

And so there are just a series of specific things we can do right now, many of them I'm doing on my own because we have the administrative authority to do it, but some of them we can't do without Congress. We can't fix a broken immigration system that would allow incredibly talented folks who want to start businesses here and create jobs here in the United States, would allow them to stay and make those investments. That's something that we need Congress to help us on. We're not going to be able to fund the highway trust fund and to ramp up our investment in infrastructure without acts of Congress.

So my hope is, is the American people look at today's news and understand that, in fact, we are making strides. We have not seen more consistent job growth since the nineties. But

we can make even more progress if Congress is willing to work with my administration and to set politics aside, at least occasionally—[*laughter*]*—*which I know is what the American people are urgently looking for.

It's a sort of economic patriotism to—where you say to yourself, how is it that we can start rebuilding this country to make sure that all of the young people who are here, but their kids and their grandkids, are going to be able to enjoy the same incredible opportunities that this country offers as we have? That's our job. That's what we should be focused on. And it's worth remembering as we go into Independence Day.

Thanks, everybody. Appreciate it. Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:57 a.m.

## The President's Weekly Address *July 4, 2014*

Hi, everybody. I hope you're enjoying your Fourth of July weekend.

I want to begin today by saying a special word to the U.S. Men's Soccer Team, who represented America so well the past few weeks. We are so proud of you. You've got a lot of new believers. And I know there's actually a petition on the White House website to make Tim Howard the next Secretary of Defense. Chuck Hagel's got that spot right now, but if there is a vacancy, I promise to think about it.

It was 238 years ago that our Founders came together in Philadelphia to launch our American experiment. There were farmers and businessmen, doctors and lawyers, ministers and a kite-flying scientist.

Those early patriots may have come from different backgrounds and different walks of life, but they were united by a belief in a simple truth: that we are all created equal, that we are all endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Over the years, that belief has sustained us through war and depression, peace and prosperity. It's helped us build the strongest democracy, the greatest middle class, and the

most powerful military the world has ever known. And today, there isn't a nation on Earth that wouldn't gladly trade places with the United States of America.

But our success is only possible because we have never treated those self-evident truths as self-executing. Generations of Americans have marched, organized, petitioned, fought, and even died to extend those rights to others, to widen the circle of opportunity for others, and to perfect this Union we love so much.

That's why I want to say a special thanks to the men and women of our Armed Forces and the families who serve with them, especially those servicemembers who spent this most American of holidays serving your country far from home.

You keep us safe, and you keep the United States of America a shining beacon of hope for the world. And for that, you and your families deserve not only the appreciation of a grateful nation, but our enduring commitment to serve you as well as you've served us.

God bless you all, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:55 a.m. on July 3 in the Map Room at

the White House for broadcast on July 4. In the address, the President referred to Timothy M. Howard, goalkeeper, U.S. Men's National Soc-

cer Team. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 3, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on July 4.

## Remarks at a Naturalization Ceremony for Active Duty Servicemembers and Military Spouses July 4, 2014

Thank you, everybody. Please be seated. Good morning to the—good morning and welcome to the White House. And happy Fourth of July!

Now, Deputy Secretary Mayorkas, thank you for taking care of the important part of this morning, which is administering the oath. That's the thing that we wanted to make sure we got right. To Acting Deputy Director Jones; to family, friends, distinguished guests: Thank you all for being here. And finally, to these 25 men and women, servicemembers and spouses, it is an honor to join everyone here, for the first time, in calling you "our fellow Americans."

Now, this is one of my favorite events to do, and not just because we get to have a barbecue and watch fireworks later. [*Laughter*] It's because each of you has traveled a long journey to this moment, journeys that began in places like Jamaica and Germany, China and Guatemala. And yet somehow—either because your parents brought you here as children or because you made the choice yourselves as adults—you ended up here in America.

And then many of you did something extraordinary: You signed up to serve in the United States military. You answered the call to fight and potentially to give your life for a country that you didn't fully belong to yet. You understood what makes us American is not just circumstances of birth or the names in our family tree, it's that timeless belief that from many we are one; that we are bound together by adherence to a set of beliefs and unalienable rights; that we have certain obligations to each other, to look after each other, and to serve one another. And over the years, that's exactly what you've done.

Rodrigo Laquian came to the United States from the Philippines. He joined the Navy because, he said, he "wanted to be a part of something big and important. To be a part of a great cause." Today Petty Officer Second Class Laquian is still part of that great cause, and today he's also an American citizen.

Stephanie Van Ausdall moved here from Canada with her mom when she was 18 years old. And today she's 26 and a sergeant in the Army. Stephanie says she joined the military "to give my children someone to look up to and someone they can be proud of." Stephanie, I know that you've made your children and all of us very proud.

Oscar Gonzalez was born in Guatemala and became a marine last year. Becoming a citizen, he says, means becoming part of a "society that strives and stands for good all around the world—just being a part of that makes me complete." Well, Oscar, welcoming you as an American citizen makes our country a little more complete, so thank you.

And then, there are those of you who married an American servicemember, and as a military spouse, you've been serving our country as well. Diana Baker is originally from Kenya and met her husband Kowaine in Germany. Today, she's a nurse at Frederick Memorial Hospital in Maryland, and she and her husband have four beautiful children. In Diana's words, "Becoming a citizen of the United States is like joining a club of the best of the best." [*Laughter*] And I agree. Congratulations, Diana, on joining the club.

Together, all of you remind us that America is and always has been a nation of immigrants. Throughout our history, immigrants have come to our shores in wave after wave, from every corner of the globe. Every one of us, un-