

you've got to care about the referendums and ballot initiatives that move this country forward at the State and local level. You've got to get your friends informed and involved. You've got to make that they vote. You've got to follow the issues. You've got to make sure that they know where their leaders stand and if they are not doing the right thing, that they are hearing from you and potentially being voted out by you.

You have to have the tenacity and the focus to make sure this system works. You can't just sit back——

Audience member. Four more years!

The President. Well, that we can't do because Michelle is not going to let that happen. [Laughter] And the Constitution forbids it. But I will be a citizen again, and I am going to be working alongside you to make sure. I'm just going to be an ordinary citizen. I will not have elected office, but it doesn't mean I stop working on these issues. I'm just getting started. We're going to be working side-by-side to make sure the system is responsive.

And you know, we can't just be the party that's against things. We've got to be for things. We can't be the party that blames certain groups; we've got to say to everybody, let's join together, make this democracy work. We are at our best when we assume the best in others, not the worst; when we try to recognize in other people our own struggles and our fears and our hopes. So that that kid who is struggling to pay for college, that's our kid. The immigrant hoping to contribute, that's our grandparent or

great-grandparent. The African American denied the right to vote, that is diminishing your democracy. A worker denied a living wage or equal pay for her equal effort, that hurts all of us. Their stories may not be our own, but we can make their fight our own.

That's what makes me proud to be a Democrat. I think we are right on most policy issues. I think our arguments are the right ones. But what I am really proud of is the fact that this is the party that stands for the idea that everybody deserves an equal shot. It's not just something to say, it's an obligation and a responsibility we have to uphold: to fight for everybody so that nobody gets left out. So that, no matter who you are, no matter where you were born, no matter what you look like, what your last name is, no matter who you love, if you work hard in this country, you can make it; and that we, as a society, are willing to hold hands and lift you up and give you the opportunity to succeed.

That's what we stand for as Democrats. That's what I believe this country stands for. That's what's at stake in this upcoming election and in the elections to come. And that's why I need you to be part of this process and part of this team.

I love you, San Francisco! Let's get to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. at the Warfield theater. In his remarks, he referred to musician Kanye O. West; and Sen. James M. Inhofe.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Los Angeles, California

October 10, 2015

The President. Hello, everybody! Hello, Los Angeles! Everybody, have a seat. Relax a little bit. It's hot out here; we don't want to get you overheated. [Laughter]

Audience member. Welcome home!

The President. It is good to be back in L.A. And let me begin by thanking Robin and Ed and their parents and their really good-looking sons

for hosting us all here today. Give them a big round of applause. Now, it's bad enough having Secret Service in your house and then having a whole bunch of folks come too, trampling on your grass. [Laughter] It's an ordeal. But it is so sweet of them to do it. We really appreciate them.

I have a couple of other people I want to acknowledge. We have one of our finest Mem-

bers of Congress here who traveled up from San Diego—he's going to fly back down with me—Scott Peters. Give Scott—where's Scott? Give him a big round of applause. Scott does outstanding work on making sure that everything from equal pay to making sure that we have the kinds of trade arrangements that are good for this country, to making sure that folks who don't have opportunities are getting the kinds of chances and able to go to college. And he not only has a good heart, but he also knows how to get things done. So we're really, really proud of Scott. Appreciate him.

And then, I've got to say thank you to Jamie Foxx. Now, Jamie has done probably three or four events on our behalf during the course of various campaigns. And everybody always loves Jamie so much that it's a little hard to follow him. *[Laughter]* I can't sing like him. I can't dance like him. I can't tell a joke like him. I can't act like him. So it puts a little bit of pressure. But despite somebody who obviously loves fun, makes people feel good, Jamie is also somebody who cares a lot about this country and our community. And I just want to say how much I appreciate him and his mom and dad who are here, who we are grateful to.

They obviously did something right. And they also have stories, I'm sure, that we could hear from them about Jamie's misbehavior. *[Laughter]* But we don't have the time to hear all of them. *[Laughter]*

This is an interesting time in our country's history. We went through, 7 years ago, the worst financial crisis and economic crisis in our country's history. We were losing about 800,000 jobs per month. The entire financial system was on the verge of collapse. People were losing their homes, their jobs, their retirement. And it wasn't just here in the United States; the problems that had started on Wall Street were rippling all across the globe.

And when I came in, it was based on a commitment I made to you that if you believed that we could change this country, if we were willing to work together and put aside some of the pettiness and the cynicism, if we could channel the basic decency of the American people, not just in our homes and our communities and

our workplaces, but in our government, that we could make life better for ourselves and for future generations.

