

ment shutdown and us coming to the brink of defaulting for the first time in 200 years and affecting the full faith and credit of the American people—if that’s all you’ve got to offer, well, maybe you need to reflect for a while on why it is that you’re in politics and what public service means.

So we’ve got one problem, and the problem is cynicism. The problem is, Democrats congenitally vote at lower rates during midterms because of gerrymandering—you know something about that here in Texas—and population distribution. Even though, on every issue, we enjoy a majority position, the House Republicans don’t have to respond to that. They’re responding to their primary Tea Party voters. Nothing happens, that makes our folks even more cynical, we’re less likely to vote, and you get this vicious spiral where there’s a lot of cynicism and a lot of unhappiness, but nothing changes.

And the reason I hope everybody is here today is because we actually can change that, but we can only change it if we feel some urgency about this midterm election. I want an effective, successful Republican Party. I want a loyal opposition. But the only way that the message is sent that you’ve got to do some common-

sense things and act based on facts and reason as opposed to politics and ideology is if they have a sense that people are paying attention and that voters vote. And that’s where the DCCC, it’s got its work cut out for it, but it can do it because we’re on the right side of this.

We’ve got to work hard. You’ve got to work not just—we don’t have to just work as hard as we did during the Presidential election, we’ve got to work harder. And I know nobody is working harder than Nancy Pelosi. And I’m working hard. I need you all to work hard. And if you do, then we can deliver on behalf of all those folks who write me letters every single day, because they’re good people, and they feel hopeful. But they need a little help, and I want to give it to them, and Nancy wants to give it to them, and I know you do too.

Thanks. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. at the residence of Marc R. and Wendy Stanley. In his remarks, he referred to St. Anthony, MN, resident Rebekah Erler, her husband Ben Erler, and their sons Jack and Henry; and Elizabeth Cooper, student, University of Northern Colorado. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Austin, Texas July 9, 2014

The President. Thank you, everybody. Good to see you. Good to be here. Good to be here. Thank you.

Well, first of all, it’s just good to be back in Austin—love this town. Love Austin, Texas. I do. I remember the first fundraiser I had down here in Austin when I was running for the U.S. Senate, and it was around this time of year. It was so hot that when I was done, I had to get rid of the shirt. [*Laughter*] It just never recovered. [*Laughter*]

The last time I took a walk unencumbered was in Austin, Texas. True story. This is before a debate in the primary. And I walked along the river, and I got about probably a mile, mile and a half, and then some people started spotting me so that by the time—Secret Service got nervous,

and then by the time we got back, there was a big rope line, and there was all the fuss. And I have wistful memories of that walk. [*Laughter*]

And I remember going to a bar or club, honky-tonk around here, and singing on stage. [*Laughter*] I wasn’t very good, but people were enthusiastic anyway. I’ve had really good barbecue here. But most importantly, I just love the people of Austin. They’re just good people. I forget, I actually got down into the Longhorn Stadium and tossed the football with Colt and Coach Brown. Every time I come here, I have fun. And tonight is no exception because we are in an extraordinary setting.

I’m going to use my creativity by taking off my jacket. And perhaps if the press wasn’t here, I’d be creative and jump in the pool.

[*Laughter*] But the pool report might reflect bad judgment on my part. [*Laughter*] There's a fine line between creativity and bad judgment. [*Laughter*] You want your President to be on the right side of that line. So, taking off the jacket, creative. Jumping in the pool, bad judgment. [*Laughter*]

Obviously, I want to thank Robert and Marci for making this incredible setting available and congratulate Robert on all the great work that he is doing on the new network and shows and the way that he is broadening, I think, everybody's imaginations about what America is about and what it looks like, what it sounds like.

I want to acknowledge a dear friend who has really been working hard on behalf of Democrats all across the country, and he is one of your own: Henry Muñoz is here. We're very, very proud of Henry. There he is. In addition to just being one of the finest people I know and a great friend, he's also very stylish, so I would advise people to take a look at his shoes before you leave and then see if you could pull it off. [*Laughter*]

I've been doing a lot of stuff today. I was in Denver to start with, and then I was in Dallas, hanging out with your Governor. [*Laughter*] And then I'm ending up in Austin. My message has been consistent, I think, throughout this day and throughout this trip and throughout my Presidency. What makes America special is the idea that no matter what you look like, where you come from, who you love, what your last name is, what manner you worship the Sacred, that you can make it here if you try. If you work hard, you can make it.

