

Rothman Statement on President Bush's State of the Union Address

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Washington, DC -- "I agree with President Bush that the basic state of our union is strong because of the hard work and perseverance of the American people and the blessings God has bestowed upon our great nation. However, we can and must do much more to make our great country and its future healthy and secure.

"The year ahead presents many challenges for the United States. First and foremost, we have to continue our tough and important work in Iraq and Afghanistan and then safely bring home our heroic troops as soon as their missions are accomplished. We must also commit more resources to fighting the war on terrorism here at home. The United States still remains vulnerable to another terrorist attack and it is imperative that the Bush Administration acts to secure our borders, ports, airways, and our entire country.

"With regard to the economy, I am very disappointed with the Bush Administration's policies. Under President Bush's watch, 3 million people have lost their jobs in the last three years and 8.5 million people are out of work. The Bush Administration should be giving money to states and local towns to build new schools and renovate old ones, and to invest in the restoration and improvements to our nation's roadways, bridges, tunnels, and other infrastructure projects that will create jobs, boost our economy, and improve our people's quality of life.

"And the President must address the health care system in our country. Today, 43.6 million Americans have no health insurance whatsoever. These millions of Americans work hard each day to provide for their families, but don't have enough money to buy health insurance. And millions more, who do have health insurance, have seen their premiums go up by an average of 14 percent in the last year. We must guarantee that every single American has access to quality, affordable health care. And despite what President Bush and the Republicans in Congress say, their drafting and passing a sham prescription drug bill, which in actuality is a cash giveaway to the health insurance industry, will begin the destruction of Medicare and is not the answer. We need a real prescription drug bill under Medicare for all of our seniors and we need quality, affordable health care for Americans of all ages.

"The state of our union is indeed strong. But if we are to continue to be the land of opportunity where all who work hard can have a good quality of life, we must respond to the pressing needs of our people."

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