

appeared in 11 films. And off screen, she starred in a real-life Hollywood romance with the love of her life, Ronald Reagan, whom she married in 1952.

As President, I know just how important it is to have a strong life partner, and President Reagan was as lucky as I am. Nancy Reagan redefined the role of First Lady of the United States. In addition to serving as a trusted adviser to her husband and an elegant hostess for our Nation, she was a passionate advocate for issues that touched the lives of so many. She raised awareness about drug and alcohol abuse. She was a staunch supporter of America's veterans. And after her own battle with breast cancer and a mastectomy, she spoke in personal terms about the need for women to get mammograms.

The American people were deeply moved by the love Nancy felt for her husband. And we were inspired by how, in their long goodbye, Nancy became a voice on behalf of millions of families experiencing the depleting, aching reality of Alzheimer's disease. She brought her characteristic intelligence and focus to the twin causes of stem cell research and Alzheimer's research. And when I signed an order to resume Federal stem cell research, I was proud that she was one of the first phone calls I made. Nobody understood better than Nancy Reagan the importance of pursuing treatments that hold the potential and the promise to improve and save lives.

That's why, last year, my administration announced the Precision Medicine Initiative to advance our ability to tailor health care and treat diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's by accounting for individual differences in people's genes, environments, and lifestyles. Last month, we took new actions to foster more collaboration between researchers, doctors, patients, data systems, and beyond to accelerate precision medicine. And more than 40 organizations stepped up with new commitments in this cutting-edge field. We've also launched the BRAIN Initiative to revolutionize our understanding of how the human brain works.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of people like Nancy Reagan, I've never been more optimistic that we are getting closer to the day when every single patient can get the care they need and deserve. I've never been more optimistic that we will one day find a cure for devastating diseases like Alzheimer's. And I can think of no better way to honor our former First Lady's legacy than by working together, as one Nation, toward that goal.

Thanks, everybody.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:50 p.m. on March 10 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on March 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 11, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 12. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks at a Democratic Hope Fund Reception in Dallas, Texas March 12, 2016

*The President.* Hello, Dallas, Texas! Oh, it is good to see all of you! Everybody, please have a seat. Have a seat. It is good to see you on a Saturday morning. There's a good-looking crowd here.

You know, I think Ron Kirk wants to run for something again. [*Laughter*] Matrice, he came up here, he's starting to get kind of—he was getting into it, wasn't he? [*Laughter*] I'm telling you. Listen, I love me some Ron Kirk. I re-

ally do. It's true I love Matrice more. [*Laughter*] But Ron and Matrice could not be better friends. And he was not only a great mayor of this city, but he was a great Ambassador on our behalf all across the country. So please give him a big round of applause.

Your current mayor, Mike Rawlings, is here. He reminds me that he had to clean up all kinds of stuff after Ron was mayor, but—[*laughter*—it's turned out okay. One of our

most wonderful Representatives, and somebody who's been an incredible friend and partner to me over the years during my Presidency, Eddie Bernice Johnson. Give her a big round of applause. She's always had my back. And Hall of Famer and dear friend and really a pretty good dancer, Emmitt Smith is in the house. Looking sharp in his three-piece.

So I came to Texas because I wanted to visit South by Southwest yesterday. And I had a great time. And it's a fun event, it's an interesting event. For those of you who have not been there, there's a lot of tech folks and new ideas. And I was slotted among a panel—there were a bunch of different panels, like “Keep Mars Weird” was one panel. [Laughter] And then there was “Robot Armageddon.” That was another panel. [Laughter] And I decided to keep quiet and not remind people that there actually is a robot rover on Mars. They might have not—anyway. [Laughter] But it was wonderful to be in Austin. It's wonderful to be in Dallas.

And we're here today because we know how deeply this year's elections matter. If anybody tells you elections do not matter, think about 2008. Some of you were along for that ride. You know how much that election mattered. And the one after that. Because when I took office, we were losing 800,000 jobs a month, and unemployment was on its way to 10 percent. And today, our businesses have created jobs for 72 straight months: 6 straight years, 14.3 million new jobs; unemployment below 5 percent. That's change. That's what we fought for. That's why elections matter.

When I took office, American manufacturing was in a decade of decline and the auto industry was flat on its back. And today, the auto industry just had its best year ever. And over the past 6 years, we've created 900,000 new manufacturing jobs. That's why elections matter. That's what change is all about.

When I took office, tens of millions of Americans went without the security of health insurance. And today, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, also known as—

*Audience members.* Obamacare!