And 7 years later, after a lot of work and a lot of gray hair, we can look back and see the kind of progress that we made. The cynics were wrong because, in fact, we took an unemployment rate that was at 10 percent and brought it down to 5.1 percent. We've got the most job openings of any time in American history. We were able to stabilize the financial markets, put in place reforms on Wall Street to prevent the kind of reckless behavior that caused the crisis in the first place. We provided 17 million people with health insurance that didn't have it before.

We cut our oil imports in half, doubled clean energy. We produce three times as much wind energy as we did when I came into office, 20 times as much solar energy as when I came into office. We're reducing our carbon. We're finally doing something about climate change—while still growing the economy—to make sure we're passing on a better planet to our kids and our grandkids.

Reading scores are up. High school graduation up. College enrollment up. We reduced our deficit by two-thirds. We saved an auto industry that was on the verge of collapse, and now Detroit and American autos are selling better than ever.

We were in the middle of two wars, and the world's opinion about America was as low as it had been in a very long time. And not only were we able to end those wars and bring our troops back home to their families, but around the globe, we brought about changes that showed how to lead not just militarily, but lead by example and lead through our values and lead through diplomacy. Whether it's dealing with Ebola, and we mobilized the entire international community to save hundreds of thousands of lives in West Africa; or opening to Cuba for the first time in a long time; or making sure that Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon, but doing it in a way that doesn't lead to war.

So the good news is, we've made a lot of progress. The bad news is that with all the work that remains to be done, we've got a

Congress that is broken. And you don't have to take my word for it. If you've been reading the papers over the last couple days, you have a pretty good sense that it's broken. And part of the reason it's broken is because money has come to dominate too much of the political agenda in Washington, that lobbyists have too much influence. Part of it has to do with the fact that the way our system is constructed requires compromise, and we have ideologues who believe that unless they get 100 percent of what they want that they're willing to burn down the house.

But part of it also has to do with the fact that there is a fundamental decision we have to make as a country in terms of our values: What do we believe, what do we care about? I believe that this country works best not when we're only thinking about ourselves, but when we're thinking about others. I believe that our economy grows best when folks at the top are not the only ones doing well, but that everybody is participating in growth and everybody has got a shot and everybody is getting an education, everybody has a chance to work hard to achieve the American Dream.

I believe that we are strengthened as a nation of immigrants and that unless you're one of the First Americans—unless you're a Native American—one of your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, somebody else—they came here and made our country stronger. And when you hear people fearmongering and fanning the flames of intolerance about new immigrants and today's arrivals, just remember they used to say the same thing about the Irish and they used to say the same thing about the Italians. They used to say the same thing about the Chinese workers who were brought over here to help build the railroads. This country would not be what it is unless we had immigration and strivers and dreamers who come here and say, we don't have to settle what was; we can create new beginnings and a new life. That's who we are. It's in our DNA.

I believe that America is best when we treat everybody with fairness and respect, not just on the basis of whether it's making sure that we're not discriminating because of race or

gender, but also that we're not discriminating against somebody because of who they love. And one of the proudest things that we've been able to achieve during the course of my Presidency is, marriage equality is now the law in all 50 States. Not just one or two or three or five, but everywhere.

I believe that we've got to make an investment in our futures, that rather than a pipeline from underfunded schools to prisons, that we should be investing in early childhood education, and we should be investing in after-school programs. And we should be investing in making sure that the best teachers are able to thrive in classrooms that are properly equipped and properly financed; and that we should make sure that everybody can go to college, not just folks who were born in the right ZIP Code, not just people who happen to have parents who had also gone to college. We want everybody educated. And when they are, we all benefit, not just those young people, but everybody.

Because in the 21st century, our economy is going to depend on who's got the best workers, who innovates the most, who has the capacity to continually adapt to technological change.

I believe that our foreign policy works best when we put our shoulder behind diplomacy. I make no apologies as Commander in Chief in being willing to order the application of force when it comes to protecting the American people, but that shouldn't be our first resort, that should be our last resort. And we should make sure that even as we fight against terrorists like ISIL, even as we make sure that we're upholding international order and international law that we're also investing in some young child in Africa who doesn't have a classroom, some farmer in a poor country that needs some electricity. Because that's also good for us, because if they're doing well and those markets are growing, then we're going to ultimately benefit as well and we'll have a more peaceful world.

So, on all these issues, the good news is, is that we have within our ability—we have within our grasp the ability to solve them. Even an issue as big as climate change. And I know it's hot today. *[Laughter]* We can't correlate any

single weather event to climate change, but what we know is, is that the planet is getting hotter. And here in California, what we know is, is that the historic drought that you're going through is not going to get better if temperatures rise and snowpacks are nonexistent and water becomes scarce and wildfires rage all across the West.

