



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 30, 2008

I send greetings to those commemorating the fifth anniversary of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* tragedy. Our Nation will forever honor the memory of the fallen crew.

Space exploration is a dream deeply rooted in human history. The seven brave astronauts of *Columbia* sacrificed their lives so that the rest of mankind could realize this dream. Rick D. Husband, William C. McCool, Michael P. Anderson, David M. Brown, Kalpana Chawla, Laurel Blair Salton Clark, and Ilan Ramon all nobly faced the dangers of space travel with courage and idealism. They assumed great risk so we could understand what lies beyond the heavens. Americans are grateful for their service, and they will always be cherished.

Laura and I send our best wishes to the families and friends of the *Columbia* crew. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George W. Bush". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and a long, sweeping underline.