

## Statement on the Death of Margaret T. Burroughs

November 21, 2010

Michelle and I are saddened by the passing of Dr. Margaret Burroughs, who was widely admired for her contributions to American culture as an esteemed artist, historian, educator, and mentor. In 1961, Dr. Burroughs founded the DuSable Museum of African American History on the South Side of Chicago, which served as a beacon of culture and a resource worldwide for African American history. She was also admired

for her generosity and commitment to underserved communities through her children's books, art workshops, and community centers that both inspired and educated young people about African American culture.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Dr. Burroughs's family and loved ones. Her legacy will live on in Chicago and around the world.

## Statement on Lebanon's Independence Day

November 22, 2010

On behalf of the American people, I offer my deepest congratulations to President Sleiman, Speaker Berri, Prime Minister Hariri, and all citizens of Lebanon on the occasion of Lebanon's Independence Day. This celebration comes at a particularly opportune time, in light of the challenges Lebanon currently faces. This important day exemplifies Lebanon's sovereignty, independence, and national and cultural identity. The United States is committed to strengthening these characteristics through support of Lebanon's state institutions and voices of peace and moderation.

We are grateful to the Government of Lebanon for its steadfast leadership under difficult circumstances. It has shown vision in its search for peace, stability, and consensus. We continue to support the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which will end the era of political assassinations with impunity in Lebanon. Lebanon and its children need a future where they can fulfill their dreams free of fear and intimidation.

I am committed to doing everything I can to support Lebanon and ensure it remains free

from foreign interference, terrorism, and war. Lebanon deserves peace and prosperity, and those who believe otherwise are no friend to Lebanon. I hope you will carry this message to your friends and family. Lebanon has fought enough fights. The only way ahead is for all Lebanese to work together, not against each other, for a sovereign and independent Lebanon that enjoys both justice and stability.

Lebanon's multiethnic democratic system ensures representation by all of Lebanon's different religious and ethnic backgrounds. This unique facet sets Lebanon apart and has allowed Lebanese citizens to flourish and build their country and the rich tapestry that is Lebanese society. It is much the same in our own country, where Lebanese Americans have for generations contributed deeply to the American community, economy, and culture through their leadership in Congress, the business world, the U.S. military, and even in my Cabinet. We salute Lebanon today for its greatest resource—its people—and wish all of Lebanon a happy independence day.

## Remarks at the Chrysler Indiana Transmission Plant II in Kokomo, Indiana

November 23, 2010

Everybody, have a seat. Thank you so much. Thank you, Joe. Thank you, Kokomo. I have to just say, by the way, Joe is not only one of the best Vice Presidents in history, he's also one of

the best introducers in history. [*Laughter*] I try to take him wherever I can.

I want to thank your plant manager, Jeremy Keating, for the great tour and the great work

that he's doing here. He is proud of the work that's being done at this plant. I want to thank your local UAW president, Richie Boruff, who's here; thank them for showing me around.

A couple other hotshots: U.S. Senator Evan Bayh is here; Congressman Joe Donnelly is in the house; Congressman Andre Carson is here; Congressman Baron Hill is here. By the way, Congressman Baron Hill is in the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame. Now, that's pretty cool. Being a Congressman's cool; being in the Basketball Hall of Fame in Indiana, that's something.

Mayor of Kokomo, Greg Goodnight, is here, doing outstanding work. The CEO of Chrysler Group, Sergio Marchionne, is here. President of UAW, Bob King, is in the house.

We've got some of the best workers in the United States of America right here at this plant. And I had a chance to meet some of you as we were going around seeing these amazing transmissions that you're building. And I was very happy to hear that after a couple of tough years, this plant is now running at full capacity. And that's why I'm here today. That's why I'm here today.

