

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:03 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Francis S. Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health; and An-

thony S. Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Statement on the Earthquake and Tsunami in the South Pacific Region *September 30, 2009*

Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives in the earthquake and tsunami in American Samoa and the region. I am closely monitoring these tragic events and have declared a major disaster for American Samoa, which will provide the tools necessary for a full, swift, and aggressive response. The Federal Emergency Management Agency is in close and

constant contact with emergency responders, and the U.S. Coast Guard is fully supporting the deployment of resources to those areas in need of immediate assistance. We also stand ready to help our friends in Samoa and the region. Going forward, we will continue to provide the resources necessary to respond to this catastrophe, and we will keep those who have lost so much in our thoughts and prayers.

Statement on Senate Action on Energy Reform Legislation *September 30, 2009*

I applaud Chairmen Kerry and Boxer for their leadership on comprehensive energy reform. With the draft legislation they are announcing today, we are one step closer to putting America in control of our energy future and making America more energy independent. My administration is deeply committed to pass-

ing a bill that creates new American jobs and the clean energy incentives that foster innovation. I commend Senators Boxer and Kerry for their work and look forward to signing comprehensive energy legislation that addresses this urgent challenge.

Statement on the United Nations Security Council Resolution on the Protection of Women and Children in Conflict *September 30, 2009*

Today the United States joins with the international community in sending a simple and unequivocal message: violence against women and children will not be tolerated and must be stopped. The United States places a high priority on this issue of fundamental human rights and global security. I am pleased that the Security Council, chaired by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, unanimously approved a U.S.-sponsored resolution that will increase the protection of women and children in conflict. In particular, the resolution focuses on one of the most abhorrent features of modern war: the use

of rape as a weapon and other forms of sexual violence against women and children.

The dignity of all human beings must be respected, and their rights protected. I applaud the United Nations and its member states for standing together to confront these despicable acts. I honor the courage that is shown every single day by women and girls facing hardship around the world, who have such an important role to play in resolving conflicts and advancing peace. And my administration will continue to support the right of all women and girls to live free from fear and to realize their full potential.

Remarks at a Democratic Governors Association Fundraiser October 1, 2009

Thank you. Please, have a seat. You don't want to follow Brian Schweitzer as a general rule, but I am grateful for the outstanding work he's doing in Montana and his extraordinary leadership of DGA. And I want to thank as well the vice chair, a great friend in Maryland, an outstanding leader, somebody who is really just navigating through some difficult times with grace and skill, Martin O'Malley. Please give both of them a huge round of applause.

To all the other Governors in attendance: Governor Beshear and Governor Culver, deJongh, Markell, Nixon, Parkinson, and Perdue—what a great lineup. And I had a chance to talk to all of them backstage, and each and every one of them are leading in the ways that make me proud to be a Democrat. And the diversity that they embody and represent, I think, is also a credit to our party.

I am so glad to be here not just because I always spending—I always enjoy spending time with the kind of outstanding Governors and a few aspiring Governors that may be in the room—because I'm absolutely committed to making sure that our Governors have the support that they need to move their States forward. And I'm absolutely committed to working with each and every one of them in the years ahead to move America forward.

Now, I don't think it's any secret, these are challenging times for America and challenging times for each of the 50 States. Few understand that better than the Nation's Governors. All of them are on the frontlines, governing their States during an economic crisis unlike anything that we've seen since the Great Depression. They're witnessing the toll of this crisis that has—that families, small businesses, and neighborhoods are all experiencing. They're being made to govern in a time of shrinking revenues and budget shortfalls, and they're facing tough choices about where to save, where to spend, and how to navigate their States and their people through this economic storm.

I also have to be honest that the tough choices they'll have to make will not end any time soon. But what I hope has made their job easier and will continue to make their job easier is knowing that they've got a full, committed partner in the White House. And I know that—[*applause*—I also know that their job has been made a little bit easier because of the Recovery Act that was passed here back at the beginning of my administration, and that I signed into law, and that's being carried out with their help, an act that's not only broken our economic freefall, but eased the burden on our States and helped our Governors get their States back on track.

Let me just describe what the Recovery Act has meant. Because of the Recovery Act, we're helping close budget gaps; we're preventing layoffs of teachers and police officers. America is stronger because of it. We put a tax cut into the pockets of 95 percent of working families to help them pay for their everyday needs. We're increasing and extending unemployment insurance to 12 million Americans to help them weather the economic storm, and we've lowered the cost of COBRA coverage for people who have lost their jobs, so that it's 65 percent lower and they can keep their health insurance as they're looking for work. And we're putting Americans back to work doing the work that America needs done rebuilding roads and bridges and new schools and all manner of construction projects across all 50 States. It's the largest single investment of infrastructure in this country since Eisenhower built the Interstate Highway System back in the 1950s.

So we know that the Recovery Act is making a difference. It's made a difference for our families. It's made a difference for our States. It's making a difference for the Nation. But I'm not going to rest, I know the Governors and candidates here today are not going to rest, and I know that the American people are not going to rest until everybody who's looking for work can find a job, until our workers aren't afraid that they'll be the next ones let go,