

the entire Iranian Government hears that message too. Because for the first time in many years, we have the opportunity to start down a new path. And if Iran seizes this moment, this Nowruz could mark not just the beginning of a new year, but a new chapter in the history of Iran and its role in the world, including a better relationship with

the United States and the American people, rooted in mutual interest and mutual respect.

Thank you, and *Eid-eh Shoma Mobarak*.

NOTE: The remarks were recorded at approximately 4:05 p.m. on March 14 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

## Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner in Miami, Florida March 20, 2014

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Everybody, have a seat, have a seat. Now, first of all, I think it's clear that Tracy's introduction was much better than Alonzo's. Now, the truth is, I was a big fan of Alonzo's before I had a chance to meet him, and that's despite being a Bulls fan. And the reason is, is because he had a warrior's heart and he always fought for what he believed in and he was always a team player. And having gotten to know Alonzo and Tracy and the kids and Tracy's mom, I've just grown to love them even more. And not only is the Heat lucky, but all of South Florida is lucky to have them in their community and doing such great work. So we really appreciate them. They're great friends.

I've got some other people I love that I just want to mention real quick, and that is, first and foremost, the leader of the Democrats in the House of Representatives, I believe will go down in history as one of the greatest Speakers in our history, which is one of the reason I want to get her back there—but she is as tough and principled and as visionary as any Member of Congress that we've ever seen, and I'm grateful to call her a friend—Nancy Pelosi. Give Nancy a big round of applause.

We've got some outstanding members of the congressional delegation from Florida here. Representative Corinne Brown is here. Representative Ted Deutch is here. Representative Lois Frankel is here. Representative Joe Garcia is here. And that's Joe Garcia's dad. And our chairwoman at the DNC, who is doing a great job, Debbie Wasserman Schultz is here.

Love Debbie. And of course, all of you are here.

Tracy told a story—with a few embellishments from her mom—[laughter]—that in some ways captures better than anything I could say what America is about and what the Democratic Party has to be about. This afternoon I was up in Orlando. We went to Valencia College. It's one of the best community colleges in the country. And I met with a group of women; all of them had a story to tell about overcoming in some ways. This is part of a process that Nancy and the White House and others are launching across the country, having a conversation just about women and families and how do we make sure that folks who work hard and are taking responsibility for themselves and have dreams about something better for their kids, how do we make sure that that hard work pays off. So this is all going to be culminating in a White House Summit on Working Families in June. And so we're having these roundtable discussions in various parts of the country.

One of the women I met with is now the president of the college, this local college. She was raised by a mother who is blind—single mom, blind, in poverty, raises her daughter to become the president of the community college. And the president of the community college was explaining—African American woman—she was explaining how when she had her son, he was born prematurely, she had to take leave, and when she was ready to go back to work, she couldn't afford childcare. Her mom

moved in with her, so her blind mother didn't just raise her, but now is providing childcare for her as she is going on to get her education and advance until she ended up having a doctorate in education.

Another woman there had a severely autistic son. She was an engineer by training, had to take 12 years off to help raise her son, then needed to go back to work, went back to school, is now teaching mathematics. Another young woman who was there had premature twins, lost her job because there was no way that she could afford the childcare required, for a time was on food stamps, went back to work, is now successfully pursuing a career in education.

Every single story you heard were of these remarkable women who were putting everything they had into their families and their children, and they're working. And they were telling stories that I remember from when my single mom was raising me. We joked about how when I was 10 years old, I complained to my mom, "Why is it we eat the same thing every three—there are three meals we eat every day?" And she had to take me aside when I was, like, 10 years old and say: "Let me explain something to you. I'm working, I'm going to school. This is the only thing I've got time to cook right now." And when I told that story, these women, they said, "Can I tell my son that you said that?" [Laughter] Because apparently, they were having the exact same conversation.

