

## CASTLE: PRESIDENT CALLS ON CONGRESS TO WORK TOGETHER IN 2008 -- JANUARY 28, 2008

Rep. Castle reacts to State of the Union

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle joined his colleagues in the House and Senate tonight to hear President Bush's final State of the Union address. Rep. Castle released the following statement in response to the President's speech.

"In this seventh and final State of the Union speech of President George W. Bush, I found his comments reflective of many major American priorities but noted that we maintain our differences.

"The President is correct in stating that that our economy is fundamentally strong and I support the agreement he negotiated with Congressional leaders of both parties on the growing housing, credit and financial concerns. I hope these bipartisan negotiations serve as a model for placing people before politics in Washington. Additionally, the President correctly identifies abusive earmarking practices. I have long believed that enacting a strict bipartisan standard will help curb our deficit spending.

"The President is correct that Congress can no longer ignore the fiscal quagmire that our entitlement spending predicates. I believe that absent initiative by the authorizing committees, we need a bipartisan review of the process so Congress can begin an overdue dialogue with Americans about the government health and retirement programs.

"The President mentioned expanding Health Savings Accounts and I believe they are only one part of a broader conversation we need to have on improving access to affordable and quality health care services for uninsured and struggling Americans.

"Pursuing Medical research funding is essential for helping those who suffer with diseases like diabetes, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. The President mentioned recent scientific advancements in stem cell research which I agree, we should pursue. However, we cannot afford to lose ground in the advancements made in embryonic stem cell research and it is my great hope that the next Administration, regardless of party, will allow scientists access to federal funding for all ethical forms of regenerative medicine.

"Educating our children should not be a political issue. Progress has been made nation-wide from NCLB and I agree with the President that we should adjust this law. I am also very supportive of the initiatives to enable veterans share their GI bill benefits with their children and spouses.

"I look forward to hearing from General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker in March on the progress in Iraq and the scheduled return of 30,000 troops.

"An important element of our national security is establishing our energy independence. I support the President's call for continued support for renewable energy; however, I believe the United States is ready to lead the charge to reduce the damaging effects of greenhouse gas emissions.

"While the work of Congress is typically overshadowed in Presidential election years, I hold out hope that we can come together on many of the challenges that face our nation.

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