

support your position. And regarding Darfur, we will exert our best effort to cooperate with you on finding the best way out. This has been a longstanding issue, but I think with our common capabilities, we will be able to achieve that goal.

[At this point, Amir Hamad spoke in English.]

And I will not forget to send your tickets for the World Cup. [Laughter]

President Obama. Thank you, my friend.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Amir Hamad spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

## Statement on Signing the Comprehensive 1099 Taxpayer Protection and Repayment of Exchange Subsidy Overpayments Act of 2011 April 14, 2011

Today I was pleased to take another step to relieve unnecessary burdens on small businesses by signing H.R. 4 into law. Small-business owners are the engine of our economy, and because Democrats and Republicans worked together, we can ensure they spend their time and resources creating jobs and growing their business, not filling out more paperwork. I look

forward to continuing to work with Congress to improve the tax credit policy in this legislation, and I am eager to work with anyone with ideas about how we can make health care better or more affordable.

NOTE: H.R. 4, approved April 14, was assigned Public Law No. 112-9.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Chicago, Illinois April 14, 2011

Hello, Chicago! Thank you. Thank you, everybody. It's good to be home. Thank you. All right, everybody have a seat. Everybody have a seat. You're making me blush. [Laughter]

We've got some very special guests here today. First of all, my former seatmate in the Illinois State Senate, who is doing gangbuster work all over the State, Attorney General Lisa Madigan is in the house. Where is Lisa? Where is she? There she is.

A guy who I basically follow around to see what he eats and drinks so I can look like him, somebody who never ages, always doing the right thing on behalf of communities all across the State, especially here in Chicago, Secretary of State Jesse White is in the house.

Our newly elected Cook County president, one of my earliest supporters, and also my former alderwoman—so I hope that my garbage is still being picked up—Toni Preckwinkle is in the house. She's around here somewhere.

And then I have to admit that I got a little confused. [Laughter] I walk in and there are these two guys talking, both of them very animated, both of them a little intimidating, even though they're not tall in stature. [Laughter] I was trying to figure out who I should bow to first. I decided to go with the current mayor—[laughter]—somebody who has done more to make Chicago not just a great American city, but a great world city, and his legacy is going to be deep and lasting, as deep and lasting as his father's was. We are grateful for his service, the mayor of the city of Chicago, Richard Daley.

Bill is doing okay, Rich. [Laughter] I mean, you know, there are times where he's still kind of figuring out where everything is—[laughter]—but overall he's making the grade. Of course, he had some big shoes to fill. And I could not be prouder of the job this man did on behalf of America as my Chief of Staff.

As Bill knows, there probably is not a harder job in Government than being Chief of Staff.

You get all the blame and little of the credit, and the pressures are enormous and they are constant. And I rely extraordinarily heavily, given everything that's on our plate, on the person who essentially oversees the executive functions of the White House.

And so I am blessed now to have a great Chief of Staff, but I also am so lucky to have had in some of the toughest times that we've seen since the Great Depression, somebody who is not only a great manager, a great strategist, a great political thinker, but also my friend. Yes, he is foul mouthed. *[Laughter]* Yes, that finger thing is a little creepy. *[Laughter]* But I love him anyway, and, Chicago, you did the right thing by electing him the next mayor of the city of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel.

Where did Rahm go? He's in the back somewhere. He's cutting a deal of some sort. *[Laughter]*

Look, I don't want to make a long speech, mainly just because even though I'm not supposed to do it, I just want to go around and say hello to everybody, because as I look around the room, I've got as good a collection of friends from every stage of my life in this room as anybody could hope for.

I've got people who helped me get started as a lawyer. I've got folks who helped me get started in politics. I've got folks who worked with me down in Springfield. I've got people who were some of my earliest supporters in my congressional race and nursed me back to health after a beating. *[Laughter]* I've got folks who believed that I might be a United States Senator when nobody could pronounce my name, long before I made a speech in Boston. And then I've got people that had the faith that I could perform the functions of the highest office in the land.

