



Thank you.

On behalf of the tens of thousands of people I have met over the last few years who have said they pray for the day when their government again responds to their concerns, their needs and their values, rather than only the concerns, needs and values of wealthy special interests, I thank those ~~here present~~ whose personal courage and political force of will has started us on a journey out of this dark time.

I thank ~~of course~~ Senator McCain and Senator Feingold, Congressman Shays and Congressman Meehan, and also their families and most especially their staffs --dedicated people who made it a matter of personal mission that this victory ~~be~~ ^{has} won.

^{always} And my friend Matt Keller of Common Cause ^{and Claudia Molloy who ~~planned~~ ^{helped} my entry into Washington with} and the others on the Hill from public interest organizations dedicated to this issue, I thank also ~~on behalf of the~~ Americans I have met, who sheltered me and fed me and took care of me and drove my ~~as~~ support car ^{to the cause and my schedule} ^{Stephanie Cudding} ^{of the Alliance for Democracy}

I thank Dennis Burke of Arizona who ^{praised my book and my speech and was}
I also thank my own family and especially my son Jim, whose support and encouragement not only helped me, but gave a message to all Americans and to people around the world. That message is that it is never too late to get in shape. It is never too late to do a great thing for yourself. It is never too late to go in search of your deepest values and your wildest dreams of brotherhood. Everything still awaits you. Everything is still laid out in front of you. Every citizen is in a position to make a difference, and every citizen must try.]

I now pray for one thing more before I go home. I pray that Mr. Bush will sign this bill into law. Perhaps some of us so inclined to prayer ought to pray together this Sunday for Mr. Bush's signature. For if he fails to do so, we are in for a great deal more work, and I will have to go shopping for some new shoes. But no one should ever think that we will not win this thing--now, tomorrow or the next day.

And once we have won it, we shall move on to other reforms.

When I began my walk, the issue of money in politics was considered the linchpin to other needed reforms. I still believe that is true, and I have become a supporter of the public funding of our elections. *Clean Money Clean Elections*

But during the last year many Americans have become concerned with the health of our Bill of Rights--our very status as a free people. I sense that we are entering a time when great political and personal courage will be necessary, fighting against dark forces that have long been lurking behind the curtain, as Mr. Eisenhower warned us many years ago. Those dark forces may have emerged in what will become ^{the} greatest historic battle for America's soul. This battle today between big money and the position of the individual in our self-governance may be but an opening skirmish in that larger conflict. *And if that is so, ain't it grand, boys, that we won this one!*