Now, we all know that one plant by itself doesn't mean that there aren't people in Kokomo who are still hurting. I had lunch with the mayor and some firefighters, and there's still a long way to go. The mayor's got all kinds of great plans, and there are businesses that are looking to start expanding. But the fact is there are millions of people around the country who are still looking for work in the wake of the worst recession in our lifetimes. I don't have to tell you that. Many of you still have friends or neighbors, a husband or a wife who is still struggling.

And I know that before this plant started re-hiring, a lot of you were in the same position. So you remember that it is a tough, tough thing when you're out of work, especially when you've taken a lifetime of pride in working and supporting a family and making great products.

But even as we continue to face serious challenges, what's happening here at this plant, the changes we're seeing throughout Kokomo, are signs of hope and confidence in the future, in

our future, together. You're showing us the way forward. You're living up to that spirit of optimism and determination, that grit that's always been at the heart of who we are as a people, at the heart of America.

I remember coming to Kokomo a little over 2 years ago. Joe will remember this. Some of you might have been here. What was happening here reflected what was happening all over the country, all over this region. For a decade or more, families had felt a growing sense of economic insecurity. A lot of manufacturing had left the area. And then a recession started taking hold, and folks were seeing job losses and facing new hardships.

That was before anybody knew how devastating the recession was going to be. So by the time I took office, just a few months later, the financial crisis had hit, the auto industry teetered on the brink, and we were losing millions of jobs.

And that left Joe and I with some tough choices. One was to help the auto industry re-structure. And that wasn't an easy call. I understood that there were some reservations of those who said that the industry should pay a price for some poor decisions by the part of management. But we also knew that millions of jobs hung in the balance. We also knew that the very survival of places like Kokomo were on the line. And we knew that the collapse of the American auto industry would lead to an even deeper disaster for our economy.

And you know what, we also believed that America, which popularized the automobile, whose middle class was made on the basis of manufacturing, that we couldn't just give up. We couldn't throw in the towel. That was not an option.

There were those who were prepared to give up on Kokomo and our auto industry. There were those who said it was going to be too difficult or that it was bad politics or it was throwing good money after bad. You remember the voices arguing for us to do nothing. They were pretty loud, suggesting we should just step back and watch an entire sector of our economy fall apart.

But we knew that the auto industry was not built, and this country was not built, by doing the easy thing. It wasn't built by doing nothing. It was built by doing what was necessary, even when it's difficult. So we made the decision to stand behind the auto industry if automakers, if CEOs like Sergio, were willing to do what was necessary to make themselves competitive in the 21st century and if they had the cooperation of workers, who were taking pride in the products that they made.

We made the decision to stand with you because we had confidence in the American worker, more than anything. And today, we know that was the right decision. We know that was the right decision.

Today, each of the Big Three automakers has increased their market share—each of them. For the first time in over a decade, Americans are buying a larger share of Chryslers, Fords, and GM cars and a smaller share of their foreign counterparts—for the first time in decades.

We're coming back; we're on the move. All three American companies are profitable, and they are growing. Some of you read last week, GM's stock offering exceeded expectations as investors expressed their confidence in a future that seemed so dim just 18 months ago. And as a result, the Treasury was able to sell half of its GM stock.

So here's the lesson: Don't bet against America. Don't bet against the American auto industry. Don't bet against American ingenuity. Don't bet against the American worker. Don't bet against us. Don't bet against us.

Don't bet against us. This plant is a shining example of why you shouldn't. Two years ago, production here was plummeting. A lot of folks had lost their jobs. Today, this plant is coming back. The company has invested more than \$300 million in this factory to retool.

But it gets better. Sergio just told me today, Chrysler is announcing an additional investment of more than \$800 million in its Kokomo facilities—\$800 million. That's good; that's good news. That's real money, \$800 million. See, the mayor's got a big grin on his face. All right, you're pretty happy about that.

Over the next few years, folks here expect to manufacture more transmissions than ever before. And as a result, hundreds of workers are back on the job, and Jeremy said we're going to be hiring more.

