

Remarks Honoring the 2012 Stanley Cup Champion Los Angeles Kings and the 2012 Major League Soccer Champion Los Angeles Galaxy March 26, 2013

The President. Hello, everybody! Welcome to the White House. And welcome back to the back-to-back MLS champion, the L.A. Galaxy. I was telling these guys, they're starting to get a little comfortable around here, because they just keep on coming back. But this time, they brought some company: the Stanley Cup champion, L.A. Kings.

Now, it is great to have both teams here, not just because they share a hometown. I'm a little resentful, coming from Chicago, that L.A. seems to be getting all these championships. But they don't just share a hometown, they also share a pretty good comeback story.

When it comes to the Galaxy, a team with Landon Donovan on it is rarely the underdog. But when the Galaxy was here last year, their chances of repeating as champions didn't look all that good. The injury bug plagued the team. It seemed like it might be a rebuilding year. But right after that visit, they turned things around. And you can call it a coincidence, but I just want to point out that right after they visited with me, the Galaxy built the best record in the league. [*Laughter*]

In the MLS Cup Final, the Galaxy trailed at halftime, and it stayed that way until Omar Gonzalez, who is with the National Team today, scored the equalizer in the 60th minute. A few minutes after that, Landon did what he does best and scored the go-ahead goal. And pretty soon, they were up 3 to 1. And then midfielder Juninho was probably dancing the samba—[*laughter*—the MLS Cup belonged to L.A. for the second-straight year, and that was the fourth in Galaxy history.

Now, the Kings' story is a little bit different. These guys were not defending champions. In fact, before last year, L.A. had never won the Stanley Cup. And after switching head coaches midseason—a coach, I should add, who got good training from the Chicago Blackhawks—[*laughter*—squeaking into the playoffs as a number-eight seed, it looked like the streak of not winning was going to continue. No eight

seed had ever won a championship in any of our professional sports.

But something happened during the playoffs. Timing is everything. And as center Jarret Stoll says, "We all came together at the right time, and we all peaked at the right time." With playoff MVP Jonathan Quick playing lights out in goal, these guys just kept winning game after game after game. And eventually, the rest of the league started to take notice.

Captain Dustin Brown put it best before the final game. He said, "I don't know what 45 years of energy sounds like, but if we play our game, maybe we'll find out." And that night at the Staples Center, they found out. And America found out that Southern California actually has some pretty intense hockey fans.

So I'm going to be a good sport: These guys pointed out that they beat my Blackhawks last night. I will also say that, given this season, how rare it is to beat the Blackhawks, I want to congratulate them for that as well. [*Laughter*]

We also found out that both these teams are full of some pretty stand-up players and coaches. They're out in the community year round. They're changing lives, they're making a difference. As Coach Arena of the Galaxy says: "The soccer is very much secondary. If we can have an impact on the lives of young kids, we want to be a part of that."

And that's something we all appreciate, especially those of us who are parents. And we are thrilled that you guys are sticking around to host a "Let's Move!" question-and-answer session with kids from all across the country.

So I want to give a hearty congratulations to both the Kings and the Galaxy one more time for bringing two championships to L.A. and for doing so much for your fans back in California.

And we also know that there are a couple of Galaxy players who couldn't be here because of World Cup qualifying, so I want to wish Team U.S.A. the very best of luck as they take on Mexico tonight. I hope both these teams have a great rest of the season.

So everybody give them a big round of applause. Congratulations. Congratulations.

All right, we've got some—are we going to do the jerseys at the podium? All right, so Landon, what do we got here?

L.A. Galaxy forward Landon Donovan. We have a ball for you, and then we've got a—

[*At this point, the President tossed the soccer ball upward, bounced it off his forehead, and caught it.*]

Mr. Donovan. That was pretty good. [Laughter] And then, we've got a jersey for you.

The President. I hope you guys caught that. That doesn't happen very often. [Laughter]

Mr. Donovan. And a jersey.

The President. That is a nice-looking jersey. All right, let's—thank you.

So am I going to stand over here? Okay. And what do we got here?

L.A. Kings right wing Dustin Brown. Just a jersey here.

The President. That's a good-looking jersey. Forty-four, it's a lucky number. All right, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Omar Gonzalez, defender, Juninho Pernambucano, midfielder, and Bruce Arena, head coach, Los Angeles Galaxy; and Terry Murray, former head coach, Darryl Sutter, head coach, Jarret Stoll, center, and Jonathan Quick, goaltender, Los Angeles Kings.

Statement on Senator Timothy P. Johnson's Decision Not To Seek Reelection March 26, 2013

For more than three decades, Tim Johnson has dedicated himself to improving the lives of South Dakota's working families. From his early days in the State legislature to his distinguished career in the Senate, Tim has worked tirelessly to protect our environment, empower rural and Native American communities, and build a financial system that is better able to serve the

American people. Always a fighter, Tim's return to the Senate floor after a life-threatening brain injury was a powerful moment, and his recovery continues to inspire us all. I look forward to working with Senator Johnson as he finishes his third term, and Michelle and I join the people of South Dakota in wishing Tim, Barbara, and their entire family all the best.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Regarding Designation of Funds for Global Counterterrorism and Overseas Contingency Operations March 26, 2013

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 5 of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013, I hereby designate for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism all funding (including the rescission of funds) so designated by the Congress in the Act pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended, as outlined in the enclosed list of accounts.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed memorandum from the Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.