

that's what your parents' generation, the generation before you, had.

Part of my job, part of Congress's job, part of your mayor's job is to figure out how do we create platforms where we can duplicate some of the foundation that everybody needs. Right? How do we make sure you're getting the education you need to be able to compete in this economy? How are we making sure that we've got the infrastructure that you need, whether it's cyberinfrastructure or hard infrastructure, for you to be able to move services, move goods, move ideas not just around the country, but globally? How do we make sure that our research engine continues to thrive here in the United States? How do we make sure that you've got health care if it's not tied to a traditional 9-to-5 job? How do we make sure that you—you have a platform for savings, for retirement if the traditional pension doesn't work?

Because statistically, I'm sure everybody here is going to succeed, but not everybody here is going to have an IPO and make a gazillion dollars, and you're going to do really interesting, exciting work, but you're still going to have to worry about, at some point, how do I pay for my kid's college education and how do I make sure that I can retire with some security. Right?

So part of what we want to do is to build portability into the system, to build flexibility into the system, to duplicate in new ways and using new models the kind of baseline security that you had in previous generations. And that is something that we're starting on. The Af-

fordable Care Act was an example of that. Some of the proposals that we have for new ways of saving is an example of that. But we're not quite there yet. And it's going to be up to you, this generation, to come up with innovative, creative ideas, and then to help mobilize the passion and energy that you're showing in the private sector and direct some of that into the public sector.

That's the one thing that I want to leave everybody here with, and that is: As clunky and as frustrating as government and politics can sometimes be, the fact of the matter is, is that it is still vital. It still makes a huge difference. It is going to help determine whether or not you've got the platform to succeed.

It's still going to be educating the vast majority of our kids. It's still going to be the lion's share of our research dollars. It's still going to be what makes airports function. And even with new technologies and new models, it's going to be the basis by which you're able to get from A to B. And the decisions we make now will help determine how successful we are collectively and individually for years to come.

So, even as you're doing all this neat, cool, interesting stuff, do pay attention to what's not always as neat and cool, but really necessary, in Washington, DC, and in your local communities.

Thanks, everybody. It was great.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:01 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Eric M. Garcetti of Los Angeles, CA; and White House Trip Director Marvin D. Nicholson, Jr.

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

October 9, 2014

Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody. It is good to see you. And I want to thank Gwyneth and Apple and Moses for letting us crash your house. [Laughter] I promised that I would put everything back. But they are so generous. And, Gwyneth, thank you for not just what you did this time, but what you did

last time, because it did make a huge difference to us. Even though I couldn't go, I wanted to go, but they said there are no voters that I can knock on doors in London. [Laughter] I'm trying to remember who drew the tough job of attending that event. I think it was Messina, wasn't it? What a scam. [Laughter]

It's great to see all of you. It's great to be back in L.A. I look around this crowd, and I see folks who have been there from day one, people who supported me even before most folks could pronounce my name. And I see people who have worked long and hard on issues separate and apart from my campaign, people who championed environmental sustainability and people championed equal rights for all people, including the LGBT community, and people who championed early childhood education. And so each of you have been game-changers in your own community, and your involvement in politics is just an extension of the concern and regard you've shown and what you want to leave for the next generation, for folks like Apple and Moses.

We're here at an interesting time in American history. The headlines are dominated by news overseas—and rightly so—because we're seeing a lot of tumult all around the world. The Middle East is moving away from an existing order towards something new, but that process is messy and dangerous. And what we're seeing with ISIL, I think, is an expression of some of the challenges we have in societies that have divided along sectarian lines and young people who aren't seeing any other opportunity other than hoisting a rifle and a breakdown in basic order. And we are looked to to try to make sure that we rebuild something that can sustain itself.

And when I was at the United Nations last week, or 2 weeks ago, it was the United States that had to mobilize the world community to make sure we were going after ISIL and putting an end to the kind of barbaric killing that we've been seeing there.

Ebola, something that's been in the news. And although I want to assure everybody that the likelihood of any epidemic in the United States is extraordinarily small, there's a humanitarian crisis that's happening in West Africa right now where children not much older, and in some cases younger, than Apple and Moses, are dying on the streets alone. And it's something that we can prevent and we know how to prevent, but it's been the United States that's had to mobilize the world community to help

not just deal with this particular epidemic, but also to rebuild a public health—or build for the first time a public health—infrastructure in countries that haven't had it.

Russia and its aggression towards Ukraine. It's been America that's been able to mobilize Europe and the world community to make sure that we stand for a simple principle, which is, people get to decide their own lives in a democratic system and that in the heart of Europe, the kind of old-style aggression that Russia has been exercising has no place in the 21st century. And it's been once again the United States that's mobilized the world community to blunt Russian aggression.

So what was striking when I was at the United Nations General Assembly is, despite sometimes, the complaining that you get about the United States, and despite folks liking or enjoying picking out flaws and problems in our policies, when there's a crisis around the world, they don't call Moscow, they don't call Beijing, they call the United States of America. We remain the one indispensable nation not just because we have capabilities that nobody else has, not just because of the strength of our military and our reach, but because of our values and because of our principles and ideals and the things that we stand for.

