

So I'm proposing—in part because of strong lobbying by Bill and by Suzanne as well as Charlie—I'm proposing a \$40 million initiative led by a high-level team from the White House, NASA, and other agencies to develop a plan for regional economic growth and job creation. And I expect this plan to reach my desk by August 15th. It's an effort that will help prepare this already skilled workforce for new opportunities in the space industry and beyond.

So this is the next chapter that we can write together here at NASA. We will partner with industry. We will invest in cutting-edge research and technology. We will set far-reaching milestones and provide the resources to reach those milestones. And step by step, we will push the boundaries not only of where we can go, but what we can do.

Now, 50 years after the creation of NASA, our goal is no longer just a destination to reach. Our goal is the capacity for people to work and learn and operate and live safely beyond the Earth for extended periods of time, ultimately in ways that are more sustainable and even indefinite. And in fulfilling this task, we will not only extend humanity's reach in space, we will strengthen America's leadership here on Earth.

Now, I'll close by saying this. I know that some Americans have asked a question that's particularly apt on tax day: Why spend money on NASA at all? Why spend money solving problems in space when we don't lack for problems to solve here on the ground? And obviously, our country is still reeling from the worst economic turmoil we've known in generations. We have massive structural deficits that have to be closed in the coming years.

But you and I know this is a false choice. We have to fix our economy. We need to close our deficits. But for pennies on the dollar, the space program has fueled jobs and entire industries. For pennies on the dollar, the space program has improved our lives, advanced our society, strengthened our economy, and inspired generations of Americans. And I have no doubt that NASA can continue to fulfill this role. But that is why—[applause]—but I want to say clearly to those of you who work for NASA, but to the entire community that has been so supportive of the space program in this area: That is exactly why it's so essential that we pursue a new course and that we revitalize NASA and its mission, not just with dollars, but with clear aims and a larger purpose.

Now, little more than 40 years ago, astronauts descended the nine-rung ladder of the lunar module called *Eagle* and allowed their feet to touch the dusty surface of the Earth's only Moon. This was the culmination of a daring and perilous gambit, of an endeavor that pushed the boundaries of our knowledge, of our technical prowess, of our very capacity as human beings to solve problems. It wasn't just the greatest achievement in NASA's history, it was one of the greatest achievements in human history.

And the question for us now is whether that was the beginning of something or the end of something. I choose to believe it was only the beginning.

So thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to *Gemini 12* and *Apollo 11* astronaut Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr.

Statement on House Energy and Commerce Committee Passage of Home Star Legislation

April 15, 2010

Today's bipartisan committee vote is an important step forward in our effort to create jobs, save consumers money, and increase energy efficiency. In my State of the Union Address and in the months since, I have called on Congress to pass a program of incentives to homeowners who make their homes more energy efficient.

The Home Star legislation approved today would do just that, providing consumers with upfront rebates on investments in things like insulation, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, and windows that have been proven to save energy. This proposal is not a Democratic or Republican idea, it's a commonsense

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strategy to help put Americans back to work while giving American consumers a break. I want to thank the Members of Congress from both parties that have worked to support this legislation, as well as their colleagues in the

Senate who are working to promote Home Star legislation. I look forward to working with Congress to get this bill to my desk without delay.

Statement on the Death of Benjamin L. Hooks

April 15, 2010

Michelle and I were saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks. As I was running for this office, I had the honor of spending some time with Dr. Hooks and hearing about his extraordinary place in our American story. For 16 years, he led the NAACP with a strong hand and a nimble mind. And all the while, he not only reminded us of that historic organization's noble mission, he inspired each and every one of us to play our part in forging a stronger nation for all Americans. While many would have been satisfied with that achievement, Dr. Hooks was a man driven to accomplish so much more. A true trailblazer, he served as the first African American

criminal court judge in his native Tennessee. He became the first African American to serve on the Federal Communications Commission. He earned the Presidential Medal of Freedom. And throughout it all, he made the time to serve others as a mentor and preach the Gospel as a pastor.

Our national life is richer for the time Dr. Hooks spent on this Earth. And our Union is more perfect for the way he spent it, giving a voice to the voiceless. Michelle and I offer our thoughts and prayers to his wife Frances, his daughter Patricia Gray, and all who knew Dr. Hooks through his extraordinary good works.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation Temporarily Extending Various Programs Including Unemployment Insurance

April 15, 2010

In these tough economic times, it is more critical than ever to bring relief to Americans who are working every day to find a job and families that are struggling to make ends meet. Millions of Americans who lost their jobs in this economic crisis depend on unemployment and health insurance benefits to get by as they look for work and get themselves back on their feet. I'm grateful that the House and Senate moved forward on this temporary extension

today. But as I requested in my budget, I urge Congress to move quickly to extend these benefits through the end of this year. I also urge Congress to move forward on legislation to help small businesses grow and hire and other measures to increase the pace of job growth. This is my top priority, and I will fight day and night until every American who wants a good job has one.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Reception in Miami, Florida

April 15, 2010

The President. Hello, Miami! Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Everybody have a seat, everybody have a seat. Settle down here for a second. Oh, it is good to be back in Miami. It's good to be back in the Sunshine State. I came

to Florida today to visit NASA, lay out a bold new vision for America's future in space. And I figured, hey, while I'm here—[*laughter*—let's beam down and visit some old friends in Miami, so—[*applause*].