

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

speak, China is trying to write the rules for trade in the 21st century. That would put our workers and our businesses at a massive disadvantage. We can't let that happen.

We should write those rules. That's why Congress should act on something called trade promotion authority. This is bipartisan legislation that would protect American workers and promote American businesses with strong new trade deals from Asia to Europe that aren't just free, but are fair. It would level the playing field for American workers. It would hold all countries to the same high labor and environmental standards to which we hold ourselves.

Now, I'm the first to admit that past trade deals haven't always lived up to the hype. And that's why we've successfully gone after countries that break the rules at our workers' ex-

pense. But that doesn't mean we should close ourselves off from new opportunities and sit on the sidelines while other countries write our future for us. We should seize those opportunities. We should make sure the future is written by us. And if we do, we won't just keep creating good new jobs for decades to come, we'll make sure that this century is another all-American century.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:10 p.m. on February 20 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on February 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 20, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 21.

Remarks at the National Governors Association Dinner February 22, 2015

The President. It's wonderful to see you all here tonight. Harry Truman once called the Presidency an "enlarged Governorship." [Laughter] Of course, a few of you are hoping that he was right. [Laughter] But Michelle and I are thrilled to host our Nation's Governors and your loved ones here tonight. If it's your first visit, then welcome to the White House. We promise a good time. The only thing we can't conjure up from the past is Governor Schwarzenegger on the dance floor. [Laughter] And it was something.

We are glad that the weather held up after yesterday's storm. And we've been thinking about you Governors from New England and everything that your citizens have been through this winter. I want to make sure we're working with each other to get what you need. It is a good thing that you are not coming on a snowstorm like there was during the dinner of 1987. Now, hours into the dinner, the food was gone. Everybody was standing around. The snow seemed to keep falling harder and harder. And President Reagan looked out the window and turned to the First Lady and said, "Honey, do we have enough cots?" [Laughter]

To which Nancy replied, "We have a few spare bedrooms." [Laughter]

But it looks like the weather has cleared up enough that there will not be a pajama party here in the Blue Room tonight. [Laughter] We are looking forward, though, to spending time with one another in fellowship and good food and good entertainment, and undoubtedly, we'll find that we have more in common than sometimes is assumed. And I—hopefully, that will inform the business that we do together tomorrow.

Our economy keeps improving. And I hope that we can seize on that momentum to keep improving the circumstances for every one of our citizens: keep building a country where every citizen can look around and see cause for optimism about the future, not only for themselves, but also for their children and their grandchildren; feel good about their own prospects and the country's prospects.

Within this room, we're not going to agree on everything, but I am committed to working with each and every one of you over the next 2 years to keep making progress. And we'll talk more about that tomorrow. Tonight I just want to express my appreciation to all of you, all of