

brina K.A. Constantine, daughter of King County Executive Dow Constantine; retired Washington State Trooper Robert Koczewski, who died during a wildfire on July 14, and his wife Pat; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; *Apollo 11* crewmembers Edwin E. “Buzz” Aldrin, Jr., and Michael Collins; and Carol

Armstrong, wife of the late *Apollo 11* crewmember Neil A. Armstrong. He also referred to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which was approved July 22 and assigned Public Law No. 113–128. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Statement on Meeting With *Apollo 11* Crewmembers on the 45th Anniversary of the First Moon Landing July 22, 2014

Forty-five years ago, while the world watched as one, the United States of America set foot on the Moon. It was a seminal moment not just in our country’s history, but the history of all humankind.

The three brave astronauts of *Apollo 11*—Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins—took the first small steps of our giant leap into the future. And for all the years since, they and their families have served as testaments to American ingenuity and human achievement. Today I was honored to welcome Buzz, Michael, and Neil’s wife Carol to the White House to mark this historic anniversary and to thank them for serving as advocates, role models, and educators who’ve inspired generations of Americans—myself included—to dream bigger and reach higher.

Today, under Administrator Bolden’s leadership, the men and women of NASA are

building on that proud legacy by preparing for the next giant leap in human exploration, including the first visits of men and women to deep space, to an asteroid, and someday to the surface of Mars, all while partnering with America’s pioneering commercial space industry in new and innovative ways.

The United States of America is stronger today thanks to the vision of President Kennedy, who set us on a course for the Moon, the courage of Neil, Buzz, and Michael, who made the journey, and the spirit of service of all who’ve worked not only on the *Apollo* program, but who’ve dared to push the very boundaries of space and scientific discovery for all humankind.

NOTE: The statement referred to Carol Armstrong, wife of the late *Apollo 11* crewmember Neil A. Armstrong.

## Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Luncheon in Los Altos Hills, California July 23, 2014

Hello, everybody. Oh, no need to stand again. Sit down. Thank you so much.

Well, there are two reasons I’m here. Number one, it’s really nice. [Laughter] The weather is good. It’s pretty—it’s gorgeous. The second reason is George and Judy’s granddaughter and me, we’ve just got a connection. [Laughter] She is adorable. There she is. [Laughter] Look how happy she is to be with the President. [Laughter] I may take her with me. [Laughter] She is gorgeous.

A couple of people I want to thank. Obviously, George and Judy, we want to thank them not only for their incredible hospitality, but for the amazing support that they provided to so many important causes through the years. It’s wonderful to see somebody who has really lived out the American Dream, remembers it, and wants to give back. And so please give them a big round of applause.

One of my favorite people, even if I did not entirely depend on her for all kinds of stuff,

she is somebody who combines grace and intelligence and toughness with deep and abiding compassion. And she has just been a remarkable partner to me throughout my Presidency, and George is exactly right, I need her back as Speaker of the House: Nancy Pelosi.

Nancy could not do what she does unless she has good partners in Congress. And one of the best partners she could ever hope for is your own Congresswoman, who not only represents this district, but is a leader on issues across the board and has been a great friend, Anna Eshoo. Thank you for all the work, Anna, on this.

And then we've got a couple of candidates who are here. Michael Eggman is here. Where is Michael? There he is. And Amanda Renteria—there she is—Renteria. Two outstanding candidates and part of what it is that we're just trying to build here and across the country.

I've got so many friends, so many people who have supported me for so long. As I look back, I realize how many of you have pictures of me with no gray hair. [Laughter] You're chronicling the slow deterioration of Barack Obama. But as a consequence, one of my main functions here today is just to say thank you, because you guys have been incredibly supportive in everything that we've done at every stage. Many of you supported me back when I was running for the U.S. Senate, when nobody could pronounce my name, and then helped to mobilize an amazing movement back in 2008, and it continued until today.

