

where we're looking for a substantive win for the U.S. economy and the American people and the businesses that are represented here.

So I'm very grateful to all of you who have joined us. But we're going to be pushing to make sure that we send out that clarion call up

towards Capitol Hill, see if we can get this done before the end of the year. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Statement on the Passage of Marriage Equality Legislation in Illinois November 5, 2013

Tonight I applaud the men and women of the Illinois General Assembly, a body in which I was proud to serve, for voting to legalize marriage equality in my home State.

As President, I have always believed that gay and lesbian Americans should be treated fairly and equally under the law. Over time, I also came to believe that same-sex couples should be able to get married like anyone else. So tonight Michelle and I are overjoyed for all the committed couples in Illinois whose love will now be as legal as ours and for their friends and family who have long wanted nothing more than to see their loved ones treated fairly and equally under the law.

I also commend the members of the General Assembly for approaching this issue in a fair and open way and for recognizing the impor-

tance of our commitment to religious freedom by engaging the religious community in this conversation. Throughout this debate, they've made it clear that this is about civil marriages and civil laws and made sure that churches and other institutions of faith are still free to make their own decisions that conform to their own teachings.

As I said in my Inaugural Address last January, our journey as a nation is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law, for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well. And tonight I'm so proud that the men and women elected to serve the people of the great State of Illinois have chosen to take us one step further on that journey to perfect our Union.

Remarks at Temple Emanu-El in Dallas, Texas November 6, 2013

The President. Thank you, Edna. Give Edna a big round of applause. Well, it is wonderful to see all of you. And let me just make some special mention of some people in addition to Edna who are here.

First of all, your outstanding mayor, Mike Rawlings, is here. Outstanding county judge, Clay Jenkins, who's doing a great job on affordable care. Thank you, Clay. Wonderful Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson is here. And we want to thank Rabbi David Stern and Rabbi Asher Knight of Temple Emanu-El for hosting us here today.

And the main reason I'm here is to thank all of you. Edna's story is a story that is repeated all across the country: people who got sick and

didn't have health insurance; folks who thought they had health insurance; and then, turned out, because of the fine print or them not filling something out right, they were short of what they needed in terms of getting healed.

And when I ran for office, obviously, we were in the midst of a great recession, and my number-one priority was making sure that we didn't go into a great depression and making sure that we started putting people back to work. We've now seen the economy begin to recover, although sometimes, Washington is not helpful with things like the shutdown. We've seen 7½ million new jobs created. We've seen exports at record levels. We've seen a lot of growth in places like Dallas, and

people are starting to get their footing back, home prices starting to recover.

But what I also understood was that if we did not start tackling our health care system in a serious way, it would continue to undermine our economy, it would continue to hurt families, and it would continue to hurt businesses.

And there's a reason why it had never been done before. Starting with Harry Truman, people had talked about how we were going to make sure that everybody had affordable, quality health care. But through Democratic and Republican Presidents and Congresses, we couldn't get it done. And the reason is it's hard. It's a big chunk of the economy, and a lot of people, even if they don't like what is going on, are always nervous about change. So it was a challenge. But we were able to get it done, in part because of grassroots folks like you that fought so hard to make sure that we were able to deliver on universal health care.

And that is what this is all about. Ultimately, all the politics, all the chatter sometimes leaves out the fact that the system we had, the status quo just wasn't working for too many people. And so it was important for us, as difficult and challenging as it has been, to go ahead and move forward to make sure that folks like Edna, when they go to the hospital because they've been stricken with an illness, know not only that they're going to get good care, but also that their families aren't going to go bankrupt just because somebody in the family got sick. That's what we've been fighting for.

Now, over the last 3 years, we've already put a whole bunch of benefits in place. A lot of people don't know that they're in place because of the Affordable Care Act, but they're already in place. So if you've got a child who's 25, didn't have health insurance, but now is on the parent's plan, the reason for that is because of the Affordable Care Act. Seniors are getting discounts on their prescription drugs, saving hundreds of dollars because we deepened the discount through the Affordable Care Act. Insurance companies have to treat customers right because of the Affordable Care Act. No more lifetime limits, no more dropping people just when they get sick.

But to finish the job, now what we've got to do is sign up those folks who don't have health insurance and improve insurance for those who are underinsured, who don't have very good insurance and have been subject to the whims of the insurance company. And that's what this is all about. And that's the challenge that we've got over the next month, 3 months, 6 months, next year. And if we get that done—when we get that done—then we will have created a stable system in which there's no reason why people shouldn't be getting health care in this country.

Now, I'm the first to say that the first month I've not been happy with. [*Laughter*] You've all heard about the website woes. Nothing drives me more crazy than the fact that right now, there's great insurance to be had out there, choice and competition, where people can save money for a better product, except too many folks haven't been able to get through the website.

Now, this is like having a really good product in a store, and the cash registers don't work and there aren't enough parking spots and nobody can get through the door. And so we are working overtime to get this fixed. And the website is already better than it was at the beginning of October, and by the end of this month, we anticipate that it is going to be working the way it is supposed to. All right? And folks are working 24/7 to make sure that happens.

But remember, the insurance is already there. And if people can't get through the website, they can get on the phone to the call center and people can take their application and walk them through this process, and people can apply in person if they've got committed folks who are out there helping people to sign up. And that's what all of you have been committed to doing.

And it is so important, because the truth of the matter is, even if the website were working a hundred percent, a lot of people would still need help to navigate through this stuff. A high percentage of people who don't have health care also might not have ready access to a computer right away, or it might be confusing for

them, and they would need people to help guide them through this process. And that's true, by the way, if they were buying any kind of insurance. Right? Sometimes, it's a complicated process.

