

diseases, because their families aren't linked up with a primary care physician who is providing them regular care? Where the costs to society for reduced productivity, illnesses, et cetera, all burden our businesses? Is that the kind of society we aspire to?

And I think the answer is no. And the notion that we would resist, or at least some would resist as fiercely as they would—or as they have, make this their number-one agenda, is perpetuating a system in which millions of people across the country, hard-working Americans don't have access to health care, I think, is wrong.

Former President Clinton. The—we have to close. But I will close with a story. I told you all this morning that the employee that our health access program lost in the Kenyan mall shooting was a Dutch nurse. And I spend—we spend a lot of time in the Netherlands. They—we get a lot of support there. Oxi is one of the biggest insurance companies in Europe. They're one of our partners here. I went to celebrate their 200th anniversary with them. They had been—they started as a fire insurance company with 39 farmers, 200 years ago.

And we were out there in this big farm field with a—in a tent in the shadow of a 13th-century church and a big Dutch windmill. And I asked the chairman of the company, I said, do you write health insurance? Because in the Netherlands there's no Medicare and no Medicaid, everybody is on an individual mandate, and you just subsidize people based on their incomes.

He said, yes, I write it; we all do. And he looked at me, and he said, but we don't make any money on it. And he said, we shouldn't. This guy is running a huge insurance—can you imagine somebody saying that in America?

[*Laughter*] He said, we shouldn't. If I can't make money on this business doing traditional insurance business, I've got no business in the work. He said, look, health care is a public good, and you've got to find a way to finance it for everybody. And he said, it's just an intermediary function that somebody has to handle. But in the end, it's how it's delivered, how it's priced, and how healthy you can keep your people.

So the First Lady is trying to keep us all healthier, and you're trying to change the delivery and the pricing. And you have to cover everybody to do it. I think this is a big step forward for America. This will, over the next decade, not only make us healthier, but it will free up in the private sector largely funds that can then be reinvested in other areas of economic growth and give us a much more well-balanced economy. But first, we've got to get everybody to sign up.

President Obama. Everybody, sign up. Go to healthcare.gov. Thank you very much.

Former President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:02 p.m. in the Metropolitan Ballroom of the Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mickey D. Beebe of Arkansas; Gov. Steven L. Beshear of Kentucky; Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter of Idaho; Carrie Banahan, executive director, Kentucky's Healthcare Connection; Amy Dowd, director, Your Health Idaho; and former President George W. Bush. Former President Clinton referred to former President George W. Bush; and Elif Yavuz, senior vaccines researcher, Clinton Global Initiative, who was killed in the September 21 terrorist attack at the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi, Kenya.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in New York City *September 24, 2013*

Hello, everybody. Hello, hello, hello! Hello, everybody. Please have a seat. Thank you. Well, now, first of all, I had a chance to take pictures with everybody, and I have to say, this

has to be one of the best looking crews I've ever been with.

I do admit that being upstaged by a magician is something that I try to avoid. [*Laughter*]

Somebody told me that the face-painting guy is coming in soon. [Laughter]

But it really is wonderful just to have a chance to be with families. And obviously, Malia and Sasha are starting to get a little bit older, but I still remember when they were this huggable. [Laughter] And I got a couple hugs from some of you, so I very much appreciate that. That made me feel good.

We've got some special guests here today. First of all, your next mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio is here. We are thrilled with Bill. His son Dante, who has the same hairdo I had back in 1978—[laughter]—although I have to confess, my Afro was never that good. [Laughter] It was a little unbalanced.

But we could not be prouder of the campaign Bill ran, the way he gave voice to the values that make us Democrats. And we are confident that he is going to continue to move New York in a direction where everybody has a chance to get ahead. And so we're very proud of him and look forward to seeing him do a great job as the mayor of New York City.

We also have here your outstanding Representative: Carolyn Maloney is here. So give Carolyn a big round of applause. And all of you are here.

Now, some of you may be aware, I gave a really long speech at the U.N. today, so I'm going to keep my remarks fairly brief; also because some of you said you still had homework to do and were trying to get me to sign a note excusing you—[laughter]—but we think you will get home in time to do your homework.

We live in such a challenging time. Internationally, we have crises like Syria, the challenge of making sure that Iran's nuclear program is not weaponized in a way that threatens the region. Here, domestically, at home, although we're now growing again, we've got a lot of people out there who are having trouble finding work, are having difficulty making ends meet. We have environmental challenges that we're concerned about for the next generation. We continue to battle on behalf of equality for all people.

