

50 people and is a leader in genomic medicine, making it possible for doctors to prescribe personalized treatment plans for patients with diseases like cancer and giving new hope to people around the world. So we thank Iya for her efforts.

So Shazi, Aunim, Iya, and so many of you who have traveled here tonight: Each of you have traveled your own path, but each of you have also lived out an American story. You started with an idea, something no one had done before. You took a leap of faith. And with daring and determination, you brought your dream to life. And that's what we Americans have been doing for more than two centuries. That's what we do every day: We work a little harder, we aim a little higher, and we keep striving to create more opportunity for our children and future generations.

And of course, this isn't just the American Dream, it's the aspiration of people around the world. It's the basic human desire for progress, to find dignity that comes from work, to give our children something better. These yearnings for economic freedom and opportunity, just as much as political freedom, are at the root of so much of the change we've seen around the world in the past few years, including in North Africa and in the Middle East.

And that's why, even as we support citizens seeking to determine their own destiny, a key part of our engagement with Muslim communities around the world has to be supporting

economic opportunity and entrepreneurship. So we launched our annual entrepreneurship summit to spur innovation and business growth in Muslim communities. I'm going to be attending one when I go to the ASEAN meeting in Southeast Asia later this year. In my second term, we're going to keep helping young entrepreneurs pursue their dreams and create opportunities, the kind of prosperity that can transform lives around the world.

Whoever does an atom's weight of gold [good]^o will see its results. And when I look around the room tonight, beyond the communities you represent, I see all the profound good that's been accomplished. So all of us are seeing the results of your good work: the opportunities to create for your colleagues and your communities and for our country. So I want to thank you for what you do, and for reminding us that our Nation is stronger and more successful when we harness the talents of all Americans, no matter where we come from or what we look like, what our last names are or how we pray.

So God bless you all. May you and your families have a blessed Ramadan. And with that, I know people are hungry—[laughter]—let's eat. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. in the State Dining at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Iya Khalil, executive vice president and cofounder, GNS Healthcare.

The President's Weekly Address July 27, 2013

Hi, everybody. On Wednesday, I spoke about what we need to do as a country to build a better bargain for the middle class: to make sure everyone who works hard has a chance to get ahead in the 21st-century economy.

You see, over the past 4½ years, America has fought its way back from the worst recession of our lifetimes. We saved the auto industry, took on a broken health care system, invested in

new American technologies to reverse our addiction to foreign oil, and changed a Tax Code too skewed in favor of the wealthiest at the expense of working families.

As a result, our businesses have created 7.2 million new jobs over the past 40 months. We produce more renewable energy than ever and more natural gas than anyone. Health care costs are growing at the slowest rate in 50

^o White House correction.

years. And our deficits are falling at the fastest rate in 60 years.

Thanks to the grit and resilience of the American people, we've cleared away the rubble of crisis and begun to lay a new foundation for stronger, more durable economic growth.

But as any middle class family will tell you, we're not yet where we need to be. Trends that have been eroding middle class security for decades—technology that makes some jobs obsolete, global competition that makes others moveable, growing inequality and the policies that perpetuate it—all those things still exist, and in some ways, the recession made them worse.

Reversing these trends must be Washington's highest priority. It sure is mine. But over the past couple of years in particular, Washington has taken its eye off the ball. An endless parade of distractions and political posturing and phony scandals shift focus from what needs to be done. And as Washington prepares to enter another budget debate, the stakes could not be higher. The choices we make now will determine whether or not every American has a fighting chance in the 21st century.

If we don't make the investments necessary to make America a magnet for good jobs—if we don't invest in education and manufacturing and research and our transportation and information networks—we might as well hit the pause button while the rest of the world forges ahead in a global economy. And that's certainly not going to fix what ails the middle class.

Here's what will: a strategy that builds on the cornerstones of what it means to be middle class in America and what it takes to work your way into the middle class; good jobs that pay good wages; an education that prepares our children and our workers for the global competition they'll face; homeownership that's built on a solid foundation, where buyers and lenders play by the same set of rules; affordable health care that's there for you when you get sick; a secure retirement even if you're not rich; and more chances for folks to earn their

way into the middle class as long as they're willing to work for it.

Over the next several weeks, in cities and towns across the country, I'll continue to lay out my ideas in each of these areas. Because reversing the forces that have conspired against the middle class for decades will require more than short-term thinking; it will require a long-term American strategy, based on steady, persistent effort.

I know there are members of both parties who understand what's at stake, and I'm open to ideas from across the political spectrum, as long as they meet the test of strengthening the prospects of hard-working families. But repealing Obamacare, gutting critical investments in our future, threatening to default on the bills this country has already racked up, or shutting down the Government just because I'm for keeping it open—none of those things add up to an economic plan. None of that will take this country where it needs to go.

We can do this if we work together. It won't be easy, but if we take a few bold steps, and if Washington is willing to shake off its complacency and set aside some of the slash-and-burn partisanship we've seen in recent years, our economy will keep getting stronger.

And as long as I have the privilege of holding this office, I will spend every minute of every day doing everything in my power to make this economy work for working Americans again, to build that better bargain for the middle class, to make sure that the American Dream is something that's achievable for everybody, not just today, but for decades to come.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 6:20 p.m. on July 25 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on July 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 26, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on July 27.