

Statement on Washington Governor Christine O. Gregoire's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

June 13, 2011

I applaud Governor Gregoire for her decades of outstanding service to the people of Washington. From Seattle to Pullman, Gov. Gregoire has demonstrated relentless determination in her efforts to foster economic growth, strengthen the communities she serves, and improve the lives of millions of Americans. As a fierce advocate for American businesses, she continues to work tirelessly to promote American goods,

open up new markets, and strengthen American businesses abroad. As chairwoman of the National Governors Association, Gov. Gregoire not only fosters strong bipartisanship among her colleagues, she helps build commonsense solutions to some of our Nation's toughest problems. Michelle and I, along with the people of Washington, will miss her outstanding leadership and thank her for her years of service.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Miami Beach, Florida

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Thank you, everybody. It is wonderful to see you. Steve, to you and Dorothea, thank you for the incredibly gracious introduction and for opening up this extraordinary home. We really appreciate it.

To everybody who is here, all the cohosts who helped make this event happen, thank you. To Debbie Wasserman Schultz, thank you for letting me in your district. We love Debbie. She—if you're in the foxhole, you want Debbie alongside you, because not only is she charming and has that dazzling smile, but she's tough as nails. And that's what's needed during challenging times.

You know, when I was taking photographs, Steve mentioned—he said, "This must be really the toughest time to be President that I can recall." And Steve has known some Presidents. And what I told him was that there's no doubt that the country has gone through an extraordinary trauma. And there are a lot of folks here who remember my first campaign, that were big supporters during the first campaign. And we talked about the challenges that America had been going through for the previous decade: that job growth had been slow, that inequality was on the rise, that our school system had declined, that we didn't have an energy strategy that was appropriate for the 21st century.

All those challenges were worsened as a consequence of the financial crisis. And so people who were already struggling—middle class families who were already treading water and trying to figure out how to get by when their income and wages had flatlined, even though costs of everything from health care to college tuition to groceries and gas had gone up—they really took it even worse in the chin over the last couple of years.

And my job over these first 2 years has frankly been to clean up a big mess. And so working with Debbie, we were able to make sure that we yanked an economy out of what could have been a second Great Depression, that we stabilized the financial system. We made sure that we ended one war and started putting another war on the path where we could start bringing our troops home. We had to restore a sense around the world of what American values and ideals were all about. We had to make sure that we put in place sensible regulations in the financial system to ensure that another financial meltdown would not happen again. We had to address an auto industry that was on the verge of liquidation. We had to get the economy growing again, and we had to get jobs created again.

And I could not be prouder of the track record that we've put together under these trying