

commanding general, North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed. The Office of the Press Secretary also re-

leased a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

## The President's Radio Address *January 18, 2003*

Good morning. In the coming weeks, the House and Senate will consider my proposals to speed up economic growth and generate new jobs for American workers. Part of that plan is designed to help America's small businesses, in particular, which create millions of jobs each year and account for about half the Nation's economic output.

Small-business owners represent the enterprise of the whole Nation and the diverse talents of our people. Nearly 40 percent of small firms are owned by women. Close to 15 percent of America's small-business owners come from minority groups, and the trend of minority ownership is accelerating. These minority-owned firms, more than 3 million strong, provide opportunities and give life to local economies across America.

To help small business, Government should not try to manage the economy from Washington. Government's role is to create an environment in which employers succeed and hire new people.

My jobs-and-growth plan will help in several specific ways. I am proposing tax relief for everyone who pays Federal income taxes. Two years ago, Congress approved income-tax reductions that will not go into full effect until 2006. My plan would make these reductions effective immediately, to boost the economy in the short term and help insure long-term growth. If tax relief is good enough for Americans 3 years from now, it is even more necessary today, when our recovery is not as strong as it should be.

Small businesses stand to gain a great deal from this measure. After all, more than two-thirds of taxpayers who pay the highest marginal tax rates are small-business owners who include their profits when they file their individual tax returns with the IRS. All together, the tax relief I propose will give 23 million small-business owners an average tax cut of \$2,042 this year. And I'm asking Congress to make those reductions permanent, so that America's entrepreneurs can plan for the future, add more employees, and invest in our economy.

I will also ask Congress to raise the amount of money small businesses can deduct from their taxes for investment in new equipment, such as machinery and computers. Right now, the maximum deduction is \$25,000. We should triple that amount to \$75,000 and adjust it for inflation. This reform would give small businesses a further incentive to make the investments on which our economy depends.

Our commitment to small businesses will take other forms as well. We will streamline business regulations and make sure that the concerns of small businesses are heard in Washington.

I'm also urging Congress to enact legal reform to curtail the frivolous lawsuits that impose unfair costs on businesses and their customers. And I will continue to seek a permanent end to the death tax, so that America's small-business owners can pass along their life's work to the next generation.

America's economy can thrive only when our small businesses thrive. My growth-and-jobs proposal will encourage America's