And so sometimes, I think people tend to feel a little overwhelmed by what they read in

the newspapers—except he doesn't feel overwhelmed at all. [Laughter] He's fine because he had some candy and is going to be up really late tonight. Yay! [Laughter]

But the good news is that when you look at the country and the direction we're moving in, what you see is a country that's becoming more tolerant, a country that's becoming more inclusive, a country that understands there's no contradiction between growing the economy and conserving this planet for the next generation. We see a nation that in a few weeks is finally going to be in a position to make sure that every single person in America can get affordable health care when they need it.

What you see is people all across the country from every walk of life who believe in this country deeply and understand that the contributions they make every day in working hard, looking after their families, treating people with respect, giving back to their community, volunteering in their places of worship, that that's what perfects our Union over time; that it's not always flashy, but it's making a difference each and every day.

And sometimes, people ask me: "How come you don't get more discouraged with some of the nonsense you see out of Washington? And other than you getting gray hair, you seem like you're okay." [Laughter] And the reason is, is because I get a chance to see all of you and I see your families and I see your contributions, and I know why I fight for the things I fight for. Because I want to make sure that the values that all of you stand for and that you're passing on to your kids, that those are the values that this whole country lives by.

But I can't do it alone. The truth is, is that we could be doing a lot more. The country could be growing faster. We could be putting more people to work. We could be rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our infrastructure. We could be putting in place early childhood education for every family in America. We could be cutting our deficits in sensible ways, not in ways that impede our growth. We could be caring for those who are vulnerable. We could be opening up more opportunity. We could be doing so much more if we had a

Congress that was focused on you and not focused on politics day to day.

And the only way that is going to happen is if we've got a strong DNC and if we are able to get our message out at a time when folks who want to look backwards and roll back the clock and don't really have a lot of regard for people who are struggling, if we're able to counteract their message with a message of hope.

We can't beat a message of fear if that message isn't delivered, if it's not projected, if it's not reaching people. And at a time when folks naturally feel cynical about Washington and politics and the possibilities of change, the only way that we're going to battle back against that kind of cynicism is if all of you get involved. And that's what you're doing here today.

So I am thankful to all of you. I intend to work as hard as I can to make sure that we're

doing everything we can on behalf of working families and building a middle class, but I'm also going to be working as hard as I can to make sure that we have a Congress that is able, in my last 2 years as President, to get as much done as we got done in our first 2 years and making sure that America is the country that we all know it can be.

So God bless all of you. Thanks for showing up. Appreciate it. Remember to do your homework, those of you who didn't do it. All right? Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:11 p.m. in the John Jacob Astor Salon of the Waldorf Astoria New York hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic mayoral candidate Bill de Blasio. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Prince George's Community College in Largo, Maryland September 26, 2013

The President. Hello, Maryland! Hello, PGCC! Well, it's good to be back in PG County.

Give it up for one of the hardest working, most effective Governors in the country, Governor Martin O'Malley.

Well, it is great to be with all of you here today—

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you back. It's wonderful being here. Wonderful.

We also have a few folks who work so hard on behalf of the people of Maryland every single day: Senator Ben Cardin is here, Congressman Steny Hoyer is here, and Congresswoman Donna Edwards is here.

And all of you are here. Sometimes, you just need to escape Beltway politics for a little bit, even if you're just a mile or two outside the Beltway.

Now, I know that a lot of you have seen some of the antics going on in Congress right now. [*Laughter*] So I wanted to take a little bit of time today to speak with you—the people who send us to serve—about something that is critical to our families, critical to our businesses, critical to our economy. And that is the re-

forms that we are making to our health care system.

There's been a lot of things said, a lot of misinformation, a lot of confusion. But there are few things more fundamental to the economic security of the middle class and everybody who's trying to get into the middle class than health care.

For a long time, America was the only advanced economy in the world where health care was not a right, but a privilege. We spent more; we got less. We left tens of millions of Americans without the security of health insurance. By the time the financial crisis hit, most folks' premiums had more than doubled in about a decade. About 1 in 10 Americans who got their health care through their employer lost that coverage. So the health care system was not working. And the rising costs of health care burdened businesses and became the biggest driver of our long-term deficits.

But this has always been about more than just statistics. Everywhere I went as I ran for President back in 2007, 2008, everywhere I've gone as President, I would hear stories from folks just like you of insurers that denied a