

Good Afternoon.

I know that I have had a long-standing invitation to speak to your Rotary Club so I am happy to finally be here.

However, I do wish that I were standing before you under different circumstances.

Originally it was planned that this speech would come at the end of a three-day tour of the North Shore. I would have had visited with many people from Grand Marais, to Two Harbors, to Silver Bay and Duluth.

But things changed.

Things changed so that somehow it just doesn't feel appropriate to stand up here and talk about how proud we are of tax reform and tax relief.

On Tuesday, September 11 things changed dramatically.

Things changed in so many devastating ways that the people of this country, this state and this city may never be the same.

The attack on America last Tuesday may be the single most mood-altering event in the lifetime of most Americans.

On September 10th we were a country confident that a little downturn in our economy would easily be overcome.

On September 10th we were a state that was making plans to meet the challenges of a changing economy and a changing workforce.

On September 10th we were a people full of hope, secure in our freedom, fun loving and free to move about the world with ease.

On September 11th in the span of less than one hour, our sense of freedom took a crushing blow.

But while the crushing blow hurt us deeply, it did not knock us out and will not tear us apart.

Last Sunday at the State Capitol in St. Paul, thirty-five thousand Minnesotans came together to pay tribute to our fallen heroes.

Thirty-five thousand Minnesotans lifted up our spirits and resolved to overcome the tragedy of September 11.

Thirty-five thousand Minnesotans, who clearly were speaking for all of Minnesota and all of America, said, we will stand united.

You can be sure that it will take all the unity, all the courage and all the faith we can muster to conquer the enemy that perpetrated this act of terrorism.

But be assured that together, we will conquer this enemy and we will restore our sense of freedom.

But it may take time.

Americans may have to be patient.

As the President said we are at war, but this is a different kind of war than we are used to.

In the meantime, President Bush has asked us go back to work.

He has asked us to try as hard as we can to live our lives as normally as possible.

Mayor Giuliani of New York has said that the best thing people could do for them is to come to New York and eat in their restaurants and go to Broadway plays.

For some that could be hard to do.

But while I have curtailed some of my planned activities, I decided to go to Lutsen yesterday, and Duluth today, because at some point I have to get back to concentrating on what is important to Minnesotans.

Many experts believe that the terrorist attack on America will have a huge impact on travel and tourism. And that could be devastating to a region like Northeastern Minnesota and the Mall of America.

Therefore, I believe that I must do what I can to mitigate the impact.

This tragedy has changed people's perceptions about many things, so if I can help people through this difficult time I certainly will.

It is early yet but be assured that we will be watching the impact this event may have on our overall economy.

Yesterday I spoke with the President of Northwest Airlines about the effect the terrorist attack will have on the airline industry in general and Northwest specifically.

Northwest is in a stronger position than many airlines but no airline is going to be able to take huge losses forever.

But I would urge everyone not to jump to conclusions on how this problem should be solved.

Of course the state should closely watch the situation and there is nothing wrong with exploring options.

But clearly, the economic impact on airlines is a nationwide problem that should first and foremost be addressed by Congress and the White House.

In addition, there will be other negative impacts that we may not have thought of yet.

However, whatever comes we must be prepared to move forward and meet these challenges with complete confidence.

It is at times like this when I am most proud of the American people.

It is at times like this that I am most proud of our law enforcement officers, our firefighters and our emergency response workers.

This is a time that I am most proud of our military, both active and reserve.

This is a time when I am most proud to be the Commander-in-Chief of the Minnesota National Guard.

And finally, this is a time when we must trust all of the above to work together.

We must trust our President and we must support our armed forces as they are called to battle.

As I said on Sunday, we must have hope and we must be determined that together,

United in family,

Strengthened by love,

Driven by opportunity, but

Tempered by respect for all humanity,

We will overcome this tragic moment.

Thank you.