*The President.* —Obamacare, 20 million more Americans are covered. And for the first

time ever, more than 90 percent of Americans have health insurance. That is change. And they said it was going to kill jobs, but ever since I signed that bill into law, our businesses have created jobs every single month right here in the United States of America.

When I took office, we were hopelessly addicted to foreign oil. Today, we've cut our imports by more than half. Oil and natural gas production in the United States is at an alltime high, but we've also tripled the power we generate from wind. We generate 30 times more solar power than we did when I came into office, leading the world to combat climate change; creating good, new clean energy jobs. That's change that you can believe in. That's why elections matter.

When I took office, 180,000 troops were serving in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, about 90 percent of those folks are home. And we could not be more grateful for their service and their sacrifice. And we are also glad that they are reunited with their families. And we still have a job to do going after ISIL and those who would do us harm. But we're pursuing a broader vision that uses every element of our national power, including diplomacy, to keep America safe and to keep America strong.

When I took office, the right to marry who you love was limited to two States. Now it's in all 50 States, from coast to coast. That's change you can believe in.

So we've been busy. [Laughter] We've been busy. We've been as busy as a one-eyed dog in a smokehouse. [Laughter] I heard that saying while I was down here. And we're still busy, still hustling, got more work to do. When cynics told us we could not change this country that we love so much, they were wrong. If somebody had told you 7 years ago that we'd have 4.9-percent unemployment and 20 million newly insured and gas at a buck-eighty and deficits cut by three-quarters and marriage equality a reality and bin Laden out of the picture, you wouldn't have bought what they were selling. You'd have said, oh, they were just hollering down a well. [Laughter]

But the truth of the matter is, America is pretty darn great right now. America is making strides right now. America is better off than it was right now. The American people should be proud about what we've achieved together over the last 8 years since the recession hit. We're great right now!

And what the folks who are running for office should be focused on is how we can make it even better. Not insults and schoolyard taunts and manufacturing facts. Not divisiveness along the lines of race or faith. Certainly not violence against other Americans or excluding them. We're a better country than that.

And what's been happening in our politics lately is not an accident. For years, we've been told we should be angry about America and that the economy is a disaster and that we're weak and that compromise is weakness and that you can ignore science and you can ignore facts and say whatever you want about the President and feed suspicion about immigrants and Muslims and poor people and people who aren't like "us" and say that the reason that America is in decline is because of "those" people.

That didn't just happen last week. That narrative has been promoted now for years. It didn't just spring out of nowhere. And of course, none of it has been true. It just ignores reality: the reality that America is the most powerful nation on Earth. The reality that our economy is not only stronger than it was 8 years ago, that it's right now the bright spot in the world. That our diversity is a strength—a great gift—that makes us the envy of every other nation.

So the narrative that's been pushed is false, demonstrably false. And we shouldn't be surprised then when, in the heat of political season, it starts getting carried away. But we've got to say no to that. We can have political debates without turning on one another. We can have political debates without thinking that the people who disagree with us are all motivated by malice. We can support candidates without treating their opponents as unpatriotic or treasonous or somehow deliberately trying to weaken America. That's not just one candidate

who's been saying that; some of the so-called more responsible candidates, including a gentleman from this State—no, no, you read what he says, it's not—it's no more rooted in reality than some of these other statements. We can point out bad policies without describing them as a "Government takeover" or "an assault on freedom."

And by the way, when I say this, this is not about "political correctness." It's about not having to explain to our kids why our politics sounds like a schoolyard fight. We shouldn't be afraid to take them to rallies or let them watch debates. They watch the way we conduct ourselves. They learn from us. And we should be teaching them something about this democracy is a vibrant and precious thing. It's going to be theirs someday, and we should be teaching them how to disagree without being disagreeable and how to engage and how to analyze facts and how to be honest and truthful and admit if you make a mistake and teach them that politics at its best is about a battle of ideas and resolving our differences without encouraging or resorting to violence.

And our leaders, those who aspire to be our leaders should be trying to bring us together and not turning us against one another and speak out against violence and reject efforts to spread fear or turn us against one another. And if they refuse to do that, they don't deserve our support. The best leaders, the leaders who are worthy of our votes, remind us that even in a country as big and diverse and inclusive as ours, what we've got in common is far more important than what divides any of us.

In 2008, we had rallies with 50,000, 80,000, 100,000 people. I'm not bragging, I'm just saying we had some big rallies. Sometimes, you hear folks say, oh, that rally is big. I say, I don't know. [*Laughter*] We had some pretty big rallies. I'm just saying. We had one in Austin, Texas—Ron remembers this, he was there—20,000 people, more than 20,000 people back in Austin.

