

In spite of the fact that we had three major effects, the economy is showing positive growth. Matter of fact, we're the strongest, most resilient economy in the entire world, which should say something. So we're pretty darn good, but we're not good enough. And that's what I'm concerned about.

I say we're not good enough because there are some in the corporate world that don't have the confidence to expand like they should be expanding, and too many of our citizens are looking for work. Too many people who want to work can't find a job, and that concerns me. And so one of my jobs is to deal with problems. If you see a problem, instead of hoping it goes away, just be forthright and lay out a plan to deal with it. And that's what I'm doing. That's what I did in Chicago, and that's what I'm going to do again today, to talk about why I've—why I said what I think is important.

First, in order to deal with the recession, in June of 2001 I signed a law that allowed people to keep more of their own money. In other words, it was tax relief for all citizens. We've reduced the tax rates for everybody who pays taxes. And it was phased in over a period of years for the sake of economic vitality. I mean, it was good enough in January of '01, the theory that if you let people have more of their own money, it would help the economy. That same theory still holds.

See, if Congress thought it was good enough in '01 to let people keep more money, they ought to think about it's good enough in '03 to let people keep more of their own money. And the phase-in is in '04 and '06. And all we're asking Congress to do is take the law they've already passed and accelerate the tax relief to today. As a matter of fact, when they pass that, I'll then get the Treasury to make it retroactive. And if we make it retroactive, the Treasury will then account for that retroactivity so that you get immediate money

into the economy. You'll notice the effects of the tax relief quickly.

All people who pay taxes should get tax relief. The tax relief is already in place. If tax relief is good enough 3 years from now for the American people, given the circumstances today, it's good enough today. And Congress needs to hear that. The plan is fair.

And the other thing we're going to do is accelerate aspects. Not only the tax rate reductions but the marriage penalty ought to be accelerated. The benefits of the marriage—of reducing the marriage penalty ought to be accelerated. It's a little odd that we have a marriage penalty to begin with. [Laughter] It seems like we ought to not penalize marriage; we ought to encourage marriage.

We ought to speed up the increase in the child credit. If you're a mom or a dad, you ought to get an increase in your child credit. And we ought to accelerate the reduction of the lowest tax rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. And these are all items that allow me to tell you that 92 million Americans benefit from this.

You hear a lot of talk in Washington, of course, about this benefits so-and-so, or this benefits this, the kind of the class warfare of politics. Let me just give you the facts that, under this plan, a family of four with an income of \$40,000 will receive a 96-percent reduction in Federal income taxes.

Now, that may not mean a lot of money to some of the big shots. It means a lot of money for the family of four making \$40,000. The income taxes would drop from \$1,178 a year to \$45 a year. That's real significant money for this family. It's money that family would have to save, invest, to help with the credit-card squeeze. It's money that the family would have to make decisions on their behalf.

Somebody asked me earlier, "Why can't Congress see the wisdom of this?" And one of the answers is, is that some in Congress would rather spend the money themselves