So, because I know so many of you so well, I'm not going to speak long at the top. What I want to do is spend most of the time in a conversation with you. Let me just make a couple of observations.

Number one, as George alluded to, when we came into office we were going through the worst economy since the Great Depression. In fact, the contraction was actually larger by some measures than the Great Depression. In part because of the incredible resilience of the American people, but in part because we actually put some smart policies in place, the record over the last 5 years is some pretty remarkable progress.

There's almost no economic measure by which we are not better off today than we were when I came into office—that 52 straight months of job growth; 10 million jobs created; this past year, the biggest drop in unemployment in 30 years. Unemployment now is lower than it was before Lehman's. We've seen the deficit cut by more than half. Millions of people have health care that didn't have it before, and health care inflation is the lowest that it's been in 50 years. The stock market obviously has more than recovered, and that's important for Wall Street, but more importantly, it's important for Main Street. People whose 401(k)s had collapsed have built up some sense of retirement security once again.

When I came into office, investors around the world thought that China was the top place to do business. Today, they think that America is the top place to do business, in part because of the fact that we've recovered faster than most industrialized nations and come further; in part because some of the energy policies that we've put in place means that for the first time in over 20 years, we're now producing more oil than we import. We doubled clean energy, tripled the amount of wind energy that we produce, increased by 10 times the amount of solar energy that we're producing, and we have reduced carbon pollution by the largest factor of any industrialized nation. High school dropout rates have gone down; college attendance is up.

And when you put all this together—manufacturing stronger than any time since the 1990s, an auto industry that was on the verge of collapse now fully recovered and stronger than ever and producing cars that not only people want to buy, but also are slated to double fuel efficiency by the next decade—it's no wonder then that a lot of people outside of the United States would say we've got the best cards out there. There's no country that wouldn't gladly trade places with us in terms of our strategic position. And part of that is also because we continue to have a culture of innovation and dynamism that Silicon Valley represents better than anyplace else on Earth.

And yet there's a lot of anxiety out there. And there's anxiety for a couple of reasons. Number one, for all the progress that we've made, there's a 20-, 30-year trend that has not changed, and that is that more and more, productivity, corporate profits, the benefits of innovation accrue to folks at the very top. And the middle class and folks striving to get into the middle class, they're stuck. They feel like they're treading water. They feel as if, no matter how hard they work, they can't get ahead, and more worrisome, they're concerned that their kids are not going to be able to get ahead.

And the second concern people have is it feels as if Washington doesn't work and doesn't listen to people and isn't paying attention to them. And those two things are related.

There are specific policies we could put in place that we know would make life easier for people out there who are working hard on behalf of their families and trying to do the right thing. We know that if we had a sensible policy of rebuilding our infrastructure—our roads, our bridges, our ports, a smart grid—that all of that would spur on growth, put people to work right away; we'd have lower unemployment, and we'd be setting the stage for economic growth for decades to come.

We know that if we invest in early childhood education, every dollar we put in, we get \$7 back in terms of kids doing better in school, less likely to drop out, less likely to end up in prison, less likely to be unemployed. We know that.

We know that 28 million people would be helped if we raise the minimum wage so that it's comparable to what it was 20 years ago. We know that if we helped working families deal with issues like childcare that that would be an enormous burden lifted off them. We know that if women who are in the workforce aren't getting paid less than men for doing the same job, that's not just good for the women, it's good for entire families because, as Anna and Nancy often remind us, when women succeed, America succeeds. And by the way, as the child of a single mom, you don't have to convince me on that.

So we know what works. This is not a technical problem. We have some big technical issues: What are the—what's the next big energy breakthrough that's going to allow us to fully contain the dangers of climate change? How do we make sure that all the innovation and productivity that is taking place and generated in places like this translate into more jobs and not more layoffs?

There's some big, technical, economic issues, scientific issues that we have to address. But if we just took some commonsense steps, this country would grow faster, more people would be working, more families would be better off.

