

And I am going to need you to be right there with me. Do not get cynical. Hope is the better choice.

Thank you, Texas. Thank you, Austin. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:48 p.m. at the Paramount Theatre. In his remarks, he referred

to Houston, TX, resident Kinsey Button and her parents Tina and Mitchell Button; David Johnson, husband of Denver, CO, small-business owner Carolyn Reed; former President George W. Bush; and actors Mark Wahlberg and Anthony Estrella, who portrayed detectives in the film “The Departed.” He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Shaun L.S. Donovan as Director of the Office of Management and Budget *July 10, 2014*

I am pleased that Republicans and Democrats in the Senate today confirmed Shaun Donovan as the next Director of the Office of Management and Budget. From his outstanding work at HUD helping to rebuild our housing market to his leadership in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, Shaun has played a crucial role in our efforts to battle back from the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes and expand op-

portunity for more Americans. While we have made significant strides by investing in areas that are helping to grow the economy, creating good jobs, and promoting more effective and efficient management in Government, Shaun knows there is more work to do, and today’s bipartisan vote ensures the dedicated professionals at OMB will have a proven, effective leader to build on the progress we’ve made.

The President’s Weekly Address *July 12, 2014*

Hi, everybody. This week, I spent some time in Colorado and Texas, talking with people about what’s going on in their lives.

One of them was Elizabeth Cooper, who will be a college junior this fall. She wrote to tell me something I hear often: how hard it is for middle class families like hers to afford college. And she shared something I know many of you feel when you wonder what’s going on in Washington. She said she feels “not significant enough to be addressed, not poor enough for people to worry [about], and not rich enough to be cared about.”

I ran for President to fight for Americans just like Elizabeth, people who work hard, do everything right, and just want a chance to build a decent life for themselves and their families.

And after the worst economic crisis in generations, our businesses have now created nearly 10 million new jobs over the past 52 months. The unemployment rate has fallen to

its lowest point since 2008. By almost every measure, our economy is better off than it was 5 years ago.

But while we’ve created more jobs at this point of the year than any year since 1999, too many families barely earn what they did in 1999. It’s harder to pay for college, save, or retire because people’s wages and incomes have not gone up. Nearly all the gains of the recovery are going to the very top and aren’t making a difference in your lives.

Now, I believe America does better when the middle class does better. And I’ve laid out an opportunity agenda to create jobs, train workers, educate our kids, and make sure hard work actually pays off. These are the things we should be doing to grow the middle class and to help folks work their way into the middle class. And it’s pretty uncontroversial stuff. I hope we can work together on it. And I’m always willing to compromise if folks have other

ideas or if it advances generally the interests of working Americans.

But so far this year, Republicans in Congress have blocked every serious idea to strengthen the middle class. Lifting the minimum wage, fair pay, student loan reform—they've said no to all of it. And that's when I've acted this year to help working Americans on my own: when Congress won't act.

I've taken actions to attract new jobs, lift workers' wages, help students pay off their loans, and more. And the Republican plan right now is not to do some of this work with me; instead, it's to sue me. That's actually what they're spending their time on. It's a political stunt that's going to waste months of America's time. And by the way, they're going to pay for it using your hard-earned tax dollars.

I have a better idea: Do something, Congress. Do anything to help working Americans. Join the rest of the country. Join me, I'm looking forward to working with you.

You know, on Tuesday, I met with Carolyn Reed and her husband David, who own six Silver Mine Sub shops in Colorado. Two days later, they announced they're giving their hourly employees a raise to \$10.10 an hour. They're not waiting for Congress. Carolyn said, "We

are happy to be a part of what I hope will be a growing voluntary trend in increased wages."

Carolyn and Americans like her all across the country are happy to do their part. Congress now needs to step up and do its part. And next week, I'll travel to a couple of job sites to talk about how Democrats and Republicans can work together to grow the economy and protect nearly 700,000 jobs by passing a highway bill by the end of the summer.

I'm here because of hard-working Americans like Elizabeth and Carolyn. That's something I'll never forget; it's something I'll never stop fighting for.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:10 p.m. on July 11 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on July 12. In the address, the President referred to Elizabeth Cooper, student, University of Northern Colorado; and David Johnson, husband of Denver, CO, small-business owner Carolyn Reed. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 11, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on July 12.

Remarks at the Iftar Dinner

July 14, 2014

Good evening, everyone, and welcome to the White House. Every year, our iftar is a chance to join in fellowship with friends, old and new, and to celebrate the incredible diversity of our great Nation. And I want to recognize members of our diplomatic corps who are here—and it's wonderful to have you back—as well as Members of Congress who are joining us here tonight. We have leaders from my administration. And most importantly, we welcome Muslim Americans from across the country. So I want to thank you all for being here. *Ramadan Kareem*. It's late, you're hungry, I will be brief. [*Laughter*]

Tonight we honor the traditions of one of the world's great faiths. For Muslims, Ramadan is a time to reflect and to remember that

discipline and devotion is the essence of a life of faith. And for all of us, whatever our faiths, Ramadan is a reminder of just how much we share. The values of peace and charity, the importance of family and community—these are universal values. The command to love one another, to uphold justice, and to care for the least among us—these are common threads in our faith traditions.

Tonight we reaffirm a simple truth. Fundamental to the character of our country is our freedom of religion, the right to practice our faith as we choose, to change our faith if we choose, or to practice no faith at all, and to do all this free from fear of persecution. All of us are deserving of an equal opportunity to thrive, no matter who we are, what we look like, what