

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 4:55 p.m. on May 27 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at the dinner on June 2 in New York City. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Paik Sun-

yup, former Republic of Korea Army Chief of Staff; Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations; and former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Extension of Benefits to Same-Sex Domestic Partners of Federal Employees

June 2, 2010

Last year, I issued a Presidential memorandum that instructed the Office of Personnel Management and the Secretary of State to extend certain available benefits they had identified to gay and lesbian Federal employees and their families under their respective jurisdictions. Among those benefits were long-term care insurance and expanded sick leave for civil service employees and medical care abroad, eligibility for employment at posts, cost-of-living adjustments abroad and medical evacuation for domestic partners of Foreign Servicemembers. In that same memorandum, I called upon the Federal agencies to undertake a comprehensive review and to identify any additional benefits that could be extended to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees under existing law. That process has now concluded, and I am proud to announce that earlier today, I signed a memorandum that requires executive agencies to take immediate action to extend to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees a number of meaningful benefits, from

family assistance services to hardship transfers to relocation expenses. It also requires agencies that extend any new benefits to employees' opposite-sex spouses to make those benefits available on equal terms to employees' same-sex domestic partners to the extent permitted by law.

While this memorandum is an important step on the path to equality, my administration continues to be prevented by existing Federal law from providing same-sex domestic partners with the full range of benefits enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. That is why today I renew my call for swift passage of an important piece of legislation pending in both Houses of Congress, the "Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act." This legislation, championed by Senators Joe Lieberman and Susan Collins and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, would extend to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees the full range of benefits currently enjoyed by Federal employees' opposite-sex spouses. I look forward to signing it into law.

Remarks at PBS's "Paul McCartney: The Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song In Performance at the White House"

June 2, 2010

Thank you. Please, everybody, have a seat. The show's not over. [*Laughter*] To all the tremendous artists from all the genres and backgrounds who've joined us tonight to pay tribute to the one and only Sir Paul McCartney, thank you so much. Stevie Wonder, the Jonas Brothers, Faith Hill, Emmylou Harris, Lang Lang, Herbie Hancock, Elvis Costello, Jack White, Corinne Bailey Rae, David Grohl, and the funnymen, Jerry Seinfeld, give it up for them.

We also want to thank the Gershwin family, as well as the Library of Congress and Dr. James Billington, as well as PBS for helping to put this together. Dr. Billington has done extraordinary work at the Library of Congress, and his deep commitment to preserving America's cultural heritage for future generations is something that we all treasure.

We have a number of Members of Congress, number of dignitaries here tonight. I want to make special mention of our outstanding

Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi. You will not find a bigger supporter of the arts than Nancy Pelosi, and so we're grateful for that.

Even as we gather here tonight to present this annual award for extraordinary contributions to American music and culture—that's right, we stole you, Paul—[laughter]—it goes without saying that this has been a very difficult time. We've gone through a difficult year and a half, and right now our thoughts and our prayers are with friends in another part of the country that is so rich in musical heritage, the people of the Gulf Coast, who are dealing with something that we simply have not seen before. And it's heartbreaking. And we reaffirm, I think, together, our commitment to see to it that their lives and their communities are made whole again.

But part of what gets us through tough times is music, the arts, the ability to capture that essential kernel of ourselves, that part of us that sings even when times are hard. And it's fitting that the Library has chosen to present this year's Gershwin Prize for Popular Song to a man whose father played Gershwin compositions for him on the piano, a man who grew up to become the most successful songwriter in history, Sir Paul McCartney.

Now, by its very definition, popular music is fleeting. Rarely is it composed with an eye towards standing the test of time. Rarer still does it actually achieve that distinction. And that's what makes Paul's career so legendary.

It's hard to believe that it's been nearly half a century since four lads from Liverpool first landed on our shores and changed everything overnight. And I have to share this story. While we were sitting here, I learned that the bass that Paul was playing onstage is the same bass that he played at "The Ed Sullivan Show,"

which he told me it cost him 30 pounds. He says he suspects it's worth a little more now. [Laughter]

But the Beatles, they weren't the first rock stars. They'd be the first to say that others had opened that door for them. But they blew the walls down for everybody else. In a few short years, they had changed the way that we listened to music, thought about music, and performed music forever. They helped to lay the soundtrack for an entire generation, an era of endless possibility and of great change.

And over the four decades since, Paul McCartney has not let up, touring the world with the band Wings or on his own, rocking everything from small halls to Super Bowls. He's composed hundreds of songs over the years, with John Lennon, with others, or on his own. Nearly 200 of those songs made the charts—think about that—and stayed on the charts for a cumulative total of 32 years. [Laughter] And his gifts have touched billions of lives.

As he later confessed of the Beatles' first appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show," where he carried that bass out—that one evening that changed everything—Paul said, "Luckily, we didn't know what America was. We just knew our dream of it, or we probably would have been too intimidated."

Tonight it is my distinct pleasure to present America's highest award for popular music on behalf of a grateful nation—grateful that a young Englishman shared his dreams with us—Sir Paul McCartney.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:36 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 3.

Remarks at the United States-India Strategic Dialogue Reception June 3, 2010

The President. Thank you very much. Good evening, everyone. *Namaste.*

Audience members. *Namaste.*

The President. I want to thank Secretary Clinton for your outstanding leadership. And I want to thank Minister Krishna for both the

kind words and the incredible work that you've put in to trying to strengthen even more and deepen even more the relationship between the two largest democracies in the world.

Secretary Clinton, I think as you may be aware, is a great admirer of India, and I know