And I was telling the folks down in Austin, you remember—I saw a guy, he had a nice-looking black cowboy hat. I said, that's a nice hat. And he took it off, and he handed it to me.

He said, you take it. And it fit really good. [Laughter] I looked really good in it, and somebody took a picture of it. But I can't find that hat.

*Audience members.* Aww.

*The President.* So if you're still out there, sir—

[At this point, an audience member offered his cowboy hat to the President.]

*The President.* No, man, that looks good on you, brother, but I—when I come down to shake hands, I may see if it fits. That's why I love Texas, right there.

But my point, going back—I got a little way-laid—Americans were frustrated back then too, upset about the wars in Iraq, anxious about the housing crisis, anxious about the financial crisis that eventually would send the markets plunging and unemployment soaring and people losing their homes and their pensions. And all that happened while we were campaigning. But somebody who went to those rallies, there wasn't a spirit of anger or meanness. People were hopeful. People were looking about, how do we bring folks together?

We tried to offer something different. We tried to offer something better. We believed that we were greater together; that we're not as divided as our politics suggest. And as Democrats, that's what we've got to keep offering now, a politics that reflects the best in us and not the worst in us. We've got to strive to hold ourselves to a higher standard. We've got to do better. We've got to offer a better path for America.

And we know what we believe. And by the way, when you know what you believe, when you know what you're for, you don't have to spend all your time trying to find somebody to be against. We believe the economy grows faster when everybody gets a fair shot, not just a few people. And we're not going to let Republicans roll back our progress by letting big banks or hedge funds make their own rules at the expense of everybody else. We're going to build on our progress and rebuild our infrastructure, raise the minimum wage, and make college more affordable; and meet our obliga-

tions to the poor and the vulnerable; and work on family leave and paid leave and early education, so that everybody gets a shot at life. That's what we believe. That's what we're about. We're for something, not just against something.

*Audience member.* Four more years!

*The President.* No, I can't do that.

We believe that in a country as wealthy as ours, everybody should have access to health care. And we made progress, but we've got more to do. Right here in Texas, your Governor could cover over a million more Texans under Medicaid with the stroke of a pen; 40,000 women could get mammograms that need it each year with the stroke of a pen. He won't do it, not because it's not the right thing to do, but because of politics. And we should not be putting people's health ahead of politics; we should be putting people's health ahead of politics. Shouldn't be putting politics ahead of health care.

As Democrats, we believe in things like science. It has resulted in great improvements in our lives. Science—that's why we have things like penicillin and airplanes. [Laughter] So we appreciate science. We appreciate scientists. And when scientists tell us that climate change is real, we should not be wasting time debating whether climate change is real. We're working together to make sure we create good clean energy jobs that pay better than average.

Right now, here in Texas, wind power is already cheaper than dirty fossil fuels. We can't let Republicans roll back this progress by letting special interests write their own rules and just keep on subsidizing the past instead of investing in the future. That's what we believe in. We're not just against something, we're for something.

Does anybody have any idea what the other side is for right now?

*Audience members.* No!

*Audience member.* What are they for?

*The President.* I don't know. [Laughter]

*Audience member.* They don't either!

*The President.* They don't. That's why they're selling wine. I had to say to—I told the folks down in Austin, I said, has anybody

bought that wine? [Laughter] I want to know what that wine tastes like. [Laughter] I mean, come on, you know that's, like, some \$5 wine. [Laughter] They slap a label on it, they charge you \$50, saying this is the greatest wine ever. [Laughter] Come on! [Laughter] Oh, boy—selling wine. [Laughter] That's not what we're for. Couldn't make it up. [Laughter]

As Democrats, our top national security priority is protecting the American people, going after terrorist networks. For over a year and a half, we've led a coalition of more than 60 countries, hunting down and destroying ISIL: going after their financial networks, going after their leadership, going after their infrastructure. We don't do it with phony bluster. We don't go around talking stuff; we do. More 10,000 airstrikes. Our men and women in uniform, our special forces right there taking care of business.

Progress is not made by over-the-top claims and suggestions that we're going to carpet bomb innocent people. That doesn't strengthen America's leadership around the world. We don't strengthen our position, our standing, we don't make ourselves safer by insulting Muslims around the world, pitting groups of Americans against each other. We're going to keep America safe and strong and respected around the world by doing the right thing and using all the elements of our power. That's what Democrats believe in.

That's what we believe in. That's what we're for. We're not just against something.

As Democrats, by the way, we believe our right to vote should be easier to exercise, not harder. I love folks who say how much they love the Constitution, love the American way, and then do everything they can to make sure that Americans can't vote. Right here in Texas, Republicans have systematically made it harder to register and harder to vote. Four years ago, Texas ranked in the bottom five in voter turnout. Two years ago, it ranked in the bottom three; 16 million eligible voters, 7 million unregistered.

