

Aug. 4 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2010

Because we know that real change does not come from Washington, it comes from the grassroots, from men and women in communities all across the country working together to make a difference.

In the end, that's what service is all about. It's not about the recognition or the awards—and it's obviously not about the money. [Laughter] To quote George Weiss, who's being honored here today: "We don't do it for the notoriety. We do it because we felt it has to be done." And that's why it is my hope that if this award serves a purpose, it will be to inspire more Americans to open their hearts, to strengthen their communities, and to follow the example of these amazing men and women who are here today.

So congratulations to all of the winners of the Citizens Medal. I've got some military aides here, and one of them is going to read the citations and I am going to get the medals to present to each of our honorees. With that, let's get started.

[At this point, Maj. Barrett M. Bernard, USA, Army Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.]

Well, you see why this is one of my favorite ceremonies? [Laughter] I want to thank all of

you for joining us to honor these remarkable people. None of them asked for this award. They didn't apply for it. Instead they were nominated by the men and women all across the country whose lives they have touched. And even though their names may not be well-known—at least not until today—[laughter]—they are heroes to those who need it the most.

And together, they remind us that we all have a purpose on this Earth that goes beyond our own lives and our own individual needs. And they teach us that no matter what challenges we face, we each have the power to make the world a better place. So congratulations to all of you. We are better as a country as a consequence of your ordinary—extraordinary service. And you exemplify what it means to be a citizen of the United States of America. We're grateful.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:26 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lisa Nigro, founder, Inspiration Corp.; Patrick A. Corvington, Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service; and George J. Weiss, Jr., founder, Fort Snelling National Cemetery Memorial Rifle Squad.

Statement on the Senate Cloture Vote on Federal Medical Assistance Percentage and Teacher Jobs Funding Legislation August 4, 2010

Today Congress took an important step towards ensuring that teachers across the country can stay in the classroom and cash-strapped States can get the relief they need.

We know that economic prosperity and educational success go hand in hand. That's why

I'm urging the Senate to pass this legislation that will prevent local budget cuts and save thousands of teacher jobs across the country.

I commend Senator Reid for his hard work and look forward to a final vote later this week.

Remarks at the Ford Motor Company Chicago Assembly Plant in Chicago, Illinois August 5, 2010

The President. Hello, Chicago! Hello, hello, hello! What's going on? Thank you, everybody.

And listen, it is good to see everybody. I appreciate everybody way back there. Hello, hello!