

that that is how we are going to move this country forward once again.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

## Statement on the 35th Anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act *November 29, 2010*

In America, we believe that every child, regardless of class, color, creed, or ability, deserves access to a world-class education. But as recently as 35 years ago, an American child with a disability might have attended school without the interventions and accommodations necessary for their success or been involuntarily isolated in a State-run institution or even received no education at all.

That was wrong, and America set out to right it. Today, across the United States, nearly 6.6 million students with disabilities rely on the provisions of the landmark Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure that they enjoy the same educational rights as all children.

And as we mark the 35th anniversary of that law, we remember what it was all about: equal

opportunity, equal access; not dependence, but independence. We know that our education system must hold children with disabilities to the same high standards as those without disabilities and hold them accountable for their success and their growth. We remember that disability rights are civil rights too and pledge to enforce those rights in order to live up to our founding principles and ensure the promise of opportunity for all our people. And even as we celebrate children with disabilities and their parents, teachers, advocates, and all who still strive to tear down the true barriers to success, even as we celebrate how far we've come, we commit ourselves to the ever-unfinished work of forming that more perfect Union.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders *November 30, 2010*

Hello, everybody. By the way, for those of you who are curious, we're using this room because we've got about a hundred volunteers decorating the White House. So we're spending a little more time in the EEOB.

I just wrapped up a meeting with leaders from both parties. It was our first chance to get together face to face since the election to talk about how we can best work together to move the country forward.

It's no secret that we have had differences that have led us to part ways on many issues in the past. But we are Americans first, and we share a responsibility for the stewardship of our Nation. The American people did not vote for gridlock. They didn't vote for unyielding partisanship. They're demanding cooperation, and they're demanding progress. And they'll hold all of us—and I mean all of us—accountable for it.

And I was very encouraged by the fact that there was broad recognition of that fact in the room.

I just want to say I thought it was a productive meeting. I thought that people came to it with a spirit of trying to work together. And I think it's a good start as we move forward.

I think everybody understands that the American people want us to focus on their jobs, not ours. They want us to come together around strategies to accelerate the recovery and get Americans back to work. They want us to confront the long-term deficits that cloud our future. They want us to focus on their safety and security and not allow matters of urgent importance to become locked up in the politics of Washington.

So today we had the beginning of a new dialogue that I hope—and I'm sure most Ameri-