

when I didn't have much of a shot. I see some farmers who were wondering what the heck is this kid from Chicago doing down here? He got lost and took a wrong turn somewhere. But they took me in and fed me and had me shuck some corn. [Laughter]

I see people who worked on our campaigns. I see people who we worked on together to get kids health care that didn't have it or early childhood education that needed it or helped send some kid to college. All of you helped to shape me, and allowed me to do what I did. And some of you now have kids of your own that has—not as many of you have gray hair as I would have expected, given how much I have. [Laughter]

And this is just my opportunity to say thank you. I appreciate what you guys have done. And I could not have done what I did without the people here in Illinois and the people here in Springfield. It has been an extraordinary privilege. And I've got a lot of work left before I leave. But just in case I don't see you in the interim, I'll see you on the back end once I'm back in Illinois. But for now, I just want to let you know that it has been an extraordinary privilege, and it was because of all of you.

And I hope that you continue to work just as hard on behalf of folks here in Illinois and folks on the national level who are trying to make sure that everybody gets a fair shot and that we have a world that is safe and secure for our kids.

I said the other day, and I'll repeat in closing, I think it was Justice Brandeis who once said that the most important office in a democracy is the office of citizen. It's more important than the office of President. It's more important than a Congressman. Because citizen, that's the predicate on which our democracy works: your participation, your values, your vision. You guys have done an extraordinary job as citizens. And I'm looking forward to joining you—[laughter]—in standing alongside you for years to come.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. Appreciate you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. at the Hoogland Center for the Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Billy Halstead, central committee chairman, Peoria County Democrats; Sen. Richard J. Durbin, who introduced the President, and his wife Loretta; and former State Sen. James "Pate" Philip of Illinois.

Statement on the Observance of Ash Wednesday February 10, 2016

Today Michelle and I join our fellow Christians in marking Ash Wednesday. Lent is a season of reflection, repentance, and renewal: a time to rededicate ourselves to God and one another. We remember the sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ. We pray for all those

who suffer, including those Christians who are subjected to unspeakable violence and persecution for their faith. And we join millions here at home and around the world in giving thanks for this sacred and solemn season that guides us toward the Easter celebration.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Marrakesh Treaty To Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled February 10, 2016

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit

herewith the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, done at Marrakesh on June 27,