So the commitment that all of you—that congregations, that faith-based groups—are engaged in is critically important. And it's not going to stop; even after the website is running perfectly, we're still going to need all of you to be making these efforts. And I want to make special mention of the mayor's and Clay's work and Bernice—Eddie Bernice's work to get people signed up, because that's the kind of commitment that we're going to need on the ground on a day-to-day basis.

So my main job here today is to say thank you. And as Clay has said, nothing is going to stop us from getting this done, because we're on the right side of history. It is the right thing to do. It is the right thing to do for our economy, our businesses, and our families.

Now, the last point I want to make: I know that sometimes, this task is especially challenging here in the great Lone Star State. [Laughter]

Audience member. We're up to the task.

The President. But I think that all of you understand that there's no State that actually needs this more than Texas. Think about it. We were just talking on the way over here that in addition to signing people up for the marketplaces so they can buy private insurance, part of the Affordable Care Act was expanding the number of working families who would qualify for Medicaid. Now, because of a Supreme Court ruling, it's voluntary, which States decide to expand Medicaid coverage, which don't.

Here in just the Dallas area, 133,000 people who don't currently have health insurance would immediately get health insurance without even having to go through the website if the State of Texas decided to do it. There's over \$500 million just for this county that would come in to help families get health insurance—has nothing to do with the website—if the State of Texas made this decision. And your neighboring States have made that decision because they look at it and they say, this is

a no-brainer, why would not—why would we not want to take advantage of this.

So the State of Arkansas has already reduced its number of uninsured by 14 percent already, just in the first month, by signing people up for expanded Medicaid—14 percent. State of Oregon, 10-percent reduction in the number of uninsured already, in the first month, right away, folks are signed up, just because the Governor and the legislature there made the right decision.

There's no reason why this State can't do the same.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. And—well, I mentioned that in the Dallas area it's 133,000 people who stand to benefit. Across this State, you've got a million people—because this is a big State—a million people, citizens, who don't have health insurance that could get health insurance right away if the State of Texas decided to take advantage of it.

So one of the things that sometimes gets me a little frustrated, although I understand it because I'm in politics, is folks who are complaining about how the website is not working and why isn't Obama fixing this and all these people are uninsured, and yet they're leaving a million people right now without health insurance that they could immediately fix.

Audience member. That's right. That's right.

The President. There's not a lot of logic to that.

But that's okay, because we've gone through barriers before; we have gone through struggles before. Eventually, though, if you stick with doing the right thing, you get it done. It will happen, all right?

And so I just want all of you to remember that, as challenging as this may seem sometimes, as frustrating as healthcare.gov may be sometimes, we are going to get this done. And when we do—when we do, not if—when we do, you're going to have families all across this great State of Texas who are going to have the security and the well-being of high-quality, affordable health insurance. And that's going to be good for business. It means that all the providers around here, instead of having to take in

folks in the emergency room, they suddenly have customers who have insurance. That means those of you who already have health insurance, your premiums will not be subsidizing folks who don't have health insurance. People will get preventive care, which means that people are likely to be healthier.

And that's within our power. That's within our grasp. So this is a pretty motivated group.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. This looks like a group that's ready to go.

Audience members. Yes!

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Fundraiser in Dallas

November 6, 2013

The President. Thank you so much. Everybody, have a seat, have a seat.

It is true, I remember being in this house with Peter and Lisa. [*Laughter*] Now, I did not recall having Peter and Lisa's three young sons, who are now towering over many of us. [*Laughter*] So it is a chronicle of how much time has passed. But Peter and Lisa have been great friends to the Democratic Party, to the Senate, efforts that we've had for a very long time. And we just want to say thank you for your incredible hospitality and friendship. It means a lot.

A couple of other people I want to acknowledge. First of all, your outstanding mayor, Mike Rawlings, is in the house. Your former mayor and my golf buddy, Ron Kirk, is gone. [*Laughter*] I'm tempted to talk about him while he's not here. [*Laughter*] But it might get back to him, so I'm not going to say anything about him other than, obviously, we love him.

And you have with you here today somebody who I genuinely consider one of the best public servants in the country, period, and the fact that he took on this thankless job of running around the country, helping to raise money and recruit outstanding candidates for the Senate is just a testimony to not only how much respect everybody in the Senate has for

The President. I'm here to tell you that I'm going to be right there with you the entire way until we get this done and everybody in Texas and everybody all across this country have the affordable health care that they need.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless America. God bless the State of Texas.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:36 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Dallas, TX, resident Edna Dean Pemberton, who introduced the President; and Gov. John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon.

him, but also his willingness to work hard on behalf of the greater good. So we love Michael Bennet, Senator from Colorado.

Lisa's really generous introduction did remind me of a story that may be apocryphal, but I like to think it's true. Some of you who saw the movie "Lincoln" know that back in the day when Honest Abe was President, there were visiting hours at the White House. And so constituents who happened to come through Washington, they'd wait their turn, and there were office hours essentially for the President, and somebody could come in and they could ask for a Postmaster's appointment or some other appointment.

And one day, a guy comes in—very exercised—and he says: "You need to understand, Mr. Lincoln, that I've worked for you. I was a delegate in the nomination. Nobody is more responsible for getting you elected as President than I am. And I expect you to remember that." And Lincoln looked up from his desk, and he said, "Sir, I forgive you." [*Laughter*]

Now, I don't know if Lisa needs forgiveness—[*laughter*]—for having convinced me to do this. But the longer I'm in this office, the more humbled I am by the incredible privilege of serving. And one of the great things about being President is you get to see the whole country, and you get to meet everybody, and