Now, our leadership internationally also depends on our strength here at home. And when I came into office, we were losing 800,000 jobs per month. We were going through the biggest contraction, the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. In fact, in some ways, the contraction was more severe than the Great Depression. And because of the resilience of the American people, but also because we made good policy decisions, what we've seen now is 55 months of uninterrupted job growth, the longest in American history. We've created 10.3 million jobs. We've been able to reduce the unemployment rate from over 10 percent down to under 6 percent, down to 5.9 percent.

We rescued an auto industry that was flatlining. It is now not only rehiring tens of thousands of workers, but it's actually producing cars that people want to drive. In the process, we've doubled fuel efficiency standards on our

cars. There was in the news last week that fuel efficiency has never been higher in the United States.

We've provided health insurance for millions of people who didn't have it before. And by the way, we did it while at the same time slowing health care inflation so that the average person who has health insurance through their employer is paying about \$1,600 less than they would have been if the trends before we passed health care had continued. It's like a \$1,600 tax cut for those families. In the meantime, we've saved over \$180 billion so far over the next 10 years, because our health care system is becoming smarter and more efficient. And that's part of the reason we've been able to cut the deficit by more than half to a sustainable point. And we were able to do it without cutting benefits for seniors, without throwing people off the Medicare rolls. Instead, we're getting more people insurance and more people into preventive care that's going to make them healthier, as well as save us money.

On energy, we're not only producing more energy than ever before, but we're producing more clean energy than ever before. We've doubled the production of clean energy. We've increased solar energy production tenfold, wind energy threefold. And as a consequence, we have actually reduced carbon emissions by more than any other advanced nation on Earth. And think about that: We've done that at the same time as we've actually created more jobs than Japan, Europe, and every advanced nation combined.

High school graduation rates at an alltime high. Math scores up. Reading scores up. College attendance up. We've provided millions of young people access to higher education and student loans and grants that didn't have access to it before.

The bottom line is, is that there is almost no economic measure by which we're not better off than we were when I came into office. And that's a fact. That's not—and for those who think that I'm a wild Socialist—[laughter]—it turns out that actually the stock market has been doing pretty fine, 401(k)s have recovered

and corporate balance sheets have never been stronger. So it's been good for business.

And yet people remain anxious about the future, and the question is, why? If we've made all this progress, why is it that there's this anxiety among ordinary folks all across the country? And there's a simple reason for it. It's that despite everything that we've done to recover the economy, to restructure energy, to reform our education system, to start fixing a broken health care system, wages and incomes have not gone up for the average person; they've continued to flatline. And that's a trend that preceded me. That's something that has been going on now for about 20 years, in part because of globalization, in part because of technology, but also because of some misguided policies. Most of the gains in our economy go to the folks who are in this lovely yard. And the average person has not seen their wages or incomes go up in the last 20 years.

And as a consequence, even though the economy has improved, folks are still uncertain as to whether, if you work hard in this country, can you still get ahead, and more importantly, can my kid get ahead, can my grandchild live out the American Dream? And everything I have done to this point, and everything that I want to do over the next 2 years, is based on the simple proposition that here in America, it doesn't matter what you look like, where you come from, what faith you belong to, where you started, who you love. If you are willing to work hard and take responsibility, then you should be able to make it here, in America. That's the essence of who we are.

And the good news is that there are some things we could do right now that would deliver on that promise. If we raised the minimum wage, which hasn't been raised in 7 years, 28 million people would be helped. 28 million people. And by the way, the minimum wage isn't mostly for high school kids trying to earn a little pocket change. The average beneficiary of a hike in the minimum wage is 35 years old, disproportionately women, folks who are trying to raise kids just like these two. And it's hard to do on \$14,000 a year.

Closing the pay gap between men and women, we know that will make a difference. That's not a women's issue, that's a family issue, because women are bringing more and more of an ordinary family's income to the table. And if we help to close that gap and make sure that we're using the incredible talents of more than half of our population, that is going to grow the economy and help families and help kids.

We know that if we rebuild our infrastructure—not just roads and bridges, but high-speed rail and a better air traffic control system and a smart grid to make sure that we're using energy smartly—that doesn't just put guys in hard hats to work right now, it lays the foundation for us growing in the future.

We know that if we invest in education, early childhood education, if we put—every dollar that we put into high-quality early childhood education, we get \$7 back, because kids are less likely to drop out from school, they're less likely to get in the criminal justice system, they're more likely to go to college, they're more likely to succeed in a career. Why aren't we doing it? We know it works. There are models out there that make sense.

Investments in research and development. Our economy is premised on innovation. It's premised on us being at the cutting edge. That's what we're about. And yet, despite multiple efforts by me and our budget, Congress still underfunds the kind of research that would discover cures for diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's, that would unleash new energy sources that could deal with climate change.

