

our cars and trucks off of oil for good. That's why, in my State of the Union Address, I called on Congress to set up an energy security trust to fund research into new technologies that will help us reach that goal.

Here's how it would work. Much of our energy is drawn from lands and waters that we, the public, own together. So I'm proposing that we take some of our oil and gas revenues from public lands and put it towards research that will benefit the public so that we can support American ingenuity without adding a dime to our deficit. We can support scientists who are designing new engines that are more energy efficient, developing cheaper batteries that go farther on a single charge, and devising new ways to fuel our cars and trucks with new sources of clean energy—like advanced biofuels and natural gas—so drivers can one day go coast to coast without using a drop of oil.

Now, this idea isn't mine. It actually builds off a proposal put forward by a nonpartisan coalition of CEOs and retired generals and admi-

als. So let's take their advice and free our families and our businesses from painful spikes in gas prices once and for all.

And in the meantime, let's keep moving forward on an all-of-the-above energy strategy: a strategy where we produce more oil and gas here at home, but also more biofuels and fuel-efficient vehicles, more solar power and wind power; a strategy where we put more people to work building cars, homes, and businesses that waste less energy. We can do this. We're Americans. And when we commit ourselves to something, there's no telling how far we'll go.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:40 p.m. on March 15 in Building 371 at the Argonne National Laboratory in Lemont, IL, for broadcast on March 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 15, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 16.

Remarks on the Nomination of Thomas E. Perez To Be Secretary of Labor March 18, 2013

The President. Thank you. Everybody have a seat. Have a seat. As I've said before, my top priority as President is doing everything we need to do to make sure that we're growing our economy and that we're strengthening our middle class. And as I said in my State of the Union Address last month, every day we should be asking ourselves three questions. One, how do we make sure America is a magnet for good jobs? Number two, how do we equip people with the skills they need to get those jobs? And number three, how do we make sure that hard work actually pays off in a decent living?

These are the challenges that I've instructed my team here at the White House and in my entire Cabinet to focus on. And a position that's instrumental to tackling these challenges is having an outstanding Secretary of Labor.

So I want to begin by thanking Hilda Solis and her entire team—[*applause*—including Acting Secretary Seth Harris, for the outstand-

ing work that they've been doing over the past 4 years. Their efforts at the Department of Labor have given more young people a chance to earn new skills, more returning vets the chance to find a job. They've looked out for worker safety from construction sites to coal mines. They've stood up for workers' rights to organize, women's rights to get paid equally for the work that they do. They've done an extraordinary job fighting on behalf of working families across the board.

And today I'm proud to nominate a leader to carry on those efforts as America's next Secretary of Labor, Tom Perez.

Like so many Americans, Tom knows what it's like to climb the ladder of opportunity. He is the son of Dominican immigrants. He helped pay his way through college as a garbage collector and working at a warehouse. He went on to become the first lawyer in his family. So his story reminds us of this country's promise: that if you're willing to work hard, it

doesn't matter who you are, where you come from, what your last name is, you can make it if you try.

And Tom has made protecting that promise for everybody the cause of his life. As a civil rights attorney, an aide to Senator Ted Kennedy, a member of the Montgomery, Maryland, County Council, Tom fought for a level playing field where hard work and responsibility are rewarded and working families can get ahead.

And this is not the first time that he's chosen to be a labor secretary either. We've got here today Governor Martin O'Malley, and Martin appointed Tom as secretary of Maryland's Department of Labor, where he helped implement the country's first statewide living-wage law, because he understood that a minimum wage should be a wage that you can live on.

In his current role as the head of the U.S. Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, Tom has fought to open pathways into the workforce for everyone willing to contribute, including people with disabilities, LGBT Americans, and immigrants. And he has helped settle some of the largest cases ever on behalf of families targeted by unfair mortgage lending.

Now, while he's tackled plenty of tough issues, Tom has also spent a career as a consensus builder. He's worked with CEOs, he's worked with labor leaders. He's worked at Federal, State, and local government levels. And throughout, he understands that our economy works best when the middle class and those working to get into the middle class have the security they need on the job, a democratic voice in the workplace, everybody playing by the same set of rules.