This includes—I'm going to name a couple of people just to embarrass them a little bit. Where's Sharon Ybarra? Is Sharon here? Right here. Sharon lost her job of 20 years at a paper mill. She was only able to find work that paid her far less than her old job, until she was hired by Chrysler. And now she is doing a great job right here at Chrysler. We're proud of you.

Jim Faurote is here. Where's Jim? Jim's right next to her. Jim worked for Chrysler for a decade, right? Then he lost his job when the plant he worked at in New Castle shut down. Over the next few years, he could only find intermittent work on and off. It wasn't until after the restructuring that he was able to have a job he could count on. And he is back at work now for more than a year, doing an outstanding job, making great products here at Chrysler. So—[applause].

At a plant down the road, workers are manufacturing parts for hybrid vehicles. That's already led to dozens of jobs and will lead to nearly 200 jobs over the next few years. A few miles outside of Kokomo, in Tipton, a clean energy company called Abound is going to be able to hire 900 workers, taking over a plant that had to shut down a few years ago.

So a factory that was empty and dark will come back to life. And when people have a paycheck, as Joe said, they can go to the store, they're able to spend. That helps the economy grow. And so on Main Street in Kokomo, we're seeing a revival with new businesses opening downtown.

So for anybody who says our country's best days are behind us, anybody who would doubt our prospects for the future, anybody who doesn't believe in the Midwest, anybody who doesn't believe in manufacturing, have them come to Kokomo. Have them come to Kokomo. Come here, meet these workers, visit these plants. Come back to this city that's fighting block by block, business by business, job by job.

This is a reminder of what we do as Americans—what we can do as Americans when we come together, when we're not divided. We're not spending all our time bickering, but instead focusing on getting the job done. We don't give up, we don't turn back. We fight for our future.

No, we're not out of the woods yet. It took a lot of years to get us into this mess. It will take longer than anybody would like to get us out. But I want everybody to be absolutely clear: We are moving in the right direction. We learned that the economy—[*applause*]*—*we learned today that the economy is growing at a faster pace than we previously thought. That's welcome news. But we're going to keep on making it grow faster. We're going to keep on creating more jobs. We need to do everything we can to make that happen.

That's why in the coming days it is so important, the coming months it's so important that Democrats and Republicans work together to speed up our recovery. We've got to put aside our differences. The election's over. We've got to find places where we can agree. We've got to remember the most important contest we face, it's not between Democrats and Republicans, it's between America and our economic competitors. Other nations are already making investments in—[*applause*]. Other nations are making investments in education, energy and infrastructure, technology, because they know that's how they're going to be able to attract the new jobs of the future. And throughout our history, Democrats and Republicans have agreed on making these investments.

If we don't want to cede our economic leadership to nations like China, we've got to do the same today. We've got to make sure our workers have the skills and the training to compete with any workers in the world. We should give our businesses more incentive to invest in research and innovation that leads to new jobs and new products and new industries like the ones we're seeing here in Kokomo. We should make it easier, not harder, for middle class families to get ahead.

I'll give you an example on taxes. Next year, taxes are set to go up for middle class families, unless Congress acts. If we don't act by the end

of the year, a typical middle class family will wake up on January 1 to a tax increase of \$3,000 per year.

So in the next few weeks, I'm asking Congress to take up this issue. The last thing we can afford to do right now is raise taxes on middle class families. If we allow these taxes to go up, the result would be that a lot of people most likely would spend less, and that means that the economy would grow less. So we ought to resolve this issue in the next couple of weeks so you've got the assurance that your taxes won't go up when the clock strikes midnight.

Now, this is actually an area where Democrats and Republicans agree. The only place where we disagree is whether we can afford to also borrow \$700 billion to pay for an extra tax cut for the wealthiest Americans, for millionaires and billionaires. I don't think we can afford it right now, not when we are going to have to make some tough decisions to rein in our deficits. That's going to require sacrifice from all Americans, including those who can most afford it. So I'm eager to sit down with leaders from both parties next week and to hammer this out, but we need to hammer it out.

