

a special place. If you want to understand America, then you'd better read some Walt Whitman. [Laughter] If you want to understand America, you need to know Langston Hughes. Or it—otherwise, you're missing something fundamental about who we are.

And now, for the very special poet here today. I met Elizabeth when we were professors together at the University of Chicago. She and Michelle and I have been friends ever since. So when we were planning my first Inauguration, we decided we better have a poet, and we thought we should have a poet that we know and we love. And she penned this extraordinary poem called "Praise Song for the Day." You all should read it. On a day full of unforgettable moments, hearing Elizabeth read that poem was one of my favorite moments. And she has just written a amazing book that tech-

nically is not a poem, but is full of poetry, and I could not be prouder of her.

So congratulations to all the young poets. I look forward to reading your work or hearing your work. But right now I want to introduce Ms. Elizabeth Alexander.

[At this point, Elizabeth Alexander, Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry at Yale University, made brief remarks followed by readings from her work. The First Lady then made concluding remarks.]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to 2014 National Student Poet honoree Madeleine LeCesne, student, Lusher Charter School in New Orleans, LA. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

The President's Weekly Address

April 18, 2015

Hi, everybody. Wednesday is Earth Day, a day to appreciate and protect this precious planet we call home. And today, there's no greater threat to our planet than climate change.

Two thousand fourteen was the planet's warmest year on record. Fourteen of the 15 hottest years on record have all fallen in the first 15 years of this century. This winter was cold in parts of our country—as some folks in Congress like to point out—but around the world, it was the warmest ever recorded.

And the fact that the climate is changing has very serious implications for the way we live now: stronger storms, deeper droughts, longer wildfire seasons. The world's top climate scientists are warning us that a changing climate already affects the air our kids breathe. Last week, the Surgeon General and I spoke with public experts about how climate change is already affecting patients across the country. The Pentagon says that climate change poses immediate risks to our national security.

And on Earth Day, I'm going to visit the Florida Everglades to talk about the way that

climate change threatens our economy. The Everglades is one of the most special places in our country, but it's also one of the most fragile. Rising sea levels are putting a national treasure and an economic engine for the South Florida tourism industry at risk.

So climate change can no longer be denied or ignored. The world is looking to the United States—to us—to lead. And that's what we're doing. We're using more clean energy than ever before. America is number one in wind power, and every 3 weeks, we bring online as much solar power as we did in all of 2008. We're taking steps to waste less energy, with more fuel-efficient cars that save us money at the pump and more energy-efficient buildings that save us money on our electricity bills.

So thanks in part to these actions, our carbon pollution has fallen by 10 percent since 2007, even as we've grown our economy and seen the longest streak of private-sector job growth on record. We've committed to doubling the pace at which we cut carbon pollution, and China has committed, for the first

time, to limiting their emissions. And because the world's two largest economies came together, there's new hope that, with American leadership, this year, the world will finally reach an agreement to prevent the worst impacts of climate change before it's too late.

This is an issue that's bigger and longer lasting than my Presidency. It's about protecting our God-given natural wonders and the good jobs that rely on them. It's about shielding our cities and our families from disaster and harm. It's about keeping our kids healthy and safe. This is the only planet we've got. And years from now, I want to be able to look our chil-

dren and grandchildren in the eye and tell them that we did everything we could to protect it.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:05 p.m. on April 16 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on April 18. In the address, the President referred to U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 17, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 18.

Statement on the 20th Anniversary of the Oklahoma City Bombing *April 19, 2015*

Twenty years ago today in Oklahoma City, two terrorists attacked their own country, killing 168 people and injuring hundreds more. We will never forget the men and women who lost their lives in the bombing that day. The passing of time will never extinguish the pain we feel. But if those murderers hoped to terrorize the American people that day, to break our spirits or shatter the bonds that unite us, then they completely and utterly failed. We will be forever grateful to the first responders who risked their lives to save others, the law enforcement officers and prosecutors who brought the perpetrators to justice, and the or-

dinary men and women who set an "Oklahoma standard" for resilience that we still hold today.

It is with heavy hearts that Michelle and I send our condolences to the families of those we lost 20 years ago. And it is with great pride that we send our deepest gratitude to all those who have served as an example of America at its best.

NOTE: The statement referred to Terry L. Nichols, who was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK, on April 19, 1995.

Remarks Honoring the 2014 College Football Playoff National Champion Ohio State University Buckeyes *April 20, 2015*

The President. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

The President. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

The President. O—H!

Audience members. I—O! [*Laughter*]

The President. That last one was a little weak there. The—everybody, please have a seat. Welcome to the White House. And give it up for the 2014 college football National Champions, the Ohio State Buckeyes!

You may have noticed, we have a lot of Buckeye fans here today, including some Members of Congress. Representative Joyce Beatty was once a leader in the OSU community, and now she represents the OSU community here in Congress.

I want to thank the Ohio State University president, Michael Drake, who is here; Athletic Director Gene Smith; and of course, Coach Urban Meyer. So this is Ohio State Football's eighth National Championship. It's Coach