

And we can afford to do these things by closing loopholes in our Tax Code that stack the decks for special interests and the super-rich and against responsible companies and the middle class.

This is where we have to go if we're going to succeed in the new economy. I know that there are Republicans in Congress who disagree with my approach, and I look forward to hearing their ideas for how we can pay for what the middle class needs to grow. But what we can't do is simply pretend that things like childcare or college aren't important or pretend there's nothing we can do to help middle class families get ahead.

### **Statement on the Death of Ernie Banks** *January 24, 2015*

Michelle and I send our condolences to the family of Ernie Banks and to every Chicagoan and baseball fan who loved him. Ernie came up through the Negro Leagues, making \$7 a day. He became the first African American to play for the Chicago Cubs and the first number one the team retired. Along the way, he became known as much for his 512 home runs and back-to-back National League MVPs as for his cheer, his optimism, and his love of the game.

As a Hall of Famer, Ernie was an incredible ambassador for baseball and for the city of Chi-

cago. He was beloved by baseball fans everywhere, including Michelle, who, when she was a girl, used to sit with her dad and watch him play on TV. And in 2013, it was my honor to present Ernie with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Somewhere, the sun is shining, the air is fresh, his team's behind him, and Mr. Class—"Mr. Cub"—is ready to play two.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:05 a.m. on January 22 in Room 1440A (Soccer Locker Room) of the Anschutz Sports Pavilion at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS, for broadcast on January 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 23, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 24.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a statement by the President and the First Lady.

### **Statement on the Death of Haruna Yukawa** *January 24, 2015*

The United States strongly condemns the brutal murder of Japanese citizen Haruna Yukawa by the terrorist group ISIL. Our condolences today are with the people of Japan for their terrible loss. We renew our call for the immediate release of Kenji Goto and all other remaining hostages. We stand shoulder to shoulder with our ally Japan and applaud its commitment to peace and development in a region far from its shores. We will work together

to bring the perpetrators of these murders to justice and will continue to take decisive action to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL.

NOTE: The statement referred to freelance journalist Kenji Goto, who traveled to Raqqa, Syria, in October 2014 to plead for Mr. Yukawa's release, and was subsequently taken hostage by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.