

lines carrying American goods and services around the world. It's the spirit that has advanced America's leadership in the world and held aloft the American Dream for generations. And it is ultimately that spirit that's given us the tools and the toughness to overcome every obstacle and adapt to every circumstance, and to-day is no different.

It hasn't always been easy. Our success is by no means guaranteed. But if we summon a sense of national purpose equal to the seriousness of these times, if we combine our creativity, our innovation, and our eternal optimism, if we come together in common cause as we have so many times before, we will succeed, we will define our destiny once again, and we will make this century another American century, with your help.

Statement on Immigration Reform *March 11, 2010*

Today I met with Senators Schumer and Graham and was pleased to learn of their progress in forging a proposal to fix our broken immigration system. I look forward to reviewing their promising framework, and every American should applaud their efforts to reach across party lines and find commonsense answers to one of our most vexing problems. I also heard from a diverse group of grassroots leaders from

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to John W. Baumstark, chief executive officer and chairman of the board of directors, Suniva Inc., and recipient of the Export-Import Bank's Renewable Energy Exporter of the Year award; Fabienne Demol, North American representative, EDF Energies Nouvelles, and recipient of the Export-Import Bank's Deal of the Year award; Luis Arguello, Sr., president and chief executive officer, DemeTech Corporation, and recipient of the Export-Import Bank's Small Business Exporter of the Year award; and Secretary-General Angel Gurría of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

around the country about the growing coalition that is working to build momentum for this critical issue. I am optimistic that their efforts will contribute to a favorable climate for moving forward. I told both the Senators and the community leaders that my commitment to comprehensive immigration reform is unwavering, and that I will continue to be their partner in this important effort.

The President's Weekly Address *March 13, 2010*

Lost in the news of last week was a headline that ought to be a source of concern for every American. It said, "Many Nations Passing U.S. in Education." Now, debates in Washington tend to be consumed with the politics of the moment: who's up in the daily polls; whose party stands to gain in November. But what matters to you, what matters to our country, is not what happens in the next election, but what we do to lift up the next generation. And the fact is, there are few issues that speak more directly to our long-term success as a nation than issues

concerning the education we provide to our children.

Our prosperity in the 20th century was fueled by an education system that helped grow the middle class and unleash the talents of our people more fully and widely than at any time in our history. We built schools and focused on the teaching of math and science. We helped a generation of veterans go to college through the GI bill. We led the globe in producing college graduates, and in turn, we led in producing groundbreaking technologies and scientific dis-

coveries that lifted living standards and set us apart as the world's engine of innovation.

Of course, other nations recognize this and are looking to gain an edge in the global marketplace by investing in better schools and supporting teachers and committing to clear standards that will produce graduates with more skills. Our competitors understand that the nation that outeducates us today will out-compete us tomorrow. Yet too often we failed to make inroads in reforming and strengthening our public education system, the debate mired in worn arguments hurled across entrenched divides.

As a result, over the last few decades, we've lost ground. One assessment shows American 15-year-olds no longer even near the top in math and science when compared to their peers around the world. As referenced in the news report I mentioned, we've now fallen behind most wealthy countries in our high school graduation rates. And while we once led the world in the proportion of college graduates we produced, today we no longer do.

Not only does that risk our leadership as a nation, it consigns millions of Americans to a lesser future. For we know that the level of education a person attains is increasingly a prerequisite for success and a predictor of the income that person will earn throughout his or her life. Beyond the economic statistics is a less tangible but no less painful reality: Unless we take action, unless we step up, there are countless children who will never realize their full talent and potential.

I don't accept that future for them. And I don't accept that future for the United States of America. That's why we're engaged in a historic effort to redeem and improve our public schools, to raise the expectations for our students and for ourselves, to recognize and reward excellence, to improve performance in troubled schools, and to give our kids and our country the best chance to succeed in a changing world.

