

down instead of up. It's about the grandma in Oregon whose free mammogram caught her breast cancer before it had a chance to spread. It's about the mom in Arizona who can afford heart surgery for her little girl now that the lifetime cap on her coverage has been lifted. It's about the folks here today who got a little bit of relief.

And I'm curious: What do opponents of this law think the folks here today should do with the money they were reimbursed? Should they send it back to the insurance companies? Do they think that was a bad idea to make sure that insurance companies are being held accountable? I know that's not what these folks think.

So the upshot is, the American people deserve a fair shot. They expect businesses to play by a fair set of rules. And that's why this fight is so important. Our broken health care system threatened the hopes and the dreams of families and businesses across the country who feared that one illness or one accident could cost them everything they'd spent a lifetime building. And step by step, we're fixing that system.

It's hard. This is a big country, and the health care industry is massive, and there are tons of providers. And so as we implement, there are going to be glitches, and there are going to be certain States that, for political reasons, are resisting implementation. And we're just steadily working through all that stuff.

The same was true when Medicare was started. The same was true when Social Security got started. There were folks who, for political reasons, resisted implementation. But once it got set up, people started saying, this is a pretty good deal, it gives me a little more security. It's part of that basic bargain that if you work hard, if you're doing the right thing, that you can get ahead in this country and that you

can provide some basic protections for your family.

And health care is at the heart of it; it's part of it. Affordable health care is not some privilege just for the few. It's a basic right that everybody should be able to enjoy.

So we're going to keep fighting to secure that right, to make sure that every American gets the care that they need, when they need it, at a price they can afford. That's the America we believe in. That's what families deserve. That's what we're going to keep on working to deliver. We're going to keep on working to make sure many people around this country who are already paying premiums are getting cheaper prices, that the money is being actually spent on their health care, that you're not having to worry about the fine print, and that if you don't have health insurance, you finally are in a position to get some at an affordable price, to give you and your family the kind of security you deserve.

That's something everybody should support. That's not something that should be subject to politics. If the folks who have been trying to make political hay out of this thing, if they had some better ideas, I've already told them, I'm happy to hear them. But I haven't heard any so far. [Laughter] What I've heard is just the same old song and dance. We're just going to blow through that stuff and just keep on doing the right thing for the American people.

So thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Silver Spring, MD, resident Morgan Theriot; and Rick Shewell, president, and Claudia Diamond, vice president, In Store Stationers, LLC.

## Statement on Senate Confirmation of Thomas E. Perez as Secretary of Labor

July 18, 2013

I welcome today's confirmation of Tom Perez to serve as Secretary of Labor. Tom has lived the American dream himself and has

dedicated his career to keeping it within reach for hard-working families across the country. At the Department of Labor, Tom will help us

continue to grow our economy, help businesses create jobs, make sure workers have the skills those jobs require, and ensure safe workplaces and economic opportunity for all.

I want to thank the Senate once again for agreeing to move forward on Tom and the other nominees who have waited far too long for the yes-or-no votes they deserve.

## Statement on Senate Confirmation of Regina McCarthy as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency July 18, 2013

I am pleased that today the Senate took bipartisan action to confirm Gina McCarthy as the next Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. With years of experience at the State and local level, Gina is a proven leader who knows how to build bipartisan support for commonsense environmental solutions that

protect the health and safety of our kids while promoting economic growth. Over the past 4 years, I have valued Gina's counsel, and I look forward to having her in my Cabinet as we work to slow the effects of climate change and leave a cleaner environment for future generations.

## Remarks on the Verdict in *State of Florida v. George Zimmerman* July 19, 2013

Well, I wanted to come out here, first of all, to tell you that Jay is prepared for all your questions and is very much looking forward to the session. The second thing is I want to let you know that over the next couple of weeks, there's going to obviously be a whole range of issues—immigration, economics, et cetera—we'll try to arrange a fuller press conference to address your questions.

The reason I actually wanted to come out today is not to take questions, but to speak to an issue that obviously has gotten a lot of attention over the course of the last week: the issue of the Trayvon Martin ruling. I gave—in a preliminary statement right after the ruling on Sunday. But watching the debate over the course of the last week, I thought it might be useful for me to expand on my thoughts a little bit.

First of all, I want to make sure that, once again, I send my thoughts and prayers as well as Michelle's to the family of Trayvon Martin and to remark on the incredible grace and dignity with which they've dealt with the entire situation. I can only imagine what they're going through, and it's remarkable how they've handled it.

The second thing I want to say is to reiterate what I said on Sunday, which is, there are going to be a lot of arguments about the legal issues in the case; I'll let all the legal analysts and talking heads address those issues. The judge conducted the trial in a professional manner. The prosecution and the defense made their arguments. The juries were properly instructed that in a case such as this, reasonable doubt was relevant, and they rendered a verdict. And once the jury has spoken, that's how our system works. But I did want to just talk a little bit about context and how people have responded to it and how people are feeling.

When Trayvon Martin was first shot, I said that this could have been my son. Another way of saying that is, Trayvon Martin could have been me 35 years ago. And when you think about why, in the African American community at least, there's a lot of pain around what happened here, I think it's important to recognize that the African American community is looking at this issue through a set of experiences and a history that doesn't go away.

There are very few African American men in this country who haven't had the experience of being followed when they were shopping in a department store. That includes me. There are