well, I looked down at that army of consultants—everybody who is vertical in South Carolina was hired by the other guys—and I said, "You know, that's a pretty good match up. One Marine versus 550 consultants. We did have the advantage."

And Dunc, if you're listening to me right now, you know, there's a couple of boxes still out. We've got about five more votes to get and we may even win this thing and pull just ahead of Mr. Giuliani.

You know, this is a great place to start because we're just a couple of miles away from Arlington Cemetery right now. And about an hour ago, the first rays of sunlight hit the stars of David and crosses in Arlington Cemetery and started to illuminate this great country.

And when they did, they illuminated what I call the arsenal of democracy. And that's our plants and facilities and manufacturers, who make things in this country and who helped to carry us to victory three times in the last century in winning this war, the war for freedom, for not only the United States, but for the world.

That's our ability to make things, our ability to produce.

You know, in World War II, we made a 100,000-plus tanks. We made 41,000 pieces of artillery. We made 36 billion yards of textiles. Ford Motor Company turned out a bomber every 60 minutes in their plant in Michigan.

Well, let me tell you, the arsenal of democracy is being fractured and sent across the world.

And as chairman of the Armed Services Committee a couple of years ago, when the roadside bombs started to hurt our troops in Iraq, and I sent our teams out to find some high-grade armor steel to protect our troops on our Humvees, I found one company left in this country that could still make high-grade armor steel.

And when a company in Switzerland cut off the guidance devices for maybe our most important weapon system, that's our smart bombs, we found one company left in America that could still make that tiny guidance system for smart bombs.

So the arsenal of democracy can largely be found today in places like Beijing and Paris and Korea and Japan, but that great arsenal that carried our troops to victory, that carried Eisenhower's forces to victory in Berlin. and carried our forces across the Pacific and drove the Japanese back to the mainland, World War II, and, yes, carried us to victory in the Cold War—it was the strength, the industrial strength, behind

Ronald Reagan's peace through strength policy that helped win the Cold War—that arsenal is being fractured.

And let me tell you one reason we're losing it: We're losing it largely because China is cheating on trade. And they're buying ships and planes and missiles with billions of American trade dollars.

And let me tell you how they're doing it.

If this podium was made in China and exported to us here in the United States, and it was \$100 when it goes down to the water's edge to be exported to us, the government of China walks over and gives its exporter all their taxes back; something we can't do under the trade law we signed, incidentally. They give them back, \$17, all their VAT taxes. So the cost of this is now down to \$83.

When we send the same product over to them, they give us a bill for \$17, thereby making us noncompetitive.

And just to make sure that the Americans never win in a competition, they devalue their currency by 40 percent. And that means that if this product is sitting in a showroom floor somewhere around the world, and sitting next to it is a product made in China, it's the equivalent, and they're both tagged at \$100 and somebody's trying to decide which one to buy, the Chinese government in effect walks by and says, "We just has a markdown in aisle 5. Our product now is \$60. Won't you buy it over the American product?"

HUNTER: And billions of consumers around the world, because of this cheating, are doing just that.

Well, let me tell you, there's a couple things that presidents do that are very important. One thing is to make arms control deals. Another thing is to make trade deals. And trade deals are business deals between nations.

And I can tell you that as president of the United States, I will junk the bad trade deal that we currently have with China. More importantly, I'll stop their cheating on the one that we have right now. We're going to have a new policy with respect to trade deals. (Applause)

And when we look across the table at China—China will come to the table, incidentally, because we have something that will pull them to the table. It's called the American market.

But we're going to have a new policy in dealing with China on trade deals. I borrowed it from a guy named Ronald Reagan: trust, but verify. (Applause)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, as that morning sun goes across the United States this morning, right about now it's shining on a little town called Kingston, Texas. And that's where Audie Murphy grew up, our most decorated hero in World War II.

And a couple hundred miles away is Cuero, Texas, where Sergeant Roy Benavidez, a special forces sergeant who helped to rescue a special operations team with nothing more than a Bowie knife—where he grew up.

And about 1,600 miles away is a little town called Scio, New York, where Corporal Jason Dunham grew up; a young Marine who gave his life for his buddies in a place called Fallujah.

Now, all three of those guys are tied together and they're tied to us with something that is very strong: the American interest. The American interest in expanding freedom.