And when I came into office, we were in the midst of the worst crisis since the Great Depression. And because of the resilience of the American people and the creativity of the American people, we pulled ourselves out of it.

And also because my administration made some good decisions early that were tough and not always popular, we've now seen 52 straight months of job growth, 10 million jobs created, unemployment rate the lowest it's been since September of 2008. First half of this year, jobs have grown faster than any time since 1999.

We saved an auto industry, stabilized the financial system, put in place laws to make sure that predatory lending and some of the practices that got us into this mess in the first place don't happen again.

We've lowered the rate of uninsured through the Affordable Care Act, and we've actually slowed the pace at which health care inflation increases, which is good for families and good for businesses. We've cut the deficit by more than half. We have seen a lowering of the dropout rate; it's been cut in half for Latino students. We've seen the highest college attendance rate in history. Our energy market is booming. We're producing more oil than we're importing for the first time in a lot of years. We've tripled the amount of wind energy, increased by tenfold the amount of solar energy, lowered our carbon pollution.

It used to be before I came into office that China was determined as the best place to invest among the world's investors and companies. The United States is now back where it belongs as the number-one country to invest and we're actually seeing manufacturing come back to the United States.

So the point is that we've made some remarkable progress. The stock market is at an alltime high, and obviously, that benefits a lot of folks at the very top, but anybody who has a 401(k) has seen their retirement savings exceed where they were before I came into office and before the crash. We've seen housing begin to recover. We've made a lot of progress.

But the reason we're here is we know we've got so much more to do. And there is anxiety around the country and worry. And the reason there is anxiety and the reason there is worry is because so much of the gains that we've made have gone to folks at the top. Ordinary folks haven't seen much of an increase in terms of their wages, their incomes. There are families that work really hard every single day, do the right thing, are responsible, but at the end of the month, it's tough paying the bills. There are young people who are dying to go to college, but aren't sure that they can afford it. There are still folks who are desperate for work, but find perhaps because they got laid

off at the age of 50 or 55 that folks aren't willing to hire them anymore.

We still have millions of people around the country who are our neighbors and our friends and the friends of our children, but who are still living in the shadows because we haven't passed immigration reform. There are children who are still in schools that aren't teaching them, and they're going to have a real hard time finding ladders into the middle class.

So we know that we've got more work to do. Now, the good news is we also know what we could be doing about it. We know that if we invest in infrastructure—rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our ports and our airports and creating smart grids and new ways to transmit energy—that all this would create jobs right now in the United States and increase our economic growth and set the course for future economic growth.

We know that if we pass immigration reform, it's not just good for the families, it's good for the economy. We attract the best and the brightest; they invest here, they create jobs. It's estimated that it would cut our deficit and the economy would grow by more than an extra trillion dollars. We know these things.

We know if we invest in basic research and technology that we'll keep our edge and the dynamism of the U.S. economy, which has always been our advantage, that the pace of growth will accelerate. We know that if we invest in early childhood education, that every dollar we invest helping a child get a good start means they're less likely to drop out, more likely to go to college, less likely to have a teen pregnancy, less likely to go to jail. We know it's a good investment.

So we know what to do. The problem is that Washington is not working the way it's supposed to. And that's part of the reason people feel anxious, because they're thinking to themselves, we could be there, we could be making progress. People sense—they may not follow all the intricacies of the debates that go on, what passes for debates in Washington, but they know we could be doing better than we're doing right now if folks were acting on behalf of middle class families and people who are

striving to get into the middle class, if folks were showing a seriousness of purpose as opposed to worrying about getting reelected or posturing on television.

They know that. And so what I've said to my team is, get me out of Washington. [*Laughter*] Let me talk to people who are doing the right thing and struggling so that they know they're being heard by at least somebody in Washington. Let's remind the country what we should be focused on. So that we can also maybe prod Congress into doing the right thing. Now—

Audience member. Good luck.

