

tant than in 2008, and it's going to be a very close election.

The good news is that the vision that we share for the country—one in which we're investing in education and building our transportation networks and our infrastructure and investing in science and research, and balancing our budget and reducing our debt and deficits in ways that are balanced so that we are thinking about future generations and we're asking everybody to do their fair share, including those of us who have been incredibly blessed by this Nation—it turns out that that vision is one that a lot of Americans believe in. And I have confidence that it's the right vision for the country.

The challenge is, is that we're still recovering from this enormous, catastrophic economic crisis, and so people feel—even if they may prefer our vision—frustrated with the fact that the economy hasn't grown as fast and not everybody has gotten their jobs back that were lost during that recession. And so that creates noise, and it allows the other side not to present anything new, but rather to simply argue over and over again that the economy is not where it needs to be and it's Obama's fault. And if you summarize all the negative ads that are being run, that's essentially the message. It's not that there's particular persuasive power in the other side's arguments about how they'd fix the economy. It's simply they want to make this a referendum on the current state of affairs.

So we're going to have to fight hard. We're going to have to work hard. Now, I have to admit to you that Texas is not yet a battleground

State. [*Laughter*] I believe it will be. I have confidence in that. But I think that it is going to take a little bit of time.

In the meantime, there is still an awful lot of people here in this room, and a lot of people here in Texas, who care about making sure that people don't go bankrupt when they get sick and care about keeping women's health in the hands of women and care about having a smart foreign policy and care about having comprehensive immigration reform. And you can make an enormous difference in this campaign.

I note that as I was taking photos, some of you have dispatched your children to work in Pennsylvania, in Virginia, in some of the battleground States. All of you are making enormous contributions to the campaign. I just want you guys to know that if we stay with this and we work hard, we're going to win this thing, because I have confidence in the American people and their core decency and their good instincts. And if we stay on this, then we're going to succeed not just over the next 4 years, but I think we'll set the tone and the track for America's success for the next several decades.

So thank you very much for all that you do. I appreciate it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:14 p.m. at the residence of Thomas J. and Lynn Meredith. In his remarks, he referred to 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Honoring the NCAA Women's Basketball Champion Baylor University Lady Bears July 18, 2012

The President. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Welcome to the White House, everybody. And congratulations to the Baylor Lady Bears on their undefeated season and second national championship.

There are some proud Members of Congress who are here today. We've got a bunch of proud Texans in the house.

I want to thank all the outstanding young women who are behind me and the coach for making my bracket look good, at least on the women's side. [*Laughter*] I picked Baylor over Notre Dame, but I have to say, I wasn't the only one. It wasn't that hard. [*Laughter*] Because if there's one thing to describe this team, it was "dominant."

Last season, the Lady Bears scored more points than any team in women's college basketball history. They became the first team ever—men's or women's—to win 40 games in a season.

Now, this is not to say that success came easily. After a tough loss to Texas A&M in the Elite Eight last year, the Lady Bears decided they weren't going to go through that again. So they buckled down, they spent all summer in the gym, and they have not lost since: not to the Aggies and not to anybody else. [Laughter]

So obviously, a lot of credit goes to Coach Kim Mulkey. This is Coach's fifth national championship. She just—she likes to win if you haven't noticed. [Laughter] She won two as a star player at Louisiana Tech, one as an assistant coach, and now two as head coach at Baylor. That's an incredible accomplishment. I want to point out, that's the first person in college basketball history to win titles in all three roles. I heard she plans to win her next one as mascot—[laughter]—so that she can—but I mean, she's got to figure out what else she can win at this point. But we want to congratulate Coach Kim for leading this team and being named Coach of the Year in women's basketball. Congratulations.

Now, obviously, a great winning team requires a great coach, but it's not as if on the court the players were slackers either. We can't say enough about Brittney Griner. And this young woman is the new face of women's basketball: she blocks shots; she rebounds; she's got the jump hook; she's got the dunk.

She won just about every award that you could win last season. And I have to say that there have been times in the past where I shot around a little bit with the visiting team, but this time I don't think I can get my shot off, so—[laughter]—I'm not doing that this year. [Applause] Not doing that this year.

She's not the only one I'm scared of. You've got Odyssey Sims, who just owned the backcourt, earned her reputation as one of the premier perimeter defenders in the country. Senior Terran Condrey, or Big Shot T—

Team members. Yes!

The President. Where did she go? Right here? Knocking down jump shots. Three other seniors: Ashley Field, Lindsay Palmer, and Cherrish Wallace, who anchored this team for 4 of the most successful years in school history.

So we know that the Lady Bears are talented on the court. But when practice is over, they work just as hard. Some made the Big 12 Honor Roll with perfect GPAs. That's worth an applause right there. [Applause] They read with students at elementary schools in Waco and served meals to the homeless. They traveled around the world, caring for infants at an AIDS orphanage and building houses in Kenya.

The Lady Bears also made a difference in one little girl, who is so special to them that the team brought her along for today's visit. Haley Klepper, who is right here—hey, Haley. Haley is as brave as can be and has just gone through some struggles. But when the team found out about Haley and all the stuff that she goes through every day, and she's such a brave little girl, they immediately took her under their wing. So she has her own spot reserved in the Baylor locker room, and she's a pretty big fan. She cheers from the sidelines just about at every home game. Is that right? [Laughter] So we're thrilled to have Haley here.

So this team just sets a terrific example for girls everywhere: as athletes, as scholars, as leaders in their community. I could not be prouder of this team. And I've said—I was saying to them before we came out, as the father of two daughters who are tall and beautiful just like them, it is great to have role models who can show that women can be strong and athletic and competitive, but also play as a team. That's a terrific lesson for my daughters; that's a terrific lesson for girls everywhere.

And so we could not be prouder with them. And since they've got all five starters coming back, I suspect that they're the odds-on favorite for my bracket next year as well. [Laughter] So congratulations, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:31 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brittney Griner, center,

Ashley Field, forward, Odyssey Sims, Terran Condrey, and Lindsay Palmer, guards, and Cherrish Wallace, student assistant, Baylor University women's basketball team.

Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Burgas, Bulgaria July 18, 2012

I strongly condemn today's barbaric terrorist attack on Israelis in Bulgaria. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of those killed and injured and with the people of Israel, Bulgaria, and any other nation whose citizens were harmed in this awful event. These attacks against innocent civilians, including children, are completely outrageous. The United States

will stand with our allies and provide whatever assistance is necessary to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of this attack. As Israel has tragically once more been a target of terrorism, the United States reaffirms our unshakeable commitment to Israel's security and our deep friendship and solidarity with the Israeli people.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Transnational Criminal Organizations July 18, 2012

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within the 90-day period prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13581 of July 24, 2011, is to continue in effect beyond July 24, 2012.

The activities of significant transnational criminal organizations have reached such scope and gravity that they threaten the stability of international political and economic systems. Such organizations are becoming increasingly sophisticated and dangerous to the United States; they are increasingly entrenched in the operations of foreign govern-

ments and the international financial system, thereby weakening democratic institutions, degrading the rule of law, and undermining economic markets. These organizations facilitate and aggravate violent civil conflicts and increasingly facilitate the activities of other dangerous persons.

The activities of significant transnational criminal organizations continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13581 with respect to significant transnational criminal organizations.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
July 18, 2012.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.