I was talking to some folks in San Francisco about climate change, and I said if 99 percent of doctors said to you that you had diabetes, you wouldn't argue with them. [Laughter] You wouldn't say, "This is a hoax." [Laughter] So when 99 percent of scientists say that the planet is getting warmer and if we do not do something about it that we're going to have unimaginable consequences and our children and our grandchildren are going to pay the price and they're not going to be able to reverse it and the time to act is now, then we have to believe them.

And we can't have the chairman of the energy and environment committee, a Republican, in the Senate lift up a snowball in the Senate and explain how this is proof that climate change isn't happening. [Laughter] We can't have that. And it would be funny if it wasn't so serious.

So the reason you're here is because you believe that everybody should have a fair shot. You believe in justice; you believe in equality; you believe in opportunity; you believe in diplomacy. You believe that America's greatness is measured not just by our skyscrapers and our GDP and how many billionaires we have, but also how do we treat the vulnerable and the infirm and our aged, and our poor and our hungry.

But it's not enough just to believe in it. How are we going to make sure that that vision we have is realized and we continue what we started 7 years ago? As many of you know, I will not be on the ballot in this next election.

Audience members. No!

The President. No, this is a really good thing. [Laughter] At least, if you talk to my wife. [Laughter] So I'm here today before you not out of self-interest, but because I'm a fellow citizen and after I leave office 15 months from

now, I'll have as much of a stake as I ever had—as a citizen—in making sure that our best selves and our highest ideals continue to be promoted. And the only way to do that is through the political system.

I mean, I want to be clear about this. There is so much work that has to be done outside the political system. And there are so many people here who are involved in incredible philanthropic efforts, and you're volunteering, and you're participating in nongovernmental organizations, and you're making contributions to help disadvantaged kids or to help save the environment. You're doing all kinds of wonderful stuff. But if we don't get our politics right, if it continues to be broken and mean and divisive, then ultimately, we're not going to meet the moment. We're not going to meet our challenges.

And that requires you citizens to participate. When I ran in 2008, a lot of stuff converged to elect a young Senator with a very unusual name. [Laughter] It was a little bit of lighting in a bottle. And it was exciting, partly because it was so unexpected and so new. But you'll remember what our slogan was back then. It wasn't, "Yes, I can." It was, "Yes, we can." And I very purposely said to everybody at every event all across this country as I was campaigning that changing the country and moving it in a better direction is not just going to depend on what I do, it's going to depend on what we do. Because I can't do it by myself.

And that remains true. We've got to have, all of us, the kind of effort and sense of purpose to make sure that we're electing people who care about climate change, that we're electing people who want to invest in early childhood education and not just build more prisons. We've got to have the same sense of urgency about making sure that not just our kids can afford to go to college, but that kid on the other side of the tracks is able to go to college. And we can make it happen. But it requires us to feel it and work for it.

My favorite statistic in 2012 was that among people who don't vote, I beat Mitt Romney by 25 percent. [Laughter] Now, I did fine. I ended up getting over 50 percent in

two consecutive elections, which hasn't been done since Mr. Eisenhower. But think about it—40 percent—more than 40 percent of people still didn't vote. And if they had, I would have had a Congress that would have cooperated with me, and we would have been growing faster and put more people back to work, and more kids would be in school, and we would have more early childhood centers around the country, and we would have been investing more in research and development. And we would have been making so much more progress. But they didn't. They didn't participate because they had listened to the cynics who told them that nothing changes and nothing is going to work.

That's what we're fighting more than anything else: cynicism and complacency. And so I hope that you come away from this—look, it's cool hanging out with Jamie Foxx. *[Laughter]* It's nice that you recognize some celebrities in the audience and you got to take a picture of yourself with the President in the background. *[Laughter]* I see some of it. *[Laughter]* Sending it to your friends: me and Barack hanging out. *[Laughter]* See, look at Chris right there. *[Laughter]* See, I know that. I see that. I've seen that trick. *[Laughter]* But the question is going to be, what do you do afterwards, the day after, the day after that.

And that's where we need you to stay involved and to stay engaged. And not just writing a check. It's not just a matter of helping to finance the young organizers who are going to go out there and knock door-to-door and get people registered and get them voting. It's also you talking to your friends, you talking to your neighbors, you talking to your coworkers. Young people who are here—at least if you're over the age of three—*[laughter]*—start getting informed about the issues. Because the more we understand that this government is us, the choices we make matter, the more this democracy is going to thrive and the more America is going to thrive.

