

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