

stop there. We've also raised standards so they are rigorous and relevant.

It starts in our children's youngest years. We set a goal to expand high-quality early education investments in every child. Over the last three years, 38 states have increased those investments.

We're also making sure our students have access to a well-rounded education—that includes exposure to a variety of classes, from computer skills and reading to science and math. We've cut our schools' digital divide in half, and today 20 million more students—including many in low-income communities—can access high-speed internet and the modern learning tools it provides.

Mindful of the needs of businesses in high-growth and high-demand industries, and true to the principle that a quality education cannot be a privilege for the few, we also proposed a plan that offers two years of free community college to anyone willing to work for it. We're also proud that there are 1 million more black and Latino students in college than there were at the start of my Administration.

At the center of all this progress are the teachers we celebrate year-round, including today. Like those who made a difference in my life, our students' teachers are the ones who help them discover, dream, believe in themselves, and realize the potential our nation promises. That's why one of the most important priorities of my Administration has been to ensure every classroom has a great teacher. To do that, we've reviewed every element of our education system—from standards to assessments to how we train, support, and reward our teachers—to bolster our national effort to improve the teaching profession. As part of that progress, we are on track to train

100,000 more outstanding math and science teachers by 2021.

Our teachers deserve credit for each of our accomplishments and the progress we're continuing to make, from better early education and higher standards to better student performance and higher graduation rates.

Like so many patriotic public servants driven by the reward of giving back, our educators didn't choose their field because of the big paychecks, easy work, or short hours. They are passionate about helping our students realize the best versions of themselves so our country can become the best version of itself. Time and again our teachers have met this solemn responsibility, even as we've asked more of them than ever before.

In our changing world, our sons' and daughters' best job qualification isn't what they do—it's what they know. Our commitment to their education means giving them the knowledge they need to thrive and lead. It is a commitment to prepare them not only to get good jobs, but also to be good citizens—not just to know the correct answer, but to be curious and caring about the world around them.

The future belongs to the nation that best educates its people. If we continue building on the progress we've made over the past seven years, I'm confident we will continue to be that nation.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: The statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as part of a White House and Department of Education report titled "Giving Every Child a Shot: Progress Under the Obama Administration's Education Agenda," in which it was included as the Foreword.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Actions of the Government of Syria

May 3, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies

Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary

date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the actions of the Government of Syria declared in Executive Order (E.O.) 13338 of May 11, 2004—as modified in scope and relied upon for additional steps taken in E.O. 13399 of April 25, 2006, E.O. 13460 of February 13, 2008, E.O. 13572 of April 29, 2011, E.O. 13573 of May 18, 2011, E.O. 13582 of August 17, 2011, E.O. 13606 of April 22, 2012, and E.O. 13608 of May 1, 2012—is to continue in effect beyond May 11, 2016.

The regime's brutal war on the Syrian people, who have been calling for freedom and a representative government, not only endangers the Syrian people themselves, but could yield greater instability throughout the region. The Syrian regime's actions and policies, including pursuing chemical and biological weapons, supporting terrorist organizations, and obstructing the Lebanese government's ability to function effectively, are fostering the rise of extremism and sectarianism and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and

economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect the national emergency declared with respect to this threat and to maintain in force the sanctions to address this national emergency.

In addition, the United States condemns the Asad regime's use of brutal violence and human rights abuses and calls on the Asad regime to stop its violent war, uphold the Cessation of Hostilities, enable the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and allow a political transition in Syria that will forge a credible path to a future of greater freedom, democracy, opportunity, and justice.

The United States will consider changes in the composition, policies, and actions of the Government of Syria in determining whether to continue or terminate this national emergency in the future.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The letter referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Following a Meeting on the Federal Government's Water Crisis Response Efforts in Flint, Michigan May 4, 2016

The President. All set? All right. Well, I just had the opportunity to meet with the Federal responders who have been on the ground here in Flint, joined by Governor Rick Snyder and Mayor Karen Weaver. And our discussion underscored how important it was for us to mount a whole-of-government effort across agencies and across levels of government to meet one core mission, and that is make sure that the people of Flint are healthy; that they've got safe water to drink and to use; that we are ensuring that we have a plan for the system to work over the long term; and that we

are certain that our kids here in Flint are going to be able to take advantage of their talents and opportunities well into the future.

So we've got a short-term challenge, which is water, but we've also got a long-term challenge, which is making sure that the city of Flint can prosper going forward.

I want to thank everybody who's participating. Everybody here has been working hard on the ground for months now to respond to this crisis. It's an all-hands-on-deck approach. And just to give you some examples of the work that's being done—FEMA is expanding its ac-