So Tom's knowledge and experience will make him an outstanding Secretary of Labor. And there's plenty of work to do. We're going to have to work very hard to make sure that folks find jobs with good wages and good benefits. We've got to make sure that our veterans who are returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan have a chance to put their incredible skills and leadership to work at home. We need to build an immigration system that works for every employee and every family and every

business. I'm confident that Tom is going to be able to work to promote economic growth, but also make sure that that growth is broad based. And he's going to be an integral part of our overall economic team.

So these are just a few of the many challenges working families out there are facing and where they need an advocate, and Tom is the right person for that job. So I hope that the Senate will act swiftly to confirm Tom so we can work together to address all these concerns. I want to thank not only Tom but his wonderful family for agreeing to take on this new role. I just heard that Tom has been coaching basketball and baseball. He doesn't claim to be a great coach—[laughter]—but he brings passion to it. He may end up missing a few of the games over the next several months, but it's going to be for a good cause. And I appreciate his family being willing to make these sacrifices as well.

So with that, I would like to introduce my nominee to be our next Secretary of Labor, give him a chance to say a few words. And again, I'd urge the Senate to confirm him as quickly as possible.

Mr. Tom Perez.

Secretary-designate Perez. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. President, for your confidence in me.

[At this point, Secretary-designate Perez made brief remarks in Spanish, and no transcript or translation was provided. He then continued in English as follows.]

It is a remarkably humbling and exciting phenomenon to be here today.

My parents taught my four siblings and me to work hard, to give back to our community, and to make sure that the ladder of opportunity was there for those coming after us. Over my career, I've learned that true progress is possible if you keep an open mind, listen to all sides, and focus on results. I look forward to taking these lessons with me, if confirmed, to my new role as Secretary of the Department of Labor.

As you well know, our Nation still faces critical economic challenges, and the Department's mission is as important as ever. I am

confident that together with our partners in organized labor, the business community, grassroots communities, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike, we can keep making progress for all working families.

In the coming weeks, as the confirmation process unfolds, I look forward to meeting with Senators of both parties to discuss the Labor Department's key role: protecting and growing the middle class.

I'll close again, Mr. President, by thanking you once again for this tremendous opportunity.

[Secretary-designate Perez made brief remarks in Spanish, and no transcript or translation was provided. He then concluded in English as follows.]

I look forward to this opportunity to continue serving our Nation. Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:47 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks at a Women's History Month Reception

March 18, 2013

Well, hello, everybody! And can everybody please give Amanda another big round of applause? It seems to me she would be pretty good at sales. [Laughter] I was sold just listening to her right there.

Thank you, Amanda, for your—for sharing your story, the wonderful introduction. It is an honor to welcome all of you here to the White House.

Now, let's be clear: I am used to being surrounded every day by talented, accomplished women, from all the meetings I have in the West Wing to the dinner table with Michelle, Malia, and Sasha. [Laughter] But I have to say, even for somebody who is accustomed to it, this is a pretty exceptional group that I'm looking around here. We've got business leaders like Abbe Raven, CEO of the A&E Networks. There she is right there. We've got activists like Dolores Huerta and Lilly Ledbetter, all-star athletes like Tamika Catchings, and outstanding public servants from Congress and my administration, including Valerie Jarrett, who serves as our Chair of the Council for Women and Girls here at the White House.

And when I look around this room, it is hard to believe that 100 years ago this month, thousands of women were marching right outside this house demanding one of our most fundamental rights: the right to vote, to have a say in our democracy. And today, a century later, its rooms are full of accomplished women who have overcome discrimination, shattered glass

ceilings, and become outstanding role models for all of our sons and daughters. And that means we've come a long way, and that's thanks to the efforts of so many people like you.

Because of the hard work and exemplary leadership of the women in this room, military families have protected family and medical leave. Women have legal recourse to fight against pay discrimination, as Amanda took advantage of. Women have the opportunity to serve on the front lines of our military conflicts, and that means that they're getting paid and promoted equally. Women have the opportunity to make their own choices about their health.

We're also seeing expanded opportunity for women's—to reach their full potential all around the world. That's in large part because 4 years ago, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton—a tireless advocate for women herself—designated an Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, whose sole job it is to make sure that women and girls are a central part of every aspect of our foreign policy, that their concerns are considered at the highest level of our diplomatic decisionmaking.

For 4 years, the incredible Melanne Verveer held that role. Where is Melanne? Is she here? All right, well, she's incredible. Take my word for it. [Laughter] We're so grateful for her service, along with the millions of women around the world that she helped to amplify and