The point is that so many of us here who, as Tracy said, have experienced incredible blessings, we experience those things because previous generations have poured that same effort and blood and sweat and tears and had the same kinds of dreams for us. And as a consequence, in this country, we have made it. But it's also been because we had a society and a government that at critical junctures said, you know what, let's give you a hand up. You're making an effort, let's give you a scholarship to go to school. You had an illness in your family, we're going to make sure that there's a net beneath you so you can get back on your feet. You're a child who's born into poverty, it doesn't matter; we're going to make sure that

the public school can deliver a good education for you.

And it's because of that collective effort that we've made that this country that started off with a few colonies ended up being the greatest, most powerful, wealthiest nation in the history of the world. And what we now fight for is making sure that that same value, those same visions are there for the next generation and the generation after that and the generation after that.

And Tracy is exactly right. Those of us who have been blessed by this country have an obligation to make sure that that vision continues. And ultimately, that's what our politics has to be about. I've run my last race. But when I think back to the very first race I ran, and I think back about what I do today, there's a running thread, and it's exactly what Tracy and her mom represent, and that is this sense that regardless of what you look like, where you come from, what your last name is, what faith you are, that you can make it. And we've got to make sure we don't lose that.

And when I came into office and Nancy was the Speaker, we were facing the worst crisis since the Great Depression, and our top priority was making sure that we stopped the bleeding and we started the economy growing again. And we've done that. The economy is now growing. For 4 consecutive years, we've now seen 8.7 million jobs created. Energy is booming. Clean energy has doubled. The auto industry is roaring. Housing has recovered, including here in Florida.

So we've got more things going for us economically than any other country on Earth. And it's fascinating when I talk to foreign leaders and they say, boy, you guys have it so good. We had the French leader here; he was bragging about, we're trying to adopt policies so we can grow like you. But that's not how it feels to a lot of folks who are cleaning houses. That's not how it feels to a lot of folks who are working in a fast food establishment. That's not how it's feeling to a lot of middle class families right now, because even though the economy is growing again, incomes, wages, they're flat. And people are having a hard time getting trac-

tion and feeling confident that their children in fact are going to do better than they are.

So everything we're fighting for now is designed to make sure that not just the economy is growing, not only are we investing in research and development and staying on the cutting edge when it comes to technology, and not only are we developing traditional sources of energy and clean energy and becoming more energy efficient, not only are we doing all the things required to become more competitive, but we're also paying attention to middle class families and working families and women like Tracy's mom and making sure that they are getting a fair shake, which means raising the minimum wage. It means making sure that there's equal pay for equal work.

It means policies to provide families the flexibility and women the flexibility where if a child gets sick, if somebody like Alijah gets sick, that that mom can go home and take care of that child without losing her job or having her pay docked so that at the end of the month she can't pay the bills. It means making sure that we've got early childhood education so that the word gap that kids experience—poor kids hearing 30 million fewer words than our kids by the time they get to school—closing that gap. Making sure that third graders are literate. Making sure that our high schools are actually training kids with the skills they need to go further. Those are all the things that we're fighting for.

Now, unfortunately, we've got on the other side folks who have a different vision of America. They're no less patriotic. They love their families just as much. Many of them do wonderful things in their communities. But their basic vision is that we don't have an obligation, at least through our government, to help; everybody has got to just look out for themselves or the community that you've built in your church or synagogue or your block or your family. We don't have to worry about that kid on the other side of town. We don't have to worry about that woman who is cleaning our house, which is why every initiative we put forward they say no to.

And that's what not just this election, but the next five elections are going to be about. Now, the good news is, on every individual issue, America is on our side. You take a poll of whether or not it's a good thing to invest in early childhood education, everybody says yes. Take a poll and you ask, does it make sense for us to raise the minimum wage? The majority of people say yes; a majority of Republicans say yes. Take a poll, should we have immigration reform to make sure that folks who are part of our communities, whose kids are in our schools alongside ours, who are making incredible contributions, should they have a chance to get out of the shadows and make sure that they can live out their dreams, the majority say yes.