So I—*[applause]*—I've got some folks who taught with me at the University of Chicago. I've got some Hyde Parkers in the house. I've got some folks who were there the summer I met my wife and folks who were there when my children were born. So as I look across the room, it's a record of my adult life and the people who helped me to become the man I am.

The last 2½ years have obviously been extraordinary. We understood when we put together our Presidential campaign that the country was entering a crossroads, that we were going to have to make some fundamental decisions about who we were and who we are as a people. And I got into this race for President because I believed that what makes us great is our incredible commitment to individual freedom and individual responsibility; the fact that with some pluck and some hard work and some good fortune, here in America, anybody can make it, regardless of race or creed or station.

But what made us great is also the fact that this collection of people from all around the world are somehow able to come together and pledge allegiance not just to a flag, but to a creed; that we're able to join together in this common enterprise; that we're able to look out for one another; that when we make it, we're saying to ourselves, who else can we pull up the ladder; that there's a sense of community that is not defined simply by ethnicity or where we go to church or mosque or synagogue or temple, but a commitment to each other that somehow is greater than the sum of its parts.

That's why I decided to run for President. That's why you supported me. Those are the values that you helped teach me when I first came to Chicago so many years ago. And those values have been put to the test over the last 2½ years, because Americans have gone through a tough time.

I can't describe night after night reading the letters that I get, the e-mails that I get, from people all across the country, just heartbreaking stories: children talking about their parents losing their jobs or losing their homes and wondering if they're going to be okay; folks sending out job application after job application after job application and nothing coming back; parents of young men and women who've been killed in action, trying to describe how proud they are of those kids even though their heart just aches, and asking to make sure that as the Commander in Chief that I am living up to that full measure of devotion that they displayed.

And so for the last 2½ years, what I've tried to do is to make sure that every day when I wake up, I remember why I ran and I remember why you supported me. And whether it was passing a Recovery Act that would get the economy back on its feet and put people back to work; saving an auto industry that a lot of people had written off; making sure that we had a financial system that is functioning, but also one that was sufficiently regulated, that consumers got a fair shake; making sure that we brought combat in Iraq to a close; making sure that anybody can serve in our military regardless of their sexual orientation; making sure that in a country as wealthy as ours nobody is going bankrupt because they get sick and no parent has to worry about selling their house because their child has a preexisting condition and he can't get health insurance; making sure that we got more women on the Supreme Court and that one of them is a Latina; and making sure that women get equal pay for equal work so that my daughters, when they come up, are going to have the same chances as your sons—each and every time we've had to make a decision, my guiding principle, that north star, has been those values that we talked about during the campaign: I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper. A belief in an America that is competitive and compassionate. A belief that there's nothing we can't accomplish if we come together, and that we have to think big in terms of what we need to accomplish.

And we've made extraordinary progress, but we still have so much work to do. There's still too many people out there writing me letters that don't have a job, too many folks who are worried about losing their home. There's still too many kids trapped in poverty in cities and rural areas all across America that we haven't been able to reach. There's still discrimination out there. There's still unfairness and injustice out there.

We've still got a hundred thousand troops in Afghanistan, who are remarkable and doing everything they can to keep us safe. We still have roads that need to be fixed and bridges that need to be repaired. We still need an energy

policy that doesn't make us vulnerable to whatever spikes in the world oil market might occur.

Right now there are folks in the Chicago-land area who are every day trying to figure out how am I going to fill up my gas tank. And all the tax cuts that we've provided to help working class and middle class families, they're worried about those tax breaks being entirely eaten up by 4-dollar-a-gallon gas.