Under the leadership of an outstanding Education Secretary, Arne Duncan, we launched a Race to the Top, through which States compete for funding by committing to reform and raising standards, by rewarding good teaching,

by supporting the development of better assessments to measure results, and by emphasizing math and science to help prepare children for college and careers.

And on Monday, my administration will send to Congress our blueprint for an updated Elementary and Secondary Education Act to overhaul No Child Left Behind. What this plan recognizes is that while the Federal Government can play a leading role in encouraging the reforms and high standards we need, the impetus for that change will come from States and from local schools and school districts. So yes, we set a high bar, but we also provide educators the flexibility to reach it.

Under these guidelines, schools that achieve excellence or show real progress will be rewarded and local districts will be encouraged to commit to change in schools that are clearly letting their students down. For the majority of schools that fall in between, schools that do well but could do better, we will encourage continuous improvement to help keep our young people on track for a bright future, prepared for the jobs of the 21st century. And because the most important factor in a child's success is the person standing in the front of the classroom, we will better prepare teachers, support teachers, and encourage teachers to stay in the field. In short, we'll treat the people who educate our sons and daughters like the professionals they are.

Through this plan, we are setting an ambitious goal: All students should graduate from high school prepared for college and a career, no matter who you are or where you come from. Achieving this goal will be difficult. It'll take time, and it will require the skills, talents, and dedication of many: principals, teachers, parents, and students. But this effort is essential for our children and for our country. And while there will always be those cynics who claim it can't be done, at our best, we know that America has always risen to the challenges that we've faced. This challenge is no different.

As a nation, we are engaged in many important endeavors: improving the economy, reforming the health care system, encouraging innovation in energy and other growth indus-

tries of the 21st century, all while still in the midst of two wars. But our success in these efforts, and our success in the future as a people, will ultimately depend on what happens long before an entrepreneur opens his doors or a nurse walks the rounds or a scientist steps into her laboratory. Our future is determined each and every day, when our children enter the classroom, ready to learn and brimming with promise.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution March 14, 2010

I send my warmest wishes to all those that will celebrate the anniversary of the 1848 Hungarian Revolution tomorrow. That event was a defining moment in Hungary's struggle for freedom and continues to serve as inspiration for all those that advocate for freedom's cause. Our two nations are bound by our shared values and our solemn obligations to each other

It's that promise we must help them fulfill. Thanks so much.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:05 p.m. on March 12 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on March 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 12, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 13.

Remarks at the Walter F. Ehrnfelt Recreation and Senior Center in Strongsville, Ohio March 15, 2010

The President. Hello, Ohio! It is good to be here in the Buckeye State. Congratulations on winning the Big Ten Championship.

Audience member. O—H!

The President. I'm filling out my brackets now. [Laughter]

Audience member. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

Audience member. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

Audience member. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

The President. Yes, that kid Turner looks pretty good. [Laughter] You guys are doing all right.

It is wonderful to be here.

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you back. I do.

Couple of people I just want to make sure I give special mention to. First of all, you already saw him, Governor Ted Strickland in the house. Ted is fighting every day to bring jobs and eco-

nomic development to Ohio. So is your terrific United States Senator, Sherrod Brown—love Sherrod Brown; your own Congressman, who is tireless on behalf of working people, Dennis Kucinich.

Audience member. Vote yes!

The President. Did you hear that, Dennis? Go—say that again.

Audience member. Vote yes!

The President. A couple of other Members of Congress are here: U.S. Representative Betty Sutton; U.S. Representative Marcia Fudge; U.S. Representative Tim Ryan; U.S. Representative Charlie Wilson.

I want to thank Mayor Tom Perciak here in Strongsville. Please, Mr. Mayor—you're on. That's a good bunch of folks we got here in Ohio, working hard, which is why I'm glad to be back. And let's face it: It's nice to be out of Washington once in a while. [Laughter]

I want to thank Connie, who introduced me. I want to thank her and her family for being