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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
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Thank you, Governor Graves, Senator Kassebaum. Good morning friends -- Elizabeth, Robin, and I thank you for that tremendous welcome. It's great to be in Kansas. Of course, I'm not the first Kansan to say, "there's no place like home." But for me, the words have special meaning. Wherever I have traveled in this life, I have never forgotten where I came from -- or where I go home to.

Whatever lessons I have applied in public life were first learned here as a member of the Kansas House of Representatives. These days I spend much of my time in another capitol. You see many things from atop the hill in Washington where I work -- but you can see America from here.

Common sense and uncommon sensitivity: that's the Kansas way. It's what made Dwight Eisenhower a great general and a great President. And it's what prompted Alf Landon with his unique wisdom to say, "there are some intelligent people in Washington, but there are more of 'em in Kansas." I hasten to add the same applies to forty nine other states.

But then, Kansans have never had to look to Washington, DC for a sense of compassion or community. As a young man in a small town my parents taught me to put my trust in God, not government, and never confuse the two. Something else I learned, learned the hard way -- that while self reliance is an essential part of the American character, so is the spirit of community that reaches out to those wounded in body or soul.

1

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However, another America is waiting -- an America strong again in heart and sure of mind. I would like to lead us there.

Our problems are not too difficult to handle. It's just that our leaders have grown too isolated from places like Topeka -- embarrassed by the values here. They seem to have lost the idea that we are -- and must remain -- one nation under God. We are bound by our heritage to a set of common values: hard work, integrity, responsibility -- these values have always been the source of our strength and the glue that holds us together.

Our country must again have leaders who believe in our people and are proud of our values. We need leaders who will summon from each of us the best of our character, who will call us as a nation to our full potential. I want to be president so I can do this for America.

My mandate as President would be to rein in the Federal government in order to set free the spirit of the American people; to reconnect our government in Washington with the common sense values of our citizens; and to reassert American interests wherever and whenever they are challenged around the world.

My guide in this would be the final piece of the Bill of Rights -- the Tenth Amendment. It reads, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states ... or to the people."

When those words were written by our Founding Fathers more than 200 years ago, they were an affirmation of a radical new theory of politics -- a theory based on the need to limit the powers of the central government in order to unleash the unlimited potential of the people. The Federal government should do only those things specifically called for in the Constitution. All others should remain with the states or the people. It is a philosophy of freedom conceived in liberty, tested by history, yet too often ignored in Washington. I intend to restore it.

3

When I went off to war it was to defend a community of values unique in all the world. I came back sustained by the love and generosity of friends and neighbors who renewed my sense of life's possibilities. Over the years they have given me opportunities for service which I can never hope to repay.

Because they restored my spirit in a time of trial I have dedicated myself to restoring the spirit of America. And so today, tempered by adversity, seasoned by experience, mindful of the world as it is -- yet confident it can be made better -- I have come home to Kansas with a grateful heart to declare that I am a candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

The view many Americans see this morning is a sobering one. We are troubled about the direction our country is taking. Our values are under constant assault from our public and cultural institutions. We feel threatened by the random incidents of violent crime. Too many of our schools, which were once passports to opportunity, have become demoralizing places. Welfare has become a misery subsidy fostering illegitimacy and generations of dependency. And yet the deficit keeps growing, taxes keep increasing, and the government keeps demanding more and more authority over our lives.

None of this should come as a surprise. For much of this century power and wealth alike have flowed from grassroots Americans to a federal government which exploded to meet the twin crises of economic depression and global war. Yet, the lifejacket of one generation can become the straightjacket of the next. In giving to Washington our responsibility to address problems close to their source, Americans have unwittingly encouraged the Federal government to become too large, too remote, too unresponsive, and too undemocratic to be representative.

2

In the last election, the American people sent an unmistakable message to Washington. With rare clarity, they reaffirmed their faith in themselves and a healthy amount of skepticism about government.

If we are truly to rein in government, we must have a President who is more than a clever apologist for the status quo. In 1992, Bill Clinton ran for president as the candidate of change. In 1996, he will seek reelection as a candidate pledged to prevent change at all cost.

We need a President who will do more than say "no" to every spending cut, "no" to every attempt to return power and money to the states. We need a President who shares our values, embraces our agenda and who will lead the fight for the fundamental change America chose last November. We need a President who will say "yes" to the American people, and that is the kind of President I intend to be.

And while on the subject of creating a government that will say "yes" to the American people, let me make one fundamental belief crystal clear: we can cut taxes and balance the budget. Middle class families are forced to send too much of their hard-earned money to Washington. We should provide a tax credit for children and remove the marriage penalty to strengthen our families. And we should cut the capital gains tax to stimulate economic growth, create new jobs, and expand opportunity for all our people.

That is just the first step, not the last. We need a president committed to making our tax system lower, fairer, flatter, simpler -- so that ordinary people like you and me could fill out our tax form without a lawyer or an accountant or both.

Balancing the budget will also be a top priority; we cannot continue mortgaging our children's future. We will give the President the line item veto and we will give the American people a Balanced Budget Amendment.

4