Long before transmissions were coming off the line at this plant—and by the way, you look at these transmissions today and somebody 20 years ago or 10 years ago might not recognize them; they're amazing. Before Henry Ford built the Model T or Walter Chrysler took up the reins at a startup called Buick, a man by the name of Elwood Haynes decided to do a little experiment right here in Kokomo.

He set up a 1-horsepower boat engine on his kitchen; he bolted it to the ground. His idea was that he might be able to rig the motor to a carriage. So he starts it up, and the engine worked great. In fact, it worked so well that it came loose from the bolts and destroyed the kitchen floor. And after a brief and what I imagine was a difficult conversation with his wife, Elwood decided to continue his tests in his machine shop. And he toiled for months. But when he was finished, he had completed one of the earliest working automobiles ever built in America. And he named it the Pioneer.

So Kokomo has a storied place in our history. This is a city where people came to invent things and to build things, to make things here in America, to work hard in the hopes of producing something of value and something that people could be proud of.

That's the legacy of all of you. You are all heirs to that tradition right here at this plant. That's the legacy that has made this country the envy of the world. And I am absolutely con-

vinced this legacy is one you will continue to uphold for years and decades to come.

Congratulations, Chrysler. Congratulations, Kokomo. Proud of you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden.

## Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony November 24, 2010

*The President.* Please, everybody, have a seat. Good morning.

*Audience members.* Good morning.

*The President.* I have my two trusty assistants here—[laughter]—Malia and Sasha, for one of the most important duties that I carry out as President.

Before everybody heads home for Thanksgiving, there is one official duty I am sworn to uphold as the leader of the most powerful nation on Earth. Today I have the awesome responsibility of granting a Presidential pardon to a pair of turkeys. Now, for the record, let me say that it feels pretty good to stop at least one shellacking this November. [Laughter]

This year's national turkey goes by the name of Apple, and his feathered understudy is appropriately named Cider. They are being presented today by the chairman of the National Turkey Federation, Yubert Envia—and I want to just point out that Yubert seems very comfortable with that turkey—[laughter]—as well as the man who helped raise and handle them since birth, Ira Brister. Where's Ira? There's Ira. Give Ira a big round of applause for raising such outstanding turkeys. I want to thank you both for joining us here at the White House.

Now, Apple and Cider came to us from the Foster Farms Wellsford Ranch, just outside of Modesto, California. Out of about 20,000 turkeys born at Foster Farms this summer, 25 were selected for a final competition that involved strutting their stuff before a panel of judges with an eclectic mix of music playing in the background. [Laughter] It's kind of like a

turkey version of "Dancing With the Stars"—[laughter]—except the stakes for the contestants was much higher. [Laughter]

Only one pair would survive and win the big prize: life—[laughter]—and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, where they've been living it up on corn feed at the W hotel. The W hotel has really been putting them up. [Laughter] It's great advertising. [Laughter] It makes you want to stay at the W. [Laughter] And after today, Apple and Cider will spend their retirement at the same beautiful place our first President spent his: Mount Vernon, Virginia.

So later this afternoon, our family will also deliver two turkeys who didn't quite make the cut to Martha's Table, which is an organization that does extraordinary work helping folks who are struggling here in DC. And I want to thank the good people at Jaindl's Turkey Farm in Orefield, Pennsylvania, who have now donated these turkeys 2 years in a row.

Now, this, of course, is what's truly meant by Thanksgiving, a holiday that asks us to be thankful for what we have and generous to those who have less. It's a time to spend with the ones we love and a chance to show compassion and concern to people we've never met. It's a tradition that's brought us together as a community since before we were a nation, when the ground we're standing on was nothing but wilderness.

Back then, the simple act of survival was often the greatest blessing of all. And later, President Lincoln declared the first National Day of Thanksgiving in the midst of the Civil War. During the depths of the Great Depression, lo-