





the.News





Anticipating the State of the Union, January 2010

1/21/2010




1.		Animated Open	
2.	Eileen Wu on Camera 	On Camera: <i>Hello, I'm Eileen Wu at the White House. Setting the nation's agenda is one of the president's major powers and it's become one of the main purposes of the State of the Union address ... That's the annual report the President gives to Congress. That's a task written into the Constitution...but also shaped by today's political realities.</i>	00:05
3.	Announcing the President 	SOT: Sound <i>Mister Speaker, The President of the United States.</i>	00:27
4.	President Clinton State of the Union 	SOT: Shesol <i>This is where the President stands before the Congress, the country and the world and says "This is what I want to accomplish over the coming year." This is going to be my focus. Let me layout my program for you</i>	00:33
5.	Jeff Shesol at work 	Narration: Jeff Shesol was the lead writer on two State of the Union speeches for President Bill Clinton. He says work usually begins sometime after Thanksgiving because so much is at stake.	00:45

6.	Jeff Shesol on Camera 	SOT: Shesol: <i>The State of the Union is not only the opportunity to set the agenda for the coming year but also to set the tone for the year.</i>	00:58
7.	Graphics 	Narration: Shira Toeplitz reports on politics and the Congress for the publication Roll Call.	1:04
8.	Shira Toeplitz on Camera 	SOT: Toeplitz <i>I think you'll see the Obama Administration point at specific landmarks, specific achievements they've made in trying to get the economy back on track after a tumultuous two years</i>	1:10
9.	U.S. Capitol Building 	Narration: And there will be elections for the entire house of representatives and a third of the Senate in 2010. That makes this year's State of the Union speech even more important to members of Congress. Democrats are anxious to move forward on issues such as education and financial reform while they still command majorities in the House and the Senate.	1:21
10.	Video/stills Headlines from Boston 	SOT: Toeplitz <i>Now what we're looking ahead to is an election year and a lot of the guys sitting in their seats, listening to the president talk are not sure they're going to be coming back next November// They'd like to get healthcare passed, they'd like to get that out of the way. They'd like to get this Massachusetts special out of the way.</i>	1:43
11.	Kwame Holman on Camera 	SOT: Holman <i>President Obama will focus on the economy and increasing jobs in the country.</i>	1:58

12.	Wu on Camera	Narration: Kwame Holman of the PBS NewsHour watches the speech from Capitol Hill.	2:08
13.	Holman on Camera	<i>SOT: Holman</i> <i>The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are still there. The latest security threat is still there. But it has been clear for some time it is the decision of this Administration and the Democratic Party in power in Congress that their primary focus is going to be on the economy.</i>	2:12
14.	President Bush State of the Union 	Narration: The State of the Union Speech has an international audience.	2:40
15.	Gerard Toal on Camera 	SOT: Gerard Toal <i>A lot of leaders overseas, the U.S.'s allies and also its enemies, look at the speech to get a sense of what the U.S. is going to do in the forthcoming year.</i>	2:45
16.	Military Helicopter 	Narration: Political Scientist Gerard Toal watches the speech for foreign policy issues. He believes people will be listening for direction on Afghanistan, Iraq, and National Security.	2:59
17.	Toal on camera	SOT: Toal So the degree to which he gets specific on the threats, specific on where Al Qaeda is a threat to the United States—that's something to look for.	3:09

18.	President Obama's Address to Congress, 2/24/09 	Narration: The specific language the President uses is analyzed closely.	3:23
19.	Toal on Camera	SOT: Toal <i>I think that they're looking to whether the Obama presidency is going //to be one which is characterized by sort of indecision or a resoluteness in facing the various problems the United States faces. // Whether President Obama is going to break decisively with some of the policies that the U.S. government has had up until now or whether he's going to continue to use some of the same language that the Bush administration used.</i>	3:31
20.	Graphic 	Narration: The State of the Union speech wasn't always as important as it is today. The Constitution only requires the President to "from time to time give to Congress information of the State of the Union and recommend to their Consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient."	4:05
21.	President Washington 	Narration: George Washington gave the first state of the Union in 1790. Thomas Jefferson felt that giving the speech made the President seem too much like a monarch. So he sent Congress a letter instead.	4:24
22.	Eileen Wu On Camera 	On Camera: <i>For over a century a clerk read the report to Congress. It wasn't until 1913 that President Woodrow Wilson re-established the practice of coming here to Capitol Hill to deliver the speech in person.</i>	4:37

23.	President Wilson 	Narration: President Wilson felt giving the speech showed the President was more in touch with the process. But it is Franklin Roosevelt who is credited with creating the modern State of the Union speech in 1935.	4:52
24.	President Franklin D. Roosevelt 	SOT: Jeff Shesol <i>President Roosevelt saw that you essentially needed to give thematic direction to the Congress for the year. He needed to suggest the big picture and to develop a storyline or a narrative of what it is that you're trying to do not just this year but in the course of your presidency.</i>	5:06
25.	Holman on Camera	SOT: Holman <i>Even in times of crisis or war, it is a celebration. //it's an opportunity for the President and the Congress to say to the people we are whatever difficulties we face, our union is strong.</i>	5:25
26.	President Bush on Camera 	SOT: Bush <i>Tonight the State of our Union is strong. And together we will make it stronger.</i>	5:39
27.	Members reactions 	SOT: Holman <i>Members are listening for their issue, their area, something important to their constituents to be mentioned by the President so that that member might rise and applaud or alternatively shake his or her head in disapproval and remembering that there's a bit of theater involved in terms of the way the television cameras are always on the chamber and looking for reactions.</i>	5:47

28.	<p>The merits of an aisle seat</p> 	<p>SOT: Toeplitz <i>Members of Congress stake out a seat. They want to be right there in the camera angle and they want to be in that aisle when the President walks up and down they can shake the hand of the President //It is a really fun thing to see members of Congress // get there at like 8:30 in the morning and just sit in that aisle seat all day long until the President comes.</i></p>	6:17
29.	<p>President Kennedy State of the Union</p> 	<p>Narration: Seats in the galleries are coveted. It's a chance to watch history.</p>	6:36
30.	<p>An address delivered</p> 	<p>SOT: Jeff Shesol <i>As a speechwriter, you get a lot of exciting opportunities but there was probably nothing more exciting than getting to join the president on the ride over to the capital and then standing in the House Chamber, sort of in the back, where nobody can see you and watch him deliver this speech.</i></p>	6:42
31.		<p>SOT: I'm Eileen Wu for the Dot News</p>	6:58