

## The President's Weekly Address December 14, 2013

One year ago today, a quiet, peaceful town was shattered by unspeakable violence. Six dedicated school workers and 20 beautiful children were taken from our lives forever. As parents, as Americans, the news filled us with grief.

Newtown is a town like so many of our hometowns. The victims were educators and kids that could have been any of our own. And our hearts were broken: for the families that lost a piece of their heart; for the communities changed forever; for the survivors, so young, whose innocence was torn away far too soon.

But beneath the sadness, we also felt a sense of resolve that these tragedies must end and that to end them, we must change. From the very beginning, our efforts were led by the parents of Newtown—men and women, impossibly brave—who stepped forward in the hopes that they might spare others their heartbreak. And they were joined by millions of Americans—mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers—who refused to accept these acts of violence as somehow inevitable.

Over the past year, their voices have sustained us, and their example has inspired us: to be better parents and better neighbors; to give our children everything they need to face the world without fear; to meet our responsibilities not just to our own families, but to our communities. More than the tragedy itself, it's how Newtown will be remembered.

## Remarks at "Christmas in Washington" December 15, 2013

Thank you. Well, merry Christmas, everybody! I want to thank our host, Hugh Jackman, for keeping our safety in mind and leaving Wolverine's claws at home. [Laughter] It can't be easy to wrap presents with those things. [Laughter] Good for carving up "roast beast" though. [Laughter]

I want to thank all the incredible performers for sharing their talents and their holiday spirit

And on this anniversary of a day we will never forget, that's the example we should continue to follow. Because we haven't yet done enough to make our communities and our country safer. We have to do more to keep dangerous people from getting their hands on a gun so easily. We have to do more to heal troubled minds. We have to do everything we can to protect our children from harm and make them feel loved and valued and cared for.

And as we do, we can't lose sight of the fact that real change won't come from Washington. It will come the way it's always come: from you, from the American people. As a nation, we can't stop every act of violence. We can't heal every troubled mind. But if we want to live in a country where we can go to work, send our kids to school, and walk our streets free from fear, we have to keep trying. We have to keep caring. We have to treat every child like they're ours. Like those in Sandy Hook, we must choose to love.

And together, we must and can change. Thank you.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:30 p.m. on December 13 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast on December 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 13, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 14.

with us tonight. And we appreciate the whole team at Time Warner and the National Building Museum who make it possible for our fellow Americans to enjoy these evenings' performances.

Every year, we mark the holiday season with celebrations and good cheer. And I should remind my girls that I like getting Christmas presents as much as anybody. [Laughter] But