

## Statement on the Observance of Ash Wednesday

*March 5, 2014*

Today Michelle and I join our fellow Christians in the United States and around the world in marking Ash Wednesday. Lent is a season of reflection, repentance, and re-

newal, a chance to recommit to loving and serving one another and to deepen our faith in preparation for the Easter celebration to come.

## Statement on the Senate's Failure To Confirm Debo P. Adebile as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights

*March 5, 2014*

The Senate's failure to confirm Debo Adebile to lead the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice is a travesty based on wildly unfair character attacks against a good and qualified public servant. Mr. Adebile's qualifications are impeccable. He represents the best of the legal profession, with wide-ranging experience and the deep respect of those with whom he has worked. His unwavering dedication to protecting every American's civil and constitutional rights under the law—including voting rights—could not be more important right now. And Mr. Adebile's personal story—rising from adversity to become someone who President Bush's Solicitor General referred to as one of the Nation's most capable litigators—is a story that proves what America

has been and can be for people who work hard and play by the rules. As a lawyer, Mr. Adebile has played by the rules. And now Washington politics have used the rules against him. The fact that his nomination was defeated solely based on his legal representation of a defendant runs contrary to a fundamental principle of our system of justice, and those who voted against his nomination denied the American people an outstanding public servant.

NOTE: The statement referred to former President George W. Bush; former U.S. Solicitor General Paul D. Clement; and Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was convicted for the 1981 murder of Philadelphia, PA, police officer Daniel Faulkner.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Boston, Massachusetts

*March 5, 2014*

Thank you. Hello! Everybody, have a seat, have a seat. First of all, I love Deval Patrick, and Massachusetts has been extraordinarily fortunate to have him as your Governor. And I believe that. And I'm fortunate to have him as a friend. And if you look at the track record of what's happened in Massachusetts, then it's a testimony in terms of jobs and growth and infrastructure and progress on schools. It's all a testimony to Deval's ability to bring people together and get them working on behalf of the Commonwealth.

You are also lucky to have an outstanding young new mayor, replacing an outstanding older mayor. I don't think Tom would object to me characterizing him that way. But all reports are, Marty Walsh is doing just a great job. So congratulations for your efforts.

A couple of former public servants who have not given up engaging in public service, one of them a great friend and a great Governor, who is actually an import, but did extraordinary work in Ohio, is teaching here now at Harvard. But very proud to call him a friend: Ted Strickland is here, former Governor of Ohio. And