

July 8 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2013

cynical. We all have a stake in Government success, because the Government is us.

And we're doing things right. When we're tracking weather more effectively, that saves lives for folks who are in the path of a tornado. When we're delivering, effectively, data on improved health care choices, that's going to save lives and reduce costs. And we've got the potential to do so much better than we're doing right now, but we're going to need the help of the private sector and non-for-profits. Most of all, we want to make sure that we're empowering some of the folks who are sitting here today to make sure that they can deliver on the kind

of 21st-century Government that the American people want.

So thank you very much, everybody. Keep up the good work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:52 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Peter Hudson, co-founder and chief executive officer, and Wayne Guerra, cofounder and chief medical officer, iTriage; Scott Wu, founding team member, Upstart Network, Inc.; Clair Holroyd, former senior product manager, Sony Network Entertainment; and Garren Givens, chief executive officer, Dibsie.com.

## Statement on the Observance of Ramadan July 8, 2013

With the start of the sacred month of Ramadan, Michelle and I extend our best wishes to Muslim communities here in the United States and around the world.

For the world's 1.5 billion Muslims, Ramadan is a time for thoughtful reflection, fasting, and devotion. It is also an opportunity for family and friends to come together and celebrate the principles that bind people of different faiths: a commitment to peace, justice, equality, and compassion towards our fellow human beings. These bonds are far stronger than the differences that too often drive us apart.

This month also reminds us that freedom, dignity, and opportunity are the undeniable rights of all mankind. We reflect on these universal values at a time when many citizens across the Middle East and North Africa continue to strive for these basic rights and as millions of refugees mark Ramadan far from their

homes. The United States stands with those who are working to build a world where all people can write their own future and practice their faith freely, without fear of violence.

In the United States, Ramadan is a reminder that millions of Muslim Americans enrich our Nation each day: serving in our Government, leading scientific breakthroughs, generating jobs, and caring for our neighbors in need. I have been honored to host an iftar dinner at the White House each of the past 4 years, and this year, I look forward to welcoming Muslim Americans who are contributing to our country as entrepreneurs, activists, and artists.

I wish Muslims across America and around the world a month blessed with the joys of family, peace, and understanding. *Ramadan kareem.*

## Remarks on Presenting the National Medal of Arts and the National Humanities Medal July 10, 2013

Hey! Thank you so much. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. See, everybody is cheering because I've bought their books, I've seen their movies, I buy their records.

[Laughter] So we're major contributors here.

Well, hello, everybody, and welcome to the White House. Thank you for joining us to cele-