We still have to worry about making sure that as the world's largest economy, as the world's wealthiest nation, that we're taking the lead when it comes to climate change. We still have an obligation to make sure that we have an immigration policy in this country that matches up with our values as a nation of laws, but also a nation of immigrants. There are still small businesses out there just waiting to be started if they're getting the right financing. There are still young men and women who are just ready to seize the moment as engineers and scientists if we're just making sure those research grants are flowing. And we've got to do all this in a context, as I talked about yesterday, in which our fiscal challenges are real.

The speech I gave yesterday was not a partisan shot at the other side. It was an attempt to clarify the choice that we have as a country right now. We agree, Democrats and Republicans, that we've got to come together and have a Government that lives within its means; that is lean, is smart, is effective; that we've got a country that pays its bills and isn't borrowing 30 or 40 cents for every dollar that we spend. That is imperative.

And if we're progressive, we've got to care about the deficit just as much as the other side does, because we won't be able to fund the research that's necessary or the Head Start programs or the college loan programs or the infrastructure that we need unless it's on a firm, solid footing.

But how we get there is important. And you've got right now one side that I believe is entirely sincere that says we no longer can afford to do big things in this country. We can't afford to be compassionate.

We can't afford Medicare, so let's make sure that seniors get a voucher, and if the health

insurance companies aren't giving them full coverage or they can't afford coverage with the voucher they get, tough luck, they're on their own.

It's a vision that says we can't afford to rebuild our roads and our bridges. We can't afford high-speed rail. We can't afford broadband lines into rural areas so that everybody can be a part of this new global community. We can't afford to make sure the poor kid can go to college. We can't afford health care for another 50 million people. That's the choice they pose.

Now, understand, it is a choice. Because they're absolutely right. If people like me, if most of the people in this room, can't afford to pay a little bit more in taxes, then a lot of this stuff we can't afford. If we're insisting that those of us who are doing best in this society have no obligations to other folks, then, no, we can't afford it.

But if we're willing to go back to our deepest roots and say to ourselves, you know what, that's not how America was built, that's not how we became the greatest nation on Earth, that's not what the American way is all about; if we say to ourselves I do have that commitment to that child on the South Side or on the West Side or out in the south suburbs, for them to succeed too—my life will be better if they succeed—this is not charity, this is a good investment for me because I want to live in a society where all those kids have a shot; if we say to ourselves, you know what, I want people to have health care, I don't want them going into the emergency room and sitting and waiting and then getting the most expensive care; I think it makes sense for us to have a more effective health care system and one where everybody has basic coverage; if we're saying to ourselves, I want to make sure that Malia and Sasha and your children and your grandchildren, that they're inheriting a land that has

clean rivers and air you can breathe and that's worth something to me, that's something I want to invest in because when I'm all finished here and I'm looking back on my life, I want to be able to say, we were good stewards of the planet; if that's what we believe, then we've got the ability to do that. We've got the ability to do it, and it doesn't take that much. It just doesn't take that much.

If we apply some practical common sense to this, we can solve our fiscal challenges and still have the America that we believe in. That's what this budget debate is going to be about. And that's what the 2012 campaign is going to be about.

And so over the next 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, I'm going to be a little preoccupied. [Laughter] I've got this day job that—[laughter]—that I've got to handle. And it means that I'm not going to see all of you as often I'd like. It means that I'm not going to be able to make that phone call to you and thank you even though my gratitude is profound.

It means that all of you are going to have to remember why I'm standing here, why we were successful. Because it wasn't my campaign, it was your campaign. It was your investment, it was your time, it was your energy, it was your faith, and it was your confidence that is allowing me to try to live up to those values that we share.

And if you remember that, and if you take ownership for that, and if you are just as fired up now, despite the fact that your candidate is a little older and a lot grayer—[laughter]—then I have every confidence that we are going to be able finish the job.

Thank you, Chicago. I love you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at N9NE Steakhouse. In his remarks, he referred to White House Chief of Staff William M. Daley.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Chicago April 14, 2011

Hello, everybody. Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. These are a bunch of

old friends; we can relax. It is wonderful to be home. And I want to thank the whole crew at