

our recovery, it will not be funded under the Recovery Act.

So the rules I'm putting in place today will help create a new culture of accountability. And I'm pleased that the U.S. Conference of Mayors has committed to joining us in this effort. I don't need to remind you that the American people are watching what we do. They need this plan to work. They're skeptical, and understandably, because they've seen taxpayer dollars frittered away before. They expect to see their hard-earned money spent efficiently. And this extraordinary moment requires extraordinary responsibilities on all our part. There's little room for error here, especially in a time for crisis.

You know, during World War II, a largely unknown Senator grew concerned that waste, corruption, and scandal threatened to choke off our Nation's war efforts before they'd truly begun. Congress didn't think a whole lot of the matter and granted him far less money than he'd asked for, but this little-known Member of Congress named Harry Truman had the courage of his convictions. So he traveled all across the country, gathered information, holding hundreds of hearings and issuing dozens of reports, and when it was all over, he had saved billions of dollars and deterred corrup-

tion and bolstered America's confidence in the conduct of the war.

What Harry Truman understood was that spending tax dollars wisely isn't just about keeping our books straight, it's about fulfilling our obligations as keepers of the public trust. And while I do not know how long the road to recovery will be, I do know that we're in a fight right now to get this economy back on track. And if we act with the same sense of responsibility that Harry Truman showed during wartime all those years ago, and if we build a partnership that stretches from the statehouse to the White House, then we'll turn this economy around and the American people will emerge from this crisis stronger than we were before.

So thank you very much. I'm looking forward to working with you. Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:55 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Vice President Joe Biden; and Interior Department Inspector General Earl E. Devaney, Chair, Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting on Transportation Infrastructure March 20, 2009

Hey, guys. Good to see you. Well, I am thrilled to have three of the most innovative elected officials in the country, representing not only a wide range of political spectrums, but also different States, different responsibilities, all of whom are concerned about the issue of our infrastructure and how we develop the long-term prosperity that's going to be so important for America's success.

And I'm confident that with all these bright minds sitting around the table, that we're going to not only continue the progress that's been made in the Recovery Act, but we're going to be able to get a budget passed that reflects our—the concerns that we're hearing

around the table. And that we're going to be able to, on the highway reauthorization act, we're also going to be able to build in some innovative approaches that will make a lot of difference and spur the kind of job creation, economic growth, and development that we all want to see.

All right. Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Arnold A. Schwarzenegger of California; Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City; and Gov. Edward G. Rendell of Pennsylvania.