And the reason we don't do it is because politics doesn't work in Washington. And the reason politics does not work in Washington—I want to be clear—is not because both parties are in the tank. It's not because everybody who goes to Congress is solely self-interested. The reason it doesn't work right now is because we have one party that has no agenda other than making Government not work; whose primary function, primary purpose right now, if you distill their ideology, comes down to saying no to any efforts to help ordinary families get ahead. Some of it is ideologically driven. Some of it is driven by pure political calculation, because what they know is if Government is not working, people get cynical; and if people get cynical, they do not vote; and if people do not vote, that advantages them.

And so I hope the reason that you're here today is because you want to get something done. And in order to get something done, we have to reverse that cycle. We have to break this cycle of gridlock and cynicism. And there's a real simple way to do it: It's making sure that people who are serious about governing are in power.

And I say that not as a strict partisan. Yes, I am a Democrat, and I'm a proud Democrat. But my favorite President is the first Republican President, from my home State of Illinois, a guy name Abraham Lincoln. And there has been throughout our history contributions by both parties to advance the common good. I'd love nothing more than a loyal and rational

opposition. But that's not what we have right now, and as a consequence, we're going to need change. And to bring about change, we're going to need you.

So I'll just close by saying that Democrats have a lot of good qualities. We do have a congenital defect, and that is we do not vote during midterm elections. But I need everybody here to have as great a sense of urgency about these midterms as you had about my election in 2008 or my election in 2012. Because as much as I can do as President of

the United States, I cannot do it alone. I need partners. I need help. And that help comes in the form of having Nancy Pelosi as Speaker and having Anna as somebody who's in the majority. So I hope all of you get to work.

With that, let me take some questions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 p.m. at the residence of George M. and Judy Marcus. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Los Angeles, California

July 23, 2014

*The President.* Hello, everybody. Hello, Los Angeles. Oh, this is a nice looking crowd. You all got dressed up. [Laughter] Don't you look cute? Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. Relax.

It is good to be in Los Angeles. Let me first of all say thank you to Shonda for opening up this unbelievable space and arranging for perfect weather. Give Shonda a big round of applause. I've gotten to know Shonda over the last couple years, and for somebody who is just so successful and is doing so much, you can't ask for somebody who is more humble and more thoughtful and has shown incredible kindness to me and my family. And I am very, very proud to know her and to call her a friend. So I just want to say thank you so much for everything you do, not just for me, but for a lot of people who she's given unbelievable opportunities to. So give Shonda a big round of applause. We love Shonda.

Kerry Washington I want to thank. Kerry—there are few people who worked harder on my campaign, even back when people didn't pronounce my name right—[laughter]—than Kerry Washington. And she has been—she's not a latecomer. She didn't jump on the bandwagon. She pushed when the wagon was stuck in the mud; she was out there. [Laughter] And she's just been a great friend. Plus she showed me her baby pictures, and that is one cute ba-

by. And I want to thank her and the entire host committee for helping to set this up.

My girl, Janelle Monáe. Janelle has performed at the White House, like, 15 times. And we—there's going to be an official Janelle Monae room in the White House. [Laughter] We love her. Michelle and I love Janelle. We love her energy. We love her talent. But we most of all, love her character. And anybody who gets a chance to talk to her, this is just a remarkable, strong, smart young lady.

And I have to say nice things about her because she may be the only person in possession of a video in which I try to keep up with her and Usher on the dance floor. [Laughter] Now, this is top secret. She has promised that this will never be released. But she can blackmail me at any time. [Laughter]

*Musician Janelle Monáe.* I love you!

*The President.* I love you back. You do have that video, though, don't you?

*Ms. Monáe.* I do. [Laughter]

*The President.* Now, tell the truth, though, Janelle, I wasn't bad, though, was I? [Laughter] I'm just saying. Go ahead, testify just a little bit.

*Ms. Monáe.* [Inaudible]

*The President.* Let me say, I did not drop in splits. [Laughter] But I did bust a move. That I did do. [Laughter]