



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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President Bush Visits with First Responders of Southern California Fires

Kit Carson Park
Ray Love Picnic Area
Escondido, California

12:56 P.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all very much for letting us come by to say hello to you. I'm proud to be here with the Senator -- the Terminator -- (laughter) -- do you still get called the Terminator?

GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER: Yes, especially by my wife. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: You know why we're here -- Brian Bilbray, the Congressman -- we're here to hopefully inspire you by thanking you from the bottom of our hearts for what you do. I'm telling you, there's a lot of folks that live up in these hills that have their houses because of you. And they're not in a position to thank you -- but we are. And so we thank you for helping save lives and save property. We thank you for serving -- serving our country.

You know, one of the things I like to do is look in the eyes -- make sure you're getting rest, and I know you're not. (Laughter.) I hope there's enough reinforcements coming to make sure that you get your shifts so you can get some sleep, because a citizen is going to count on you for you a while.

These fires are tough. But you know better than anybody how hard it is. And so we're here to compliment you on your courage and your compassion. I know you're working incredible hours and you got family members who wonder about you, and so one of the things that we can do is also hope you pass on our best regards to your family members. I'm confident they're inspired by you, but they're wondering about your health and your safety. And so please, when you talk to them, tell them the President, the Senator, the Governor, the Congressman, but most of all, the folks here in the San Diego area and around the state affected by the fires are really appreciative.



And finally, I'd like to ask God's blessings on you and to protect you and guard you. Thanks for being great Americans. God bless. (Applause.)

END 12:57 P.M. PDT

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