

like something that is going to cost me tax dollars, and I already have insurance, so why should I support this.

So I just want to be clear that there are things that have to get done. This is our best chance to do it. We can't keep on putting this off. Even if you've got health insurance right now, look at what's happening with your premiums and look at the trend. It is going to gobble up more and more of your paycheck. A half—there have to be a chunk of you folks in here who have seen your employers say you've got to pick up more of your payments in terms of higher deductibles or higher copayments. Some of you, your employers just said, we can't afford health insurance at all. That's going to happen to more and more people.

You asked about Social Security. Let me talk about Medicare. Medicare will be broke in 8 years if we do nothing. Right now we give about \$17 billion in subsidies to insurance companies through the Medicare system, your tax dollars. But when we try to eliminate them, suddenly there were ads on TV, "Oh, Obama is trying to cut Medicare." I get all these seniors writing letters: "Why are you trying to cut my Medicare benefits?" I'm not trying to cut your Medicare benefits. I'm trying to stop paying these insurance companies all this money so I can give you a more stable program.

The point is this: None of the big issues that we face in this country are simple. Everybody wants to act like they're simple. Everybody wants to say that they can be done easily. But they're complicated. They're tough. The health care system is a big, complicated system, and doing it right is hard.

Energy: If we want to be energy independent, I'm for more oil production. I am for

new forms of energy. I'm for a safe nuclear industry. I'm not ideological about this. But we also have to acknowledge that if we're going to actually have a energy-independent economy, that we've got to make some changes. We can't just keep on doing business the same way. And that's going to be a big, complicated discussion.

We can't shy away from it though. We can't sort of start suddenly saying to ourselves, America or Congress can't do big things, that we should only do the things that are noncontroversial, we should only do the stuff that's safe. Because if that's what happens, then we're not going to meet the challenges of the 21st century. And that's not who we are. That's not how we used to operate, and that's not how I intend us to operate going forward.

We are going to take these big things on, and I'm going to do it, and you're going to do it, because you know that we want to leave a better America for our children and our grandchildren. And that doesn't mean standing still, that means marching forward.

I want to march forward with you. I want to work with you. I want to fight for you. I hope you're willing to stand by me, even during these tough times, because I believe in a brighter future for America.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. at Lorain County Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Jody Hasman, student, Lorain County Community College. A participant referred to Lt. Gov. Lee Fisher of Ohio; and Mayor Donald L. Plusquellic of Akron, OH. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of the President's opening remarks.

Statement on the 37th Anniversary of the Supreme Court Decision in *Roe v. Wade*

January 22, 2010

Today we recognize the 37th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which affirms every woman's fundamental constitutional right to choose whether to have

an abortion, as well as each American's right to privacy from Government intrusion. I have and continue to support these constitutional rights. I also remain committed to working

with people of good will to prevent unintended pregnancies, support pregnant women and families, and strengthen the adoption system.

Today and every day, we must strive to ensure that all women have limitless opportunities to fulfill their dreams.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report Relating to the Interdiction of Aircraft Engaged in Illicit Drug Trafficking *January 22, 2010*

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with the authorities related to official immunity in the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking (Public Law 107–108, 22 U.S.C. 2291–4), as amended, and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing a report by my Administration.

This report includes matters related to support for the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
January 22, 2010.

The President's Weekly Address *January 23, 2010*

One of the reasons I ran for President was because I believed so strongly that the voices of everyday Americans, hard-working folks doing everything they can to stay afloat, just weren't being heard over the powerful voices of the special interests in Washington. And the result was a national agenda too often skewed in favor of those with the power to tilt the tables.

In my first year in office, we pushed back on that power by implementing historic reforms to get rid of the influence of those special interests. On my first day in office, we closed the revolving door between lobbying firms and the Government so that no one in my administration would make decisions based on the interests of former or future employers. We barred gifts from Federal lobbyists to executive branch officials. We imposed tough restrictions to prevent funds for our recovery from lining the pockets of the well connected, instead of creating jobs for Americans. And for the first time in history, we have publicly disclosed the names of lobbyists and nonlobbyists alike who visit the White House every day so that you know what's going on in the White House, the people's house.

We've been making steady progress. But this week, the United States Supreme Court handed a huge victory to the special interests and

their lobbyists and a powerful blow to our efforts to rein in corporate influence. This ruling strikes at our democracy itself. By a 5–4 vote, the Court overturned more than a century of law, including a bipartisan campaign finance law written by Senators John McCain and Russ Feingold that had barred corporations from using their financial clout to directly interfere with elections by running advertisements for or against candidates in the crucial closing weeks.

This ruling opens the floodgates for an unlimited amount of special interest money into our democracy. It gives the special interest lobbyists new leverage to spend millions on advertising to persuade elected officials to vote their way, or to punish those who don't. That means that any public servant who has the courage to stand up to the special interests and stand up for the American people can find himself or herself under assault come election time. Even foreign corporations can now get into the act.

I can't think of anything more devastating to the public interest. The last thing we need to do is hand more influence to the lobbyists in Washington or more power to the special interests to tip the outcome of elections.

All of us, regardless of party, should be worried that it will be that much harder to get fair, commonsense financial reforms or close unwar-