The problem we have right now is not that we don't know what to do, it's that we're not doing it. And the reason we're not doing it is very simple. It's not because Democrats and Republicans are both just arguing it out and both ideological and everything is corrupt. That's not what's going on. There's no false equivalence here. What's happening is that you have a narrow ideological band of folks in the Republican Party that have taken over and who are saying no to everything. No to the minimum wage. No to fair pay for women. No to infrastructure. No to things that they used to be for, including, by the way, the kind of health

care plan that I ended up passing. That was originally a Republican idea.

And when you ask them, "Well, why no?," they can't really give you a coherent answer other than feeding on, I think, the fears and anxieties of folks in ways that they think are providing them short-term electoral advantage, but aren't solving the country's problems.

Now, even in the absence of a functioning Congress, there's a whole bunch of stuff we're getting done anyway. We went ahead and passed laws to make it easier for women to be able to find out whether they're getting paid the same as men or not and enforce their rights. We went ahead and provided a minimum wage for workers of companies that want to do business with the Federal Government. We went ahead and made sure that DREAM kids, kids who had been brought here from other countries and who for all intents and purposes are Americans, except for their papers, who grow up with our kids, who are friends with our children, who aspire to in some way serve in this country, we went ahead and said, you know what, we want you here, we want to do right by you.

So we're acting despite Congress. But imagine what we could do with a Congress that operated on some common sense. Imagine that. Imagine what we could do not just on any particular issue—although it would make a huge difference for us right away to be able to pass comprehensive immigration reform or to pass a minimum wage law or pass a fair pay law—but just in terms of the mood of the country, in terms of people believing that once again we can do something in common. Believing that we can rise above narrow, ideological interests. Believing that we can match the decency and common sense of the American people with our politics.

During the summer, I had a chance to have lunches or dinners or spend a day with just ordinary folks who had written me letters. And the people you met just reflected what you want America to be. There was a young woman in Minnesota who I sat down with, who had been a waitress, she met the love of her life, and he was in construction, but after 2008 and

the housing market collapsing, he had to get a job on the railway. His income was cut in half. She goes back to school; she becomes an accountant. They piece what little savings they have together. She pays off her debt, because she doesn't want to have that lingering over her because they want to start saving for their kids' college education.

And in the letter that she wrote me, she said, you know what, we don't really want that much in terms of material things. We're not aspiring to be wealthy. We just want at the end of the month for us to be able to pay our bills. It would be nice if I was able to spend less than 25 percent of our income on childcare. It would be nice if we got a little more help in making sure that we're going to be able to afford sending our kids to college. She said in the letter, understand, I'm not complaining. We have a wonderful life, and I can go take my kids into the park, and they can have so much fun. And every Friday night, we usually have a night out for pizza, and maybe we rent a movie. We're wonderfully happy, but we just wish maybe the Government was giving us a little bit of a break, a little bit of help, a little bit of encouragement. We wish that people in Washington were thinking of us.

And people sometimes ask me, with all the stuff going on, and you're getting gray—[laughter]—and people are calling you names, how do you do it? How do you get up every morning? And I tell folks, it's people like that woman, who reminds me of my single mom, who had to work and go to school and raise two kids and didn't have the kind of health care that she needed and ended up dying of cancer and never lived to see what happened to her son and her daughter. But there are folks like that all across the country. And they're not asking for much. All they want is that if they work hard and they do what they're supposed to do, that somebody is standing there alongside them helping them out a little bit, pushing down some of those barriers that are getting in their way.

And that's what keeps me going. It doesn't just keep me going; that's what inspires me. And I hope that's what inspires you.

We live in such a cynical time, partly because of how the media is now structured. And each side of the political divide gets its information from different sources, and we only listen to folks who feed our biases and our inclinations. And bad news tends to attract the most attention. But cynicism, which is often passed off as wisdom, did not send a man to the Moon. Cynicism did not defeat fascism. Cynicism did not ever cure a disease or start a business or invent something that changed people's lives for the better. Cynicism is a choice. And hope is a better choice.

And so I hope that in these midterms you feel a sense of urgency about this. And I'm talking to you, Democrats. Because Democrats have many good qualities, but a congenital disease is, A, we get depressed too easily—[laughter]—and, B, we're terrible at paying attention to midterm elections. When there's not a President on the ballot, we tend to get complacent. We can't afford to get complacent right now.

So I'm going to do everything I can in the last several weeks. My name is not on the ballot, but our values and our ideals and the things that generations have fought for to make this a fair, more prosperous, more equal, more just place, those values and ideals are at stake. And I hope you'll join me to make sure that they're there not just for this generation, but for future generations.

Thanks, everybody. Appreciate you. Love you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:25 p.m. at the residence of Gwennyth K. Paltrow. In his remarks, he referred to Apple B.A. and Moses B.P. Martin, children of Ms. Paltrow; James A. Messina, national chairman, Organizing for Action, in his former capacity as manager of the Obama 2012 reelection campaign; St. Anthony, MN, resident Rebekah Erler, her husband Ben Erler, and their sons Jack and Henry; and his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.