*Audience member.* Wow!

*The President.* And that's not an accident. It's on purpose. It's systematically been struc-

tured to prevent more folks from voting, discourage more folks from voting.

So I'll tell you what Democrats believe. We believe that despite those efforts, we're going to go ahead and make sure we've got big turnout. We're going to prove everything is bigger in Texas and get more folks registered and get them to the polls. Tell them, don't mess with Texas's right to vote!

That's what we believe in: that everybody should participate, everybody should be involved, everybody has got a voice, everybody has got a say. Our country works better that way. Black, White, Asian, Latino, gay, straight, immigrant, native born. You look around this State, it's home to everybody. People from all kinds of places. That's what makes the Lone Star State great. That's what makes America great.

And that's why I'm proud to be a Democrat, because that's what the Democratic Party looks like. We believe at our core that everybody deserves an equal shot. We fight for people who haven't had the same chances we have, fight for kids who may not have the same opportunities that our kids have, no matter where they are, what they look like, where they come from. We believe they should be able to make it. We look out for somebody else's kids, not just our own, because we know when our kids grow up, then they'll be living in a better world if somebody else's kid has a chance too.

That's what we stand for. That's what we stand for as Democrats. That's what we stand for as Americans. That's what's at stake this year. That's why I'm so proud to have all of you on our team. So let's get to work, Dallas! Let's get to work, Texas! Let's move this country forward! Let's remember what we're for, let's not just be against something. Let's lift up hope! Let's remind ourselves of just how much progress we've made and that when people who love their country decide to come together, nothing can stop them.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:14 a.m. at Gilley's Dallas. In his remarks, he referred to

former U.S. Trade Representative Ronald Kirk and his wife Matrice Ellis-Kirk; Emmitt J. Smith, former running back, National Football League's Dallas Cowboys; Sen. R. Edward "Ted" Cruz, in his capacity as a Republican

Presidential candidate; and Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas. 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 Senatorial Campaign Committee Fundraiser in Dallas

March 12, 2016

Obviously, I want to thank Naomi and Larry, who have just been such dear friends, for their incredible hospitality and the support over all these years. Congratulations to mom and dad. [Laughter] I need you to talk to Michelle so she'll put up with me for another third term. [Laughter] But what a wonderful story that is. To Peter and Lisa, thank you so much. They, too, have been there from the very beginning, and we are so grateful for their friendship.

I guess you guys call him Ambassador Kirk around here—[laughter]—and Theresa—[inaudible]. The Kirks, as many of you know, are two of our dearest friends. We're so grateful to them.

I also want to acknowledge Cecile, who has a tough job all the time and does it with grace and good cheer, most of the time. [Laughter] And Tom Lopach, the executive director of the DSCC, thank you so much for the good work you guys are doing.

I just gave a long speech, not as long as Ron Kirk's, but it was long. [Laughter] His introduction turned out to be a little longer because he remembered what it's like being mayor. [Laughter] It feels kind of good. So I'm just going to make some short remarks, building off of what Naomi already said.

This room knows what's at stake. You understand why this is important. I could not be prouder of the work we've done over the last 7½ years. And we've still got a lot more work to do. And we're going to run through the tape. And by the time we are finished, we will be able to say unequivocally that the economy is better than it was when I took office, by a long shot: that more people are working; that millions

have health insurance that didn't have it before; that we are finally starting to tackle climate change in a serious way and we're doing so in a way that also creates jobs and economic development all across the country; that we've made progress in revamping our education system. High school graduation rates are all up. College enrollment is up. And we're putting more money into basic research and science. And we've doubled the production of clean energy. We're making huge strides in terms of things like, in the medical field, around precision medicine.

There's work that we're doing overseas that obviously gets a lot of attention: our fight against ISIL and making sure that we're keeping America safe. But we're also helping to mobilize global health and making sure that girls have the chance to learn in every corner of the globe. Lifting up our values and speaking out on behalf of human rights. We've got a long list of stuff we got done.

What we're also aware of, though, is too many people still have a tough time getting a job, finding decent housing, making sure their children are able to give the kind of education that our kids are getting. We know that the ability of women to determine their own health care needs is under assault all across the country, in State legislature after State legislature, because of a concerted national effort that's been organized. We're aware of the fact that economic inequality has continued, even as we have dramatically improved and stabilized the economy. And it's going to require us doing more of what we've done over the last 7½ years, not rolling back the progress that's been made.