And I'll just close with this point. Yesterday I went to Oregon to visit with the families of the people who'd been shot at this community college. And it seems like I have to do this ev-

ery 2 months or so. And while I was there, there were actually two more shootings at two other schools—one in Arizona, one in Texas—while I was visiting the families of these victims. And some of these families were trying to process their 18-year-old child who they'd invested their entire lives in—everything they hold dear, everything they could do—and gotten them finally off to college, and that first week, they were taken.

And there were actually some people—it's a fairly conservative community, so there were some folks who were protesting about their Second Amendment rights as they understood them. But overwhelmingly, I think it was just shock and grief. And the families appreciated the fact that I was expressing condolences on behalf of the American people and that they weren't alone in this.

But I came away feeling just as strongly as I did the day it happened when I went to that podium in the White House to say, this is a choice we make. This is not a natural disaster. This is not inevitable. This doesn't happen in other countries. We're not more violent than other developed countries in the world; it's just that when we commit violence, we're more deadly. It's a decision that we make. And it's not just mass shootings, but it's the same decision that leads us to have, in neighborhoods all across this country—in big cities, and sometimes in smaller ones—young people shot every day on the streets. It's easier to buy a gun than buy a book.

And this is an example of something that we can't change unless Congress, elected officials change their attitudes. And their attitudes won't change unless the American public's attitudes change. And so we can act outraged each time this happens, and it just continues and perpetuates itself. Or we can say, enough. We have a different vision of what America is going to look like.

What is true on gun violence is true on every other issue that matters to you. And if you doubt that, in fact, we can bring about change, just think about what we've done in the last 7 years. Yes, or just run around. *[Laughter]* And get some exercise. *[Laughter]*

Think about what we've done the last 7 years. We did not do that simply because you elected me. We did that together. We did that because Members of Congress like Scott Peters are willing to take votes. We did that because we had a majority in the House and the Senate that were willing to pass Obamacare. We did that because we changed people's minds about "don't ask, don't tell" and said that don't exist no more. We did that with you.

Don't stop now. Let's keep going. Let's keep going, because if we do, I promise you, 7 years from now, we're going to look back and feel just as good about the progress we've made. And there will still be more work to do, but we'll be confident that, as Dr. King often said,

"the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." It bends towards justice. It just doesn't bend on its own; we've got to help it bend that way.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. at the residence of Ed and Robin Berman. In his remarks, he referred to Louise A. Talley Dixon and Shahid Abdula, parents of actor Jaime Foxx; and Sen. James M. Inhofe. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Los Angeles October 10, 2015

Thank you. There are some pretty good acoustics in here. I'm going to start singing. *[Laughter]*

Well, let me, first of all, just thank James and Michael. First of all, James is doing outstanding work as the Ambassador to Spain. Part of our incredible diplomatic team all around the world that are solving problems, dealing with conflicts, papering over misunderstandings, and really strengthening the ties that bind us with our allies.

Michael, in addition to having made the Oval Office more presentable, is, in fact, the only person other than my wife and my two daughters who does feel the need to tease me incessantly. *[Laughter]* I know I'm not alone in this. But he does have a certain roguish charm that allows him to get away with it. What is also true is, is that he and James have been just great friends from the start, and not just to me, but to Michelle and to Malia and Sasha. They're really part of the family. And so I just want to say to them how much we appreciate them and the fact that you guys have been in our lives this whole time. So thank you so much.

I've got a lot of other friends here. I look around the room, and there are people who have supported me since the very beginning when most people couldn't pronounce my

name. And somebody observed the fact that I'm not wearing a tie today. Some of you will recall that I used to never wear a tie when I was campaigning right at the beginning. And I was explaining that I think around halfway through the campaign people started realizing that it was conceivable I might end up being President, and so David Axelrod came to me one day, and he said, listen, Barack, you've got to start wearing a tie—*[laughter]*—because you don't look old enough potentially to be President when you look casual. So we've got to dress you up a little bit. So we started wearing a tie. I was wearing a tie all the time. And now that I am so gray there's no doubt that I'm old enough to not only be President, but to have been President, we're reverting back to a more casual style. So this is something you can anticipate for the next 15 months. I think we're going to start dialing down the tie thing. *[Laughter]* Probably, because I always spill things on my ties.

I'm going to be very brief at the front end because I just want this to be a dialogue. We're at a critical time in our history, and that is a cliché, but this time it's really true. We have done really good, important work. And I say "we" purposely because I could not have done it alone. I couldn't have done it without the