

We will have further weaned our economy off of dirty fuels. We will have not just made environmental progress, but we'll also have a much stronger economy, a stronger infrastructure. We'll be creating the jobs of the future. And I think we'll look back and we'll say, that was a smart investment, that was a wise decision for us to make.

That—but the point is, it's right to do it now when gas prices are really low. And they will be low for quite some time to come, so it's not going to be a disruptive factor in terms of the economy. All right?

[At this point, many reporters began speaking at once.]

Okay, guys. Of course, they always say something. I only said two questions, but I hope you guys have a wonderful Super Bowl party. All right? Thank you, guys.

Q. Are you still in a good mood?

The President. I am in a good mood. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:31 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House.

## Statement on the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting February 5, 2016

Thirteen years ago tomorrow, four First Ladies in Africa came together and declared an International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C). They knew that by targeting and holding back girls, this practice harms and holds back entire communities. Since then, countless others—from the Middle East to South Asia to here in the United States—have joined these women to say that FGM/C has no place in any community and undermines our efforts to celebrate and empower women and girls.

Some people say that FGM/C is a rite of passage, something families do to help prepare girls for adulthood or marriage. In my travels last year, I made clear my view that “there’s no reason that young girls should suffer genital mutilation.” Just because this is a tradition in some places does not make it right. This practice is harmful, and therefore wrong, wherever it occurs. That is why we have funded programming to combat FGM/C in places like Guinea, just as we have launched a range of actions here at home to stop the practice. In the

United States, we have criminalized the transport of girls to undergo FGM/C, worked with religious leaders and community-based organizations to raise awareness—especially in some immigrant communities, where the pressures to engage in this practice remain—and provided grant opportunities for domestic NGOs implementing innovative prevention strategies.

Today we stand with communities here and around the globe working to prevent FGM/C. We call on girls and their families, teachers, health workers, community and religious leaders, and government officials to act together to make a difference. It’s time to put an end to this harmful practice and to allow communities everywhere to meet their full potential by enabling women and girls to meet theirs.

NOTE: The statement referred to the late former First Lady Stella Obasanjo of Nigeria; former First Lady Chantal Compaore of Burkina Faso; former First Lady Henriette Conte of Guinea; and former First Lady Touré Lobbo Troaré of Mali.

## The President’s Weekly Address February 6, 2016

Hi, everybody. One of the things that makes America great is our passion for innovation:

that spirit of discovery and entrepreneurship that helps us meet any challenge.

One of the greatest challenges of our time is climate change. Over the last 7 years, we've made historic investments in clean energy that helped private sector companies create tens of thousands of good jobs. And today, clean power from the wind or the sun is actually cheaper in many communities than dirtier, conventional power. It's helped grow our economy and cut our total carbon pollution more than any other country on Earth.

That leadership helped bring nearly 200 nations together in Paris around the most ambitious climate agreement in history. And in Paris, we also launched one of the most important partnerships ever assembled to accelerate this kind of clean energy innovation around the world. Investors and business leaders including Bill Gates, Meg Whitman, and Mark Zuckerberg joined us, pledging their own money to help advance new technologies to the market. That's important because we'll only meet this challenge if the private sector helps lead the way.

As I said in my State of the Union Address, rather than subsidize the past, we should invest in the future. That's why the budget I will send to Congress this Tuesday will double funding for clean energy research and development by 2020. This will include new investments to help the private sector create more jobs faster, lower the cost of clean energy faster, and help clean, renewable power outcompete dirty fuels in every State.

And while Republicans in Congress are still considering their position on climate change, many of them realize that clean energy is an incredible source of good-paying jobs for their constituents. That's why we were able to boost

clean energy research and development in last year's budget agreement. And I hope they support my plan to double that kind of investment.

Because it's making a difference across the country. In Idaho, our Battery Test Center is helping electric cars run longer on a single charge. In Ohio, entrepreneurs are pioneering new ways to harness wind power from the Great Lakes. In Tennessee, researchers are partnering with utilities to boost storage and solar power to create a more resilient electric grid.

The point is, all across the country, folks are putting their differences aside to face this challenge as one. Washington should do the same. That's how we're going to solve this challenge: together. And that's how we're going to give our kids and grandkids the future they deserve: one with a safe, secure, and prosperous planet.

Thanks everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:20 p.m. on February 5 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on February 6. In the address, the President referred to William H. Gates III, founder, technology adviser, and board member, Microsoft Corp.; Meg Whitman, president and chief executive officer, Hewlett Packard Enterprise; and Mark E. Zuckerberg, founder and chief executive officer, Facebook, Inc. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 5, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 6. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks Following a Meeting With President Sergio Mattarella of Italy *February 8, 2016*

*President Obama.* It is my pleasure to welcome President Mattarella and his delegation to the Oval Office. The President has an extraordinarily distinguished career as an academic, as a jurist, as a public servant. He has the honor of being the first Sicilian to become President of Italy. As I mentioned, he's also a

constitutional law professor, so I felt great affinity for him right away.

The bonds between Italy and the United States could not be closer. And this gave us an opportunity not only to reaffirm the friendship between the United States and Italy, but also the extraordinary strategic cooperation on a