

had some old rusty weights, a medicine ball. You didn't have some gleaming, state of the art—I'm just using those as examples.

There are ways that universities have to cut costs as well. But ultimately, we've got to make sure that we're not cutting education unnecessarily. And you're right. In some cases, revenue is going to be necessary.

Now, how many people here know that not only did we cut your taxes when I first came into office, but back in December we just cut your taxes again? How many folks are aware of that? I mean, you wouldn't know it from watching TV. You would think I was just out there raising everybody's taxes; just these big-spending Democrats out there. We haven't raised your taxes; we've lowered your taxes. Because it was important during the recession to make sure that middle class families were able to land on their feet.

And that's actually helping absorb some of the increased costs of gas prices and food prices that are out there right now and helping to sustain consumer spending to keep the economy growing.

But at a certain point, as the economy begins to grow again, as people are getting back on their feet, we've got to go back and say to ourselves, you know what, there's no such thing as a free lunch. Taxes are lower now than they have been in a generation. Taxes are a lot lower now than they were under Ronald Reagan. They're lower than they were under Bill Clinton. They're lower than they were under George Bush, in many cases.

And what I've said is, at minimum, we should say, for those like myself who can afford it, let's pay a little bit more. Let's go—we can

go back—if we went back to the Clinton rates for the wealthiest 2 percent, going back to the Clinton rates—you remember back in the nineties, the economy was doing really well, and rich people were doing just fine. And I can afford it. It's not that I like paying taxes. I don't like paying taxes. Nobody likes paying taxes. But if the choice is keeping my tax break or 33 seniors having to pay an extra 6,000 bucks for their Medicare, why would I want that—why would I wish that on those 33 seniors? If the choice is between me keeping my tax cut and a couple hundred kids being able to go get their Head Start, why would I want that?

This isn't a matter of charity; it's a matter of what we think it is to live in a good society. And I think it is good for me, it is good for my life if when I'm driving around, I'm saying to myself, you know what, that school is producing all kinds of kids who are smart and are going to help build America's future.

And I drive around and I see some seniors, and they're out for a walk. And I know, you know what, I'm glad that I live in a country where in their retirement years, they're going to be secure. That makes me feel good. That's the kind of country I want to live in. That's the kind of country you want to live in. And we've got to make sure we're willing to fight for it.

Everybody, thank you very much. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at ElectraTherm, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush. Participants referred to Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR).

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Culver City, California

*April 21, 2011*

*The President.* Thank you, everybody. Have a seat. Have a seat.

First of all, I just want to say how grateful I am to Ken and John for agreeing to take on the tough task of cochairing our finance committee here in southern California. They have been

great friends and great supporters from the get-go. And I have to say, I did not realize John was that good on the introductions. *[Laughter]* I might have to take him on the road. *[Laughter]*

I also want to thank Michael and Amy who, you know, this is their shop, letting us crash their

space, when I know they're incredibly busy. I was just hearing about "Spider-Man 4"—[*laughter*—so I'm all psyched up about that.

*Audience member.* Will you play a part?

*The President.* Seriously, I was—[*laughter*—I'm very big on Spider-Man. I also want to acknowledge a wonderful public servant, one of the finest mayors in the country, Antonio Villaraigosa is here.

We set this up so that I am just going to go from table to table. And you guys can poke me and prod me—[*laughter*—you know, lift the hood and kick the tires and give me what I'm sure will be wonderful advice. [*Laughter*] Looking around this room, this is not a shy group. [*Laughter*]

But what I want to say before I visit with all of you is how grateful I am. You know, many of you were involved in the 2008 campaign, and let's face it, it was not likely that I was going to end up in the Oval Office. It was possible, but not likely. And so many of you took this incredible leap of faith, in part because the campaign wasn't just about me. It was about how we could move the country in a new direction and how could we recapture that sense of community that, I think, had frayed for too long, and it prevented us from dealing with so many challenges that we face.

As John said, we've made incredible progress over the last 2½ years, but we've got so much more work to do. There are still a lot of folks hurting out there. We've got to put people back to work. We've got to grow the economy. We've got to reduce the deficit. We've got to pass immigration reform. We've got to have an energy plan that works for all Americans.

And that's before I start talking about international affairs. [*Laughter*]

So my inbox keeps on filling up, but I welcome the challenge because I know that I have all of you behind me. I just want to remind you, as we're going around to the tables, that this is going to be just as hard, if not harder, than 2008. And I'm going to need all of you just as engaged, just as motivated, and taking as much ownership over the campaign as you did then.

That's part of what made 2008 special, was you owned it. It wasn't just top down. That's part of the reason why our campaign office is going to be in Chicago, first time in modern history that a President hasn't had his campaign office run out of Washington. Because I never want to lose touch. I never want to lose that sense that what this is about is not simply maintaining a status quo, but it's about how do we bring about the changes that are going to make a difference in people's lives.

So thank you, all of you, for being here. Thanks in advance for the extraordinary work that you're going to do over the next 18 months to make sure that we can finish the job that we started. And with that, let me join you all at the tables. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:39 p.m. in the Commissary restaurant at Sony Pictures Studios. In his remarks, he referred to John B. Emerson and Kenneth A. Solomon, cochairs, Southern California Finance Committee, Democratic National Committee; and Michael M. Lynton, chairman and chief executive officer, and Amy B. Pascal, cochairman, Sony Pictures Entertainment. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Culver City April 21, 2011

*The President.* Hello, L.A.! Hello, Los Angeles! It is good to be back in L.A.

*Audience member.* We love you!

*The President.* Love you back. It's an honor to be here at Sony Studios stage 30. For those of you who thought you were being brought in

here as extras for the new Spider-Man movie—[*laughter*—you're at the wrong soundstage. [*Laughter*] I hope you'll stick around anyway.

We have some wonderful folks here, and I am so grateful for everybody and what they did