

allow Wall Street to go back to the kind of recklessness that led to the crisis in the first place and would allow these kinds of lenders who are not doing the right thing keep at it.

I have to be clear: If Republicans in Congress send me a bill that unravels the reforms we've put in place, if they send me a bill that unravels Wall Street reform, I will veto it. And this is not about politics. It's about basic values of honesty and fair play. It's about the basic bargain that says, here in America, hard work should pay off, responsibility should be rewarded.

One of the people who I met with was Reverend Shannon Webster of Birmingham's First Presbyterian Church. Where's pastor? He's here somewhere. There he is, in the back. Stand up so everybody can see you. So Pastor Webster is one of the pastors leading the effort to protect consumers here in Alabama. And at a public hearing a few years ago, he explained why he decided to work on this issue. "When our people are trapped in debt," he said, "they cannot escape, and we're all hurt." We're all hurt. And that's a simple statement, but it captures so much of what it means to be an American.

We are a country of rugged individuals. We don't expect folks to give us a handout. We expect people to work hard. We expect that hard work to be rewarded. If you're out there and you're working hard and starting a business and doing the right thing and looking after your family and not spending beyond your means, we—folks like that shouldn't be pun-

ished or expected to pay for everybody else. We expect everybody to be responsible.

But we're also our brother's keeper. We're also our sister's keeper. We're also a country that was built on the idea that everybody gets a fair shot and that we put laws in place to make sure that folks aren't taken advantage of. When this country does not live up to its promise of fairness and opportunity for all people, we're all hurt. When we do live up to those promises, all of us are better off.

Back in 2008, I came to Birmingham as a candidate for this office, and I said, "There is nothing we cannot do if the American people decide it's time." Seven years later, I still believe there is nothing we cannot do if we decide it is time. We're all in this thing together, Alabama. We've been through some tough times together, but we're coming back together. If we decide this is our time, then together, we're going to write the next great chapter in this country's history. We're going to do it not just because I came to town, but because of the wonderful people in this town who are already making it happen.

Thank you, Alabama. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:27 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Ollie Parham, economic development chair, Alabama National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Adam Ganucheau, reporter, Birmingham News; and Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc. He also referred to H.R. 2.

Remarks During a Meeting With Members of the President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology *March 27, 2015*

I'm having an opportunity to meet with my science and technology advisory group, which has—works on an ongoing basis on a whole range of technology and science and research issues. And we're joined by a couple of Cabinet members, Secretary Burwell and Secretary Vilsack.

The reason I called you guys in here today before the meeting is, I wanted to talk about an

issue that is of great importance to America's public health and the world's public health, and that is some of the problems that we're having in antibiotics becoming less effective and the need for us to deal with these drug-resistant bacteria.

This is a major public health issue. Some of you may have been reading and hearing

recently about the problem. Drug-resistant bacteria are one of the most serious public health issues that we face today. They cause tens of thousands of deaths, millions of illnesses, and that's just in the United States. And the numbers are sure to climb unless we take some very clear, concrete, and coordinated action.

Last year, I issued an Executive order directing agencies across the Government to create a national action plan for combating antibiotic-resistant bacteria. And today we are releasing that plan. John, give me the plan. [Laughter] Just so we have a little prop. [Laughter]

This is a product of extraordinary work from some of our top scientists and the private sector, research universities, and practitioners, doctors, and health professionals so that we can figure out how do we approach this problem. It is detailed, it is realistic, it covers the next five years, starting right now.

We've set some aggressive goals. First, we're going to slow the emergence of resistant bacteria and prevent the spread of resistant infections. Second, we're going to include surveillance; we want to know when it's happening and why it's happening. Third, we're going to develop better diagnostic tools. Fourth, we're going to accelerate research into new drugs. And fifth, we're going to improve global coordination, because this is going to end up being a global problem.

Last year, I also called for the creation of an Advisory Council for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria to advise me and future Presidents on how to see this mission through, because this is not something that we'll solve just in the next 20 or 22 months. Starting today, we're officially taking nominations for that Council.

The budget that I released earlier this year nearly doubles the investment in fighting antibiotic resistance. This plan spells out exactly where the money would go. So I'm going to be urging Congress to pass a budget that will ultimately help save lives. We can't do this without Congress. But to—in order for us to get it done we're also going to have to educate the public. And this is one of those problems that doesn't always rise to the top of people's day-to-day concerns until somebody in their family is impacted. We take antibiotics for granted for a lot of illnesses that can be deadly or debilitating, and we're extraordinarily fortunate to have been living in a period where our antibiotics work.

If we start seeing those medicines diminish in effectiveness, we're going to have problems. And part of the solution here is not just finding replacements for traditional antibiotics; it's also making sure that we're using antibiotics properly, because part of the problem is that a lot of times we overdiagnose them. They're entering into our food chain through livestock. There are a whole range of reasons why bacteria is becoming more and more resistant to our traditional treatments.

And this is something that we have to take seriously now and invest in now. If we do, then I'm confident we're going to be able to deal with this effectively. If we don't, if we put this off, this is going to be a major public health problem, and it will be a lot harder to solve.

So all right? Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John P. Holdren, Director, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Statement on Senator Harry M. Reid's Decision Not To Seek Reelection March 27, 2015

Harry Reid is a fighter. In his five terms as a U.S. Senator, Harry has fought for good jobs, a safer environment for our kids, and affordable health care for all. He's never

backed down from a tough decision or been afraid to choose what is right over what is easy. Time and time again, Harry stood up to special interests and made sure every one of