

it seemed in retrospect. [Laughter] And “yes, we can,” and the slogans and the posters, et cetera, sometimes, I worry that people forget, change in this country has always been hard. Every step of the way—women’s rights, workers’ rights, civil rights, Medicare, Social Security—everything we value in terms of making sure that everybody has a fair shot in this country required a fight. And it was bumpy, and it was difficult, and it was controversial. But over time, we got it done.

And that got done not just because of who was President at any given time. It got done not just because of brilliant policy. It got done

because ordinary folks decided they were going to fight for it and they supported candidates who were willing to fight as well. And that struggle continues. That journey continues. And I’m just glad that I’ve got all of you along for the ride.

Thank you. I appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. at the residence of Peter A. and Lisa V. Kraus. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. R. Edward “Ted” Cruz; and Gov. J. Richard Perry of Texas. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Fundraiser in Highland Park, Texas November 6, 2013

The President. Thank you so much. Well, I’m going to be very brief on the front end because I want to spend some time getting questions and comments.

First, I just want to say thanks to Russell and Dorothy for their hospitality. This is not the first time that they have hosted us here. I think the first time I was here, I was still running for the Senate, or at least I had—maybe I had been elected to the Senate and I was helping the DSCC, although I’m trying to remember who was the chair at the time.

Fundraiser host Russell W. Budd. It was November of 2005, and we also had Senator Joe Biden—

The President. And Harry Reid.

Mr. Budd. And Harry Reid.

The President. It was a powerful combination. [Laughter]

Mr. Budd. Yes, it was.

The President. But the Budds couldn’t have been more gracious then and have continued to be supportive in so many efforts throughout the years. So we appreciate their friendship and their support.

Some of you I know well; some of you I’m meeting for the first time. I hope all of you get a chance to know Michael Bennet, because although he’s not your Senator—he’s the Sena-

tor from Colorado—he is not only heading up the DSCC, but he’s also one of the best public servants that we’ve got in the country. And we’re really proud of all the great work he’s doing, so give him a big round of applause.

We have had an interesting year, most recently, a Government shutdown, and we came close to defaulting for the first time in 200 years. And I think it’s fair to say that that was a—just a symptom of a larger challenge that we’ve got, which is that although the American people are full of common sense and in their workplaces and in their families and their congregations, on the soccer fields and all the various parts of their life, they’re looking out for one another, and they’re making good decisions and are resilient in the face of challenges, that’s not very often reflected in Washington.

And we’ve got two parties, but one party has become captive, I think, to a fairly extreme faction that thinks compromise is a dirty word and has not thought of government service—and the Federal Government in particular—as a potential engine for individuals across the country making it if they work hard and if they act responsibly.

Traditionally, we had a bipartisan consensus that this country runs because of individualism and self-reliance, but that we also create

various ladders of opportunity so anybody anywhere, no matter what they look like, where they come from, who they love, they can make it; that there are certain things that we do in common. We make sure there are schools for every child. We make sure that we have regulations to keep our air and water clean. We build transportation hubs and networks so that businesses can move products and goods, not just across the country, but around the world. We invest in research and development so that we can stay on the cutting edge. We enforce our laws so that everybody has equal access to justice.

And historically, those things have been struggles, but at least in most of my lifetime, you had both Democrats and Republicans who would affirm those values even if they had differences in tactics or different particular political programs. That's not what we have right now. And the result is not just gridlock, but it's actually a little more destructive than that.

I mean, the shutdown cost this country money. It was bad for business. It was bad for families. And yet it still happened. Default would have been worse, could have triggered a financial crisis worse than the one we had in 2008. And yet that was a real possibility.

The only way that we can realign our politics so that it matches up with the decency and goodness of the American people is if elections matter and we're able to both deliver a message and organize ourselves so that folks who aren't acting responsibly pay a consequence and that we're lifting up and rewarding candidates who are serious about the challenges this country faces and are willing to work together in a spirit that is constructive in order to deliver for the American people.

So that's what 2012 was about, and that's what 2014 was about, and I suspect that's what 2016 is going to be about. And I have to say that I'm a proud Democrat and am committed to the values that the Democratic Party represents, but I'm also interested in getting the Republican Party back in a functioning state. Because this country has two parties, and we need both of them operating in a way that allows us to move forward.

And I think that will eventually happen. Voters have an ability, I think, to help parties self-correct, although sometimes, it takes more than one cycle to do it. But in the meantime, we can't just be standing still.

So on issues like immigration reform, where we know we've got a bipartisan consensus and the majority of the people support it and we've already passed it through the Senate, Michael Bennet worked with folks like Marco Rubio and John McCain and Jeff Flake, Republicans who recognize we've got a broken system and we need to fix it. On issues like early childhood education, where some of the reddest States in the country are making these investments and doing the right thing, there's no reason why that should be a partisan issue.

On issues like rebuilding our infrastructure, putting people back to work right now, medical research that can provide cures to things like cancer and Alzheimer's, these are all areas where we should be able to get things done. But that's going to require that not only we maintain a Democratic Senate, but also that we send a message that empowers some of the more commonsense Republicans to do the right thing.

So I'm optimistic that over the long term, Washington starts working better, but I've got to tell you, it's not going to happen unless we've got a strong showing in this election. And you can't ignore the short term because, for example, Supreme Court Justices, Federal bench decisions that ultimately are going to be made about women's reproductive health, about how we treat our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters, those are decisions that are going to be made based on my ability to nominate qualified candidates and make sure that we can get them through.

So this is important. This counts. But you know that; otherwise, you wouldn't be here. So I just want to say thank you for everything you've already done, but I want to remind everybody the work is not yet done. We've got a long way to go. And I'm confident we'll get there, but we're going to need your help.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:53 p.m. at the residence of Russell W. and Dorothy A. Budd. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Senate Passage of Legislation To Prevent Employment Discrimination Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Persons November 7, 2013

For more than two centuries, the story of our Nation has been the story of more citizens realizing the rights and freedoms that are our birthright as Americans. Today a bipartisan majority in the Senate took another important step in this journey by passing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would help end the injustice of our fellow Americans being denied a job or fired just because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. Just as no one in the United States can lose their job simply because of their race, gender, religion, or a disability, no one should ever lose their job simply because of who they are or who they love.

Today's victory is a tribute to all those who fought for this progress ever since a similar bill was introduced after the Stonewall riots more than three decades ago. In particular, I thank Majority Leader Reid, Chairman Harkin, Senators Merkley and Collins for their leadership, and Senator Kirk for speaking so eloquently in

support of this legislation. Now it's up to the House of Representatives. This bill has the overwhelming support of the American people, including a majority of Republican voters, as well as many corporations, small businesses, and faith communities. They recognize that our country will be more just and more prosperous when we harness the God-given talents of every individual.

One party in one House of Congress should not stand in the way of millions of Americans who want to go to work each day and simply be judged by the job they do. Now is the time to end this kind of discrimination in the workplace, not enable it. I urge the House Republican leadership to bring this bill to the floor for a vote and send it to my desk so I can sign it into law. On that day, our Nation will take another historic step toward fulfilling the founding ideals that define us as Americans.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 815.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Weapons of Mass Destruction November 7, 2013

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

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within the 90-day period prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency

with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938, as amended, is to continue in effect for 1 year beyond November 14, 2013.

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. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.