

*The President.* Everybody can see?

*Audience members.* No.

*The President.* Oh-oh. Hey, guys, you got to sit down for a second so the big fancy cameras back there can—[laughter]. I mean, we appreciate you taking pictures, but—[laughter]. All right, I'm about to start signing.

[*The President signed the bill.*]

*The President.* This was good work. I'm going to use every pen. There you go. Hey!

## The President's Weekly Address *February 8, 2014*

Hi, everybody. In my State of the Union Address, I talked about the idea of opportunity for all. Opportunity is the idea at the heart of this country: that no matter who you are or how you started out, with hard work and responsibility, you can get ahead.

I ran for President to restore that idea, and I'm even more passionate about it today. Because while our economy has been growing for 4 years and those at the top are doing better than ever, average wages have barely budged. Too many Americans are working harder than ever just to get by, let alone get ahead, and that's been true since long before the recession hit.

We've got to reverse those trends. We've got to build an economy that works for everyone, not just a fortunate few. And the opportunity agenda I laid out last week will help us do that.

It's an agenda with four parts: number one, more new jobs; number two, training folks with the skills to fill those jobs; number three, guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education; and number four, making sure that hard work pays off, with wages you can live on, savings you can retire on, and health insurance that's there when you need it.

I want to work with Congress on this agenda wherever I can. But in this year of action, whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, I will. I've got a pen, and I've got a phone: a pen to take executive action and a phone to rally citizens and business leaders who are ea-

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the Mary Anne McPhail Equine Performance Center. In his remarks, he referred to Ben LaCross, District 9 director, Michigan Farm Bureau Board of Directors; Tom Izzo, head coach of men's basketball, and Mark Dantonio, head football coach, Michigan State University; former Rep. Mark Schauer; and Michael N. Trout, centerfielder, Major League Baseball's Los Angeles Angels. H.R. 2642, approved February 7, was assigned Public Law No. 113-79.

ger to create new jobs and new opportunities. And we've already begun.

In Wisconsin, I ordered an across-the-board reform of our training programs to train folks with the skills employers need and then match them to good jobs that need to be filled right now. In Pittsburgh, I directed the Treasury to create MyRA, a new way for working Americans—even if you're not wealthy—to start your own retirement savings.

In Maryland, I rallied the leaders of some of America's biggest tech companies to help us make sure all our kids have access to high-speed Internet and up-to-date technology to help them learn the skills they need for the new economy. And at the White House, I brought together business leaders who have committed to helping more unemployed Americans find work, no matter how long they've been looking. And I directed the Federal Government to make hiring decisions the same way: based on whether applicants can do the job, not when they last had a job.

So when you hear me talking about using my pen and my phone to make a difference for middle class Americans and those working to get into the middle class, that's what I mean. And I'm going to keep asking students and parents and business leaders to help, because there are millions of Americans outside Washington who are tired of stale political arguments, ready to move this country forward, and determined to restore the founding vision of opportunity for all.

That's what I'm all about. Thanks, have a great weekend. And to our Olympians in Sochi: Go Team U.S.A.!

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:15 p.m. on February 7 in the

Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on February 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 7, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 8.

## Remarks With President François Hollande of France at Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia

February 10, 2014

*President Obama.* Well, the—this has been a wonderful visit. And I want to thank François for joining us here today. I thought this was an appropriate way to start a state visit because what it signifies is the incredible history between the United States and France.

As one of our Founding Fathers, the person who drafted our Declaration of Independence, somebody who not only was an extraordinary political leader, but also one of our great scientific and cultural leaders, Thomas Jefferson represents what's best in America. But as we see as we travel through his home, what he also represents is the incredible bond and the incredible gifts that France gave to the United States, because he was a Francophile through and through.

He drew inspiration from the Enlightenment ideas that had been developed in France and throughout Europe, but he also drew from the arts, from the architecture, from the writings, from the culture, and from the cuisine of France. And so, in this sense, this home represents the bonds that helped to lead to the American Revolution, helped to influence the French Revolution, figures like Lafayette, who played such a central role in our own independence—all this is signified here at Monticello.

And our hope in starting our visit this way is that, just as we can extend back through generations to see the links between the United States and France, tomorrow we'll have an opportunity to talk about not only our current bonds and alliance, but also ways that we can strengthen our cooperation in the future.

And of course, this house also represents the complicated history of the United States. We

just visited downstairs where we know that slaves helped to build this magnificent structure, and the complex relations that Jefferson, the drafter of the Declaration of Independence, had had to slavery. And it's a reminder for both of us that we are going to continue to fight on behalf of the rights of all peoples, something that I know France has always been committed to and we are committed to as well.

And I'm looking forward to talking about issues of human dignity and human rights not just in our own countries, but around the world as well.

So, Mr. President, welcome to Monticello, and we look forward to continuing our conversation tomorrow.

*President Hollande.* I would like to thank especially President Obama for having invited me to this house. This is Thomas Jefferson's house, which means that this was a man who understood what meant the century of Enlightenment, and he wanted to represent this light throughout this house. You can see light everywhere. You can see it in its objects, in the refinement of these objects, and its architecture.

So why is this house a symbol? Because here Lafayette was welcomed. Together, Lafayette and Jefferson imagined something that seemed impossible: namely, American independence and the rights of—human rights and the rights of the citizen. Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence, and Lafayette was also involved in drafting the Rights of the Citizen, and they met together in this house.

There is something quite unique about Jefferson in the fact that he been Ambassador of the United States to France before becoming