

the help and the good will of Congress, and what that means is you've got to make sure that constituents of Members of Congress are putting some pressure on them, making sure they're doing the right thing, putting an end to some of these political games.

So I need you, Virginia, to keep up the pressure. I need you to keep up the effort. I need you to keep up the fight. If you do, Congress will listen. If you stand up and speak out, Congress will listen. And together, we will unleash our true potential. And we'll remind the world

just why it is the United States builds the greatest ships on Earth and is the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:23 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to C. Michael Petters, president and chief executive officer, Huntington Ingalls Industries, which owns Newport News Shipbuilding; and Gov. Robert F. McDonnell of Virginia.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Charles T. Hagel as Secretary of Defense

February 26, 2013

With the bipartisan confirmation of Chuck Hagel as our next Secretary of Defense, we will have the Defense Secretary our Nation needs and the leader our troops deserve. From the moment he volunteered for military service in Vietnam, Chuck has devoted his life to keeping America secure and our Armed Forces strong. An American patriot who fought and bled for our country, he understands our sacred obligations to our servicemembers, military families, and veterans.

I will be counting on Chuck's judgment and counsel as we end the war in Afghanistan, bring our troops home, stay ready to meet the threats of our time, and keep our military the finest fighting force in the world. Most of all, I am grateful to Chuck for reminding us that when it comes to our national defense, we are not Democrats or Republicans, we are Americans, and our greatest responsibility is the security of the American people.

Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for a Statue Honoring Rosa Parks at the United States Capitol

February 27, 2013

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, Leader Reid, Leader McConnell, Leader Pelosi, Assistant Leader Clyburn; to the friends and family of Rosa Parks; to the distinguished guests who are gathered here today.

This morning we celebrate a seamstress, slight in stature, but mighty in courage. She defied the odds, and she defied injustice. She lived a life of activism, but also a life of dignity and grace. And in a single moment, with the simplest of gestures, she helped change America—and change the world.

Rosa Parks held no elected office. She possessed no fortune, lived her life far from the

formal seats of power. And yet today she takes her rightful place among those who've shaped this Nation's course. I thank all those persons, in particular the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, both past and present, for making this moment possible.

A childhood friend once said about Mrs. Parks, "Nobody ever bossed Rosa around and got away with it." [*Laughter*] That's what an Alabama driver learned on December 1, 1955. Twelve years earlier, he had kicked Mrs. Parks off his bus simply because she entered through the front door when the back door was too crowded. He grabbed her sleeve, and he pushed her off the bus. It made her mad