The President. Well, I don't need luck, I need work. Because the challenge we've got—and I said this earlier today, and I'm going to keep on saying it—I'm not actually—I wasn't raised sharply partisan. My mom, she had good old-fashioned liberal, progressive values, but she wasn't involved in politics. And my favorite President is a Republican named Abraham Lincoln. And so my attitude is that, historically, both parties have done really important work. You have Teddy Roosevelt, a Republican, started the national parks, and Dwight Eisenhower build the Interstate Highway System, and Richard Nixon started the EPA. There have been historically some great Republicans and some great Democrats who have helped lead this country in a good direction. And for a big stretch of time, they've been able to work together on important projects.

But right now, at this moment, the reason Washington doesn't work is very simple: You've got one party whose main goal seems just to say no. Say no to immigration reform. Say no to raising the minimum wage. Say no to extending unemployment benefits for folks who are out there looking for work, but can't find it. Say no to equal pay for equal work. Don't just say no to doing something about climate change, just deny climate change. And definitely say no to me.

And so you don't get a sense that you've got a party that's serious about trying to do anything when it comes to the challenges that are facing the middle class. It's not just that they have a different theory about how to help, they just don't seem to have any theory at all—other

than saying no, or a theory that says we're going to help—or just allow folks at the very top to do whatever the heck they want and somehow prosperity is going to trickle down onto everybody else.

And that's, hopefully, why you are here, because that is not inevitable. The American people agree with us on minimum wage. They agree with us on equal pay for equal work. They agree with us on immigration reform. They agree that we should be doing more to help young people go to college. Across the board, on the issues, the American people agree with us. So why is it Congress isn't working and the Republican Party can't seem to respond? It's because, especially in midterms, half of us don't vote.

And so the reason we are here today is just to remind everybody—here we don't have to be that creative—that if people participate and feel a sense of urgency and channel the frustration people feel constructively into these midterm elections, then we can get a Congress that's responsive, which doesn't mean that we have to do everything that I think we should do; I'm willing to compromise.

I told Rick Perry today, I said, I'm happy to listen to your ideas, but right now the main problem I've got with respect to these unaccompanied children is, I've just put forward a piece of legislation before Congress that would give us the resources to care for them and help deal with the borders, all the things you say you want, Governor, and somehow, I haven't heard yet from the Republican delegation of Texas to

say this is such an urgent problem that they're going to move this quickly and get it done. So, if you can't even do the things you say you want to do, how are we going to get anything done?

So we've got to feel a sense of urgency. And if we do, Congress can change. And if Congress changes, then America can change in ways that we all hope for, not just for ourselves, but for our kids and our grandkids.

But we've got to feel a sense of urgency about it not just during Presidential elections, but during midterms. And all of you are going to be critical in that endeavor. So I hope you'll join me. Do not get cynical. Cynics didn't send men to the Moon. Cynics did not liberate slaves. Cynics did not transform this country. Folks who are hopeful and creative did. And that's what we've got to constantly remember, we've got to guard against cynicism, embrace hope, work hard. If we do, we're going to be able to deliver the kind of Congress that the American people deserve.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 p.m. at the residence of Robert Rodriguez. In his remarks, he referred to Colt McCoy, quarterback, National Football League's Washington Redskins, in his former capacity as quarterback of the University of Texas at Austin football team; Mack Brown, former head coach, University of Texas at Austin football team; and Marci Madison, girlfriend of Mr. Rodriguez. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in Austin, Texas

July 10, 2014

The President. Hello, Austin! Hey! Hello, Austin! All right, everybody, have a seat, have a seat. It's good to be in Austin, Texas. Can everybody please give Kinsey a big round of applause for the great introduction?

Audience member. We love you!

The President. That's because I love you. I—everybody knows I love Austin, Texas. Every time I come here I tell you how much I love you. I love Austin. I love the people. I love the

barbecue, which I will get right after this. [Laughter] I like the music. I've got good memories here; I've got good friends.

I was telling somebody that the last time I walked, a real walk, where I was kind of left alone was in Austin, Texas. Right before the debate here during the primary in 2007, 2008? It must have been 2008. And I was walking along the river, and nobody noticed me, and I felt great. [Laughter] And then, on the way