So the problem is not that the American people disagree with us on the issues. The challenge is, is that our politics in Washington have become so toxic that people just lose faith and finally they just say, you know what, I'm not interested, I'm not going to bother, I'm not going to vote.

And that's especially true during the midterms. During Presidential elections, young people vote, women are more likely to vote, Blacks, Hispanics more likely to vote. And suddenly a more representative cross-section of America gets out there and we do pretty well in Presidential elections. But in midterms we get clobbered, either because we don't think it's important or we've become so discouraged about what's happening in Washington that we think it's not worth our while.

And the reason today is so important and the reason that I'm so appreciative for all you being here is because we're going to have to get over that. This is a top priority. We need Nancy Pelosi as Speaker because folks like Nana over there, cleaning houses, may need her help, and she's going to look out for her. We need Harry Reid staying as Democratic Leader in the Senate because there are kids just like Alijah, but who aren't as lucky to have parents with the resources that Alonzo and Tracy have. Just a mile away from here, they look just like him, just as much talent, but they don't have the resources, and they need somebody who is going to be fighting for them.

And the good news is, when we actually make these investments in kids like Alijah, when we're looking out for women like Tracy's mom, we all do better. Businesses have more customers, the country hums, people's attitudes are better, consumer confidence is up. That's how America has always grown.

So that's what's at stake. And I'm just hoping that all of you feel the same sense of urgency that I do. Like I said, I'm not on the ballot this time, but I didn't get into politics just for the office. I got into it because I believe in what we're fighting for. But I can't do it alone. Nancy can't do it alone. Debbie can't do it alone.

## The President's Weekly Address

March 22, 2014

Hi, everybody. This week, I visited a community college in Florida, where I spoke with students about what we need to do to make sure our economy rewards the hard work of every American. More specifically, I spoke about making sure our economy rewards the hard work of women.

Today, women make up about half of our workforce and more than half of our college graduates. More women are now their family's main breadwinner than ever before.

But in a lot of ways, our economy hasn't caught up to this new reality yet. On average, a woman still earns just 77 cents for every dollar a man does. And too many women face outdated workplace policies that hold them back, which in turn holds back our families and our entire economy.

A woman deserves to earn equal pay for equal work and paid leave that lets you take a day off to care for a sick child or parent. Congress needs to act on these priorities.

And when women hold most lower wage jobs in America, Congress needs to raise the minimum wage. Because no woman who works full time should ever have to raise her children in poverty.

Now, the good news is that in the year since I first called on Congress to raise the minimum

We're going to need you. And I'm grateful you're here for that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. at the residence of Tracy and Alonzo H. Mourning. In his remarks, he referred to Alijah H. Mourning, Alonzo Mourning III, and Myka Sydney Mourning, children of Mr. and Mrs. Mourning; Jean "Nana" Wilson, mother of Mrs. Mourning; José Garcia, Sr., father of Rep. Joe Garcia; Felecia Williams, president, Valencia College, West Campus; Orlando, FL, resident Eve Gassman; and President François Hollande of France. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

wage, six States have passed laws to raise theirs. More States, counties, and cities are working to raise their minimum wages as we speak. Small businesses like St. Louis-based Pi Pizzeria are raising their wages too, not out of charity, but because it's good for business. And Pi, by the way, makes a really good pizza. In this year of action, I've signed an Executive order requiring Federal contractors to pay their employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour.

But if we're truly going to reward the hard work of every American, Congress needs to join the rest of the country and pass a bill that would lift the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. This wouldn't just raise wages for minimum wage workers, its effects would lift wages for nearly 28 million Americans across this country. It will give businesses more customers with more money to spend and grow the economy for everybody. So call up your Member of Congress and let them know it's time for "10-10." It's time to give America a raise.

A true opportunity agenda is one that works for working women. Because when women succeed, America succeeds. We do better when everyone participates and when everyone who works hard has the chance to get ahead. That's what opportuni-