

where we can work together, like reforming America's criminal justice system so it protects and serves all of us and it is fair. And I'm looking forward to working with them. But until they start wanting to walk and not just talk, we're going to keep offering the American people something better. We're going to offer the American people a vision that believes in opportunity not just for a few, but for everybody.

We've got to be the party that believes nobody should be treated like a second-class person regardless of what you look like or where you come from or who you love. We've got to be the party that doesn't just recognize the threat of climate change, but actually does something about it for the sake of our kids. We're the party that's willing to make tough decisions.

We've got to be the party that practices a better kind of politics, not just in Washington, but in every community in America, and that appeals to the basic decency of the American people; that sees our differences as a source of strength; that give young people a sense of purpose and possibility and asks them to participate in our great democracy; that appeals not to fear, but to hope.

Because this is not just about us in this room. This is not just a sports contest. This is not just about who's up and down at any given point. It's not about notches on a belt. It's not about ideological battles or proving how smart you are. It's not about the back-and-forth of politics. It's about doing things that make people's lives better. It's about doing things that make us confident that America will continue on this upward trajectory that began so many years ago. It's about making this Nation we love more perfect.

We are Democrats. We don't just want people to share in America's success, we want to see everybody contributing to America's success and building a smarter and stronger economy, forging a better and kinder society and writing the next great chapter in this great country's amazing story. That's what we're doing together, still moving forward.

Thank you, Democrats. God bless you. God bless America. Let's get to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill hotel.

Remarks at a Democratic Governors Association Meeting February 20, 2015

The President. Well, I want to welcome the Democratic Governors to this meeting and thank them for all the outstanding work that they are doing. I am a little concerned that David Ige of Hawaii does not know what to do with this weather. [Laughter] I don't even know if he owns a winter coat.

Governor David Y. Ige of Hawaii. I bought one in Colorado. [Laughter]

The President. But this gives me a chance to have an ongoing conversation with Governors. I've said in the past, and it continues to be true: Governors can't afford to just peddle an ideology, they've got to actually make things work on behalf of their constituencies. And this is where a lot of the rubber hits the road.

And the men and women around this table are doing some great work on the issues that

are of uppermost priority to this administration. That is, making sure that we've got a strong brand of middle class economics, that we are giving opportunity for people who are working hard out there to succeed, and make sure that their wages and their retirement and their health care and the education for their kids—that those things are available and providing them pathways to be able to improve their lives.

We have made enormous progress over the last 6 years. As I've said before, last year, we saw the strongest job growth since the 1990s. We've had 59 straight months of uninterrupted private sector job growth, and manufacturing is stronger than it's been since the nineties. So we're seeing steady improvement in the economy. But we've got a lot more work to do. And

every one of the Governors here would acknowledge that there are still people who are not being reached by the progress that's been made and that we've got to really tackle some of these issues.

We've got to make sure that we are providing the kind of job training that people need to fill the jobs of the future. We've got to make sure that education is affordable and that we're using, not only our 4-year colleges and universities, but also our community colleges, which is why I'm going to be talking to them about how we can promote this notion of the first 2 years of college—community college—free for kids who are willing to earn it.

We need to make sure that workers are getting paid a fair wage. And I want to congratulate a number of the people around this room that either have already been able to pass a strong minimum wage in their State or are in the process of doing so and are advocating for it in the future.

I know there are others around this table who are advancing an agenda for paid sick leave. We've got 43 million people in this country, if they get sick, they've got to make a decision about whether they go to work sick, which is probably not very good for their co-workers or their employers or losing their paycheck, something that they probably can't afford. And so whether it's the work that's being

done by Governor Malloy when it comes to being the first in the State to mandate paid leave, Governor Inslee fighting to do the same, Governor Shumlin signing a law to raise Vermont's minimum wage, others, like newly elected Governor Raimondo, working to increase the minimum wage in Rhode Island, we're seeing a lot of great work being done around this table.

And we're also going to be talking about some issues of national importance where we've had real leadership at the State level: clean energy, for example. Obviously, Governor Hickenlooper in Colorado has been doing a lot of work on those issues. We care about climate change, and we don't think it contradicts our need to also continually grow the economy and be energy independent.

So I want to thank everybody here. I'm looking forward to a great conversation. And all these folks are also then going to be putting on their dancing shoes, I think, on Sunday—[laughter]—when we have a chance to get all the Governors together for a little fellowship.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:15 p.m. in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut; and Gov. Jay R. Inslee of Washington.

The President's Weekly Address *February 21, 2015*

Hi, everybody. At a moment when our businesses are creating jobs at the fastest pace since the 1990s, we've still got to do everything we can to help workers and businesses succeed in the new economy, one that's competitive, connected, and changing every day.

One thing we know for certain about businesses in the 21st century is that they'll need to sell more goods and services made in America to the rest of the world. Now, our businesses already sell goods and services in other countries at record levels. Our farmers, our factory workers, and our small businesses are export-

ing more than ever before, and exporters tend to pay their workers higher wages.

More small businesses are using the Internet to grow their business by reaching new customers they couldn't reach before too. As an example, 9 in 10 American small businesses that use eBay as a platform to sell their products are exporters, with customers in more than 30 different countries on average. But there's a lot of room for growth. After all, 95 percent of the world's potential customers live outside our borders.

Many of them live in the Asia-Pacific, the world's fastest growing region. And as we