

disciplined enough and serious enough when they saw folks singing freedom songs. Dr. King himself once acknowledged that he didn't see "the real meaning of the movement" until he saw young people singing in the face of hostility.

You see, it's easy to sing when you're happy. It's easy to sing when you're among friends. It's easy to sing when times are good. But it is hard to sing when times are rough. It's hard to sing in the face of taunts and fear and the constant threat of violence. It's hard to sing when folks are being beaten, when leaders are being jailed, when churches are being bombed.

It's hard to sing in times like that. But times like that are precisely when the power of song is most potent. Above the din of hatred, amidst the deafening silence of inaction, the hymns of the civil rights movement helped carry the cause of a people and advance the ideals of a nation.

Bernice Johnson Reagon knew this. One day when she was young, she was sitting in church when a local sheriff and his deputies showed up to intimidate the congregation. "They stood at the door," Bernice wrote, "making sure everyone knew they were there." "And then," she said, "a song began. And the song made sure

that the sheriff and his deputies knew that we were there."

Joan Baez and Bob Dylan knew this. One day in 1963, they joined hundreds of thousands on the National Mall and sang of a day when the time would come, when the winds would stop, when a ship would come in. They sang of a day when a righteous journey would reach its destination.

And Congressman John Lewis—a man of that Moses generation, a man who couldn't be here tonight, but whose sacrifices helped make it possible for me to be here tonight—he knew this too. For in the darkest hour, he said, "The songs fed our spirits and gave us hope."

So to everyone here or watching at home, let us enjoy the music we hear tonight. Let the music feed our spirits, give us hope, and carry us forward as one people and as one Nation. Enjoy.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to civil rights activist Joseph E. Lowery. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 10.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Presidential Nominees *February 11, 2010*

Today the United States Senate confirmed 27 of my high-level nominees, many of whom had been awaiting a vote for months.

At the beginning of the week, a staggering 63 nominees had been stalled in the Senate because one or more Senators placed a hold on their nomination. In most cases, these holds have had nothing to do with the nominee's qualifications or even political views, and these nominees have already received broad, bipartisan support in the committee process. Instead, many holds were motivated by a desire to leverage projects for a Senator's State or simply to frustrate progress. It is precisely these kinds of tactics that enrage the American people.

And so on Tuesday, I told Senator McConnell that if Republican Senators did not release

these holds, I would exercise my authority to fill critically needed positions in the Federal Government temporarily through the use of recess appointments. This is a rare but not unprecedented step that many other Presidents have taken. Since that meeting, I am gratified that Republican Senators have responded by releasing many of these holds and allowing 29 nominees to receive a vote in the Senate.

While this is a good first step, there are still dozens of nominees on hold who deserve a similar vote, and I will be looking for action from the Senate when it returns from recess. If they do not act, I reserve the right to use my recess appointment authority in the future.

Feb. 12 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2010

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Amendments

February 12, 2010

Dear Madam Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 Budget amendments for the Departments of Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, the Treasury, and Veterans Affairs, as well as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. These amendments will increase by \$155 mil-

lion the overall discretionary budget authority in my FY 2011 Budget.

These amendments are necessary to reflect correctly policies assumed in the FY 2011 Budget. The details of these amendments are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments

February 12, 2010

Dear Madam Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed amendments to Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 proposals in my FY 2011 Budget.

Included is an amendment for the Department of Homeland Security, Disaster Relief, for the continued response and recovery efforts associated with prior large events, such as Hurricane Katrina and the Midwest Floods. The proposed total for FY 2010 in my FY 2011 Budget would increase by \$1.5 billion as a result of this amendment.

Also included are amendments to general provisions that would provide authorization and funding for FY 2010 to implement the settlement of a case involving the management of individual Indian trust accounts related to Indian lands and to settle claims of prior discrimination brought by black farmers against the Department of Agriculture.

The details of these requests are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

The President's Weekly Address

February 13, 2010

All across America, people work hard to meet their responsibilities. You do your job, take care of your family, pay your bills. Sometimes, particularly in tough times like these, you have to make hard choices about where to spend and where to save. That's what being responsible means. It's a bedrock value of our country. And that ought to be a value that our Government lives up to as well.

Yet over the past decade, this hasn't always been the case. Ten years ago, we had a big

budget surplus with projected surpluses far into the future. Ten years later, those surpluses are gone. In fact, when I first walked through the door, the Government's budget deficit stood at \$1.3 trillion, with the budget gap over the next decade projected to be 8 trillion.

Now, partly, the recession is to blame. With millions of people out of work and millions of families facing hardship, folks are paying less in taxes while seeking more services, like unemployment benefits. Rising health care costs