And, of course, in World War II, in Audie Murphy's war, we freed hundreds of millions of people. And, of course, in Vietnam we failed to free people. And in Iraq, Jason Dunham's war, victory hangs in the balance.

But there can be no debate about the fact that it's in our interest to expand freedom around the world. And that really was a trademark of Ronald Reagan.

And, you know, as we watched the debate this last week, in which the liberals were trying to cut off reinforcements, and will continue to do that, I thought, "I've been here before."

HUNTER: Because I was here in the 1980s, when Ronald Reagan stood up to the Russians in Western Europe as they started to ring France and Germany with those SS-20 missiles, and President Reagan started to send in ground-launch cruise missiles and Pershing IIs to stand up to the Russians. And you had liberal pundits saying, "There he goes, we're going to have World War III; he needs to appease the Russians."

In fact, while I was campaigning in Iowa, one person told me their newspaper actually had an editorial at that time against the president, saying—and it was entitled "Better Red Than Dead."

But, you know, because we had a policy of peace through strength, at some point the Russians picked up the phone, and they said, "Can we talk?" And when we talked, we didn't talk about a standoff or about a negotiated treaty. We talked about disassembling the Russian empire.

And I remember also, in those 1980s, when we had the wars in Central America. And we provided that shield for that little country called El Salvador. And we provided the shield while we stood up a fragile democracy.

And liberals across this nation said, "This is going to be America's Vietnam." Do you remember that? In fact, I think there's a lot of liberals who have died of old age waiting for the next Vietnam, very anxiously.

But it wasn't. And today Salvadoreans are standing side by side with us in Iraq.

Now we're trying to expand freedom in a very difficult, tough part of the world right now. And it's tough work and it's difficult work and it's dangerous work. But it's worthwhile.

I saw the secretary of defense two days ago, and I gave him a plan that I've worked up that I'm going to try to develop here over the next several weeks. It's a plan for the right way to rotate out of Iraq—to rotate American troops out as we rotate Iraqi troops into security positions.

HUNTER: It's based on operations. And that's the right way to hand off the security burden in Iraq.

But what the Democrats tried to do this last week, and what they're going to try to do—and you've seen the talk about cutting off supplemental appropriations. And you've seen the talk about how the troops won't be able to go; they won't have—and I'm quoting them, "They won't have the training. They won't have the equipment."

Ladies and gentlemen, if the Democrat leadership of the United States House of Representatives tries to cut off reinforcements or cut off supplies for our troops who are engaged on the battlefield, our troops will never forgive them, and the American people will never forgive them. (Applause)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, as that morning sun continues—floods the Southwest, it reflects on what I call that thin green line of Border Patrol men who secure that 2,000-mile border to the best of their ability every day. And they're trying to secure a border that, right now, is wide open.

And through that border in 2005, along with the hundreds of thousands of people who came across the border from Mexico, who were citizens of Mexico, we interdicted, we arrested 155,000 people who came across from Mexico who weren't citizens of Mexico.

They came from virtually every country in the world; 1,100 of them came from communist China. Some came from Iran. Some from North Korea. And the reason they came is because everybody in the world now has a television set and they know that the southern border of the U.S. is open.

Well, let me tell you. I built the border fence in San Diego, and I built it against a lot of complaint. It's a double-fence.

And when we built that fence, the border between San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico, was a no-man's land. It was a land that was roamed by armed gangs that robbed and raped and murdered. It was so bad that Joseph Wambaugh wrote the best-selling book "Lines and Shadows" about that difficult piece of territory that was owned by nobody.

Well, we built the double-fence in San Diego. And we knocked back the smuggling of people and narcotics by more than 90 percent. And we reduced the crime rate in the city of San Diego—after we'd built the border fence, by FBI statistics, the crime rate in the city of San Diego fell by more than 50 percent. (Applause)

HUNTER: Well, ladies and gentlemen, I wrote the law that was signed by the president which extends that San Diego border fence for 854 miles across Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, all the smugglers' routes. We're going to build that border fence.

And we've got, contrary to popular opinion as emanated from *The Washington Post*, we have \$1.2 billion cash on hand at the Department of Homeland Security to build that fence.

Now, some people will say, "Well, the fence is going to be very expensive. It costs 3 million bucks a mile. That means if you build 1,000 miles of fence, that's \$3 billion."

Ladies and gentlemen, we have today incarcerated in federal, state and local penitentiaries and jails 250,000 criminal aliens. Some of them are so bad that their countries won't take them back, like the MS-13 gang members.

We pay \$3 billion a year to incarcerate them. We could save enough money in one year in incarceration costs to build a thousand miles of border fence.

Let's build this fence. (Applause)

And, ladies and gentlemen, at one small, one remote place on that Rio Grande, as almost everybody here knows, two American Border Patrol agents saw a van come across with some 750 pounds of narcotics. And at some point during that apprehension, the drug dealer was winged. He wasn't winged badly. I understand he didn't even collect workman's comp...(Laughter)

... before he was back on the job. But for that, these two American Border Patrol agents, Ramos and Compean, were given 11 and 12 years of hard time in the federal penitentiary.

HUNTER: That is a greater punishment than the average convicted murderer in this country, who does about eight and a half years.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I've read the transcript. I've talked with the families. And I've met with Mrs. Compean and Mrs. Ramos. And I've read the transcript of the trial. And I would say this.

I've been in the Armed Services Committee for 26 years. I've been chairman for four. I have never seen a Marine or a soldier treated in such an unjust way as Ramos and Compean.

And as president of the United States, I will pardon Ramos and Compean. (Applause)

And, ladies and gentlemen, it takes more than simply walking across the border — and I'll shut up here shortly and take questions. But it takes more than walking across the border to be an American.

You've got to have a heart for people. You've got to have the willingness to serve your country when called. You've got to be charitable. You've got to have a sense for your fellow citizens.

You've got to be a guy like my chief of staff, Wendell Cutting, who, when he had terminal cancer last year, last January, and I called him up to see how he was doing because I thought he had two weeks to live—that's what the doctor had told me—I heard that Wendell wasn't there.

And a lot of folks here know Wendell, or knew Wendell. And I said, "Where is he?"

And they said, "He's gone to help the people in the tsunami." And he'd gotten up, with his chemotherapy equipment, and gotten on the airplane and flew over with his beloved rescue task force to help the tsunami victims.

That's the heart of this country. And the great aspect of that is that Wendell wasn't alone. He came with thousands and thousands of Americans who spread out around the world. Some of them come under government action, like our fleet that came in

to help those folks. But a lot of them just come because of the goodness of their heart.

And, you know, to America's critics, I would say this. When you were hungry, we brought you food; the Americans came. When you were sick, the Americans brought medicine. When you were attacked, we left the safety of our own homes to come and defend you.

America is a great nation because America is a good nation. (Applause)

HUNTER: And our goodness — and our goodness comes from our belief in God and a corresponding belief in the value of human life. (Applause)

Now, presidents appoint judges. And I can tell you, if any judicial candidate comes before me who can look at a sonogram of an unborn child and not see a valuable human life, then I will not appoint that candidate to the federal bench. (Applause)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, if we walked all the way across this great country in this great, wonderful morning, in just a short period of time the sun's going to be coming up 3,000 miles away at another cemetery — another national cemetery, and that's Rosecrans National Cemetery in my home town of San Diego. And Rosecrans stands guard over that great harbor where so many people have come back from America's wars.

And in 1945, a young Marine returning home from the South Pacific to San Diego wrote these words: "I think that just to be able to live with your wife and family, to be able to take care of them every day is the great privilege a person can enjoy."

Well, 61 years later another Marine returned to San Diego from a place called Fallujah, and he wrote: "At some point in a dangerous environment you forget about your own safety and you try to keep your men safe and place your own life in the hands of God. But your family, your wife and kids never leave your mind. Families lift our country up. They support us with fidelity, morality, faith in God, and raising the next generation of Americans."

Ladies and gentlemen, the first gentleman that I mentioned, the first Marine, was my father, to whom I owe everything I am or ever will be. And the second was my son, Duncan Hunter. (Applause)

Those letters, 60 years apart, reflect the truth of America. God still loves this nation. We are still a people of character and strength and kindness.

And so with faith in God, with confidence in the goodness of the American people, let's win this race for the United States presidency.

Thank you, and God bless you. (Applause)