

partners. If JASTA were enacted, courts could potentially consider even minimal allegations accusing U.S. allies or partners of complicity in a particular terrorist attack in the United States to be sufficient to open the door to litigation and wide-ranging discovery against a foreign country—for example, the country where an individual who later committed a terrorist act traveled from or became radicalized. A number of our allies and partners have already contacted us with serious concerns about the bill. By exposing these allies and partners to this sort of litigation in U.S. courts, JASTA threatens to limit their cooperation on key national security issues, including counterterrorism initiatives, at a crucial time when we are trying to build coalitions, not create divisions.

The 9/11 attacks were the worst act of terrorism on U.S. soil, and they were met with an unprecedented U.S. Government response. The United States has taken robust and wide-

ranging actions to provide justice for the victims of the 9/11 attacks and keep Americans safe, from providing financial compensation for victims and their families to conducting worldwide counterterrorism programs to bringing criminal charges against culpable individuals. I have continued and expanded upon these efforts, both to help victims of terrorism gain justice for the loss and suffering of their loved ones and to protect the United States from future attacks. The JASTA, however, does not contribute to these goals, does not enhance the safety of Americans from terrorist attacks, and undermines core U.S. interests.

For these reasons, I must veto the bill.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,  
September 23, 2016.

## The President's Weekly Address *September 24, 2016*

Hi, everybody. This weekend, we'll dedicate the newest American icon on our National Mall: the National Museum of African American History and Culture. It's a beautiful building, five stories high and some 70 feet below the ground, situated just across the street from the Washington Monument.

And this museum tells a story of America that hasn't always taken a front seat in our national narrative. As a people, we've rightfully passed on the tales of the giants who built this country. But too often, willful or not, we've chosen to gloss over or ignore entirely the experience of millions upon millions of others.

But this museum chooses to tell a fuller story. It's doesn't gauze up some bygone era or avoid uncomfortable truths. Rather, it embraces the patriotic recognition that America is a constant work in progress; that each successive generation can look upon our imperfections and decide that it is within our collective power to align this Nation with the high ideals of our founding.

That's what you'll see inside. You'll see it in the shackles of an enslaved child and in the hope of Harriet Tubman's gospel hymnal. You'll see it in the tragedy of Emmett Till's coffin and in the resilience of a lunch counter stool and the triumph of a Tuskegee airplane. You'll see it in the shadow of a prison guard tower and in the defiance of Jesse Owens's cleats and in the American pride of Colin Powell's uniform.

All of that isn't simply the African American story, it's part of the American story. And so it is entirely fitting that we tell this story on our National Mall, the same place we tell the stories of Washington and Jefferson and our independence; the story of Lincoln, who saved our Union, and the GIs who defended it; the story of King, who summoned us all toward the mountaintop.

That's what we'll celebrate not just this weekend, but in the years and generations ahead: a fuller account of our glorious American story. It's a chance to reflect on our past and set a course for the future. Be-

cause here in this country, all of us, no matter what our station in life, have the chance to pick up the pen and write our own chapter for our time.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:30 p.m. on September 23 in the Roosevelt

Room at the White House for broadcast on September 24. In the address, the President referred to former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 23, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 24. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the National Museum of African American History and Culture *September 24, 2016*

James Baldwin once wrote, “For while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard.” For while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard.

Today, as so many generations have before, we gather on our National Mall to tell an essential part of our American story, one that has at times been overlooked. We come not just for today, but for all time.

President and Mrs. Bush; President Clinton; Vice President and Dr. Biden; Chief Justice Roberts; Secretary Skorton; Reverend Butts; distinguished guests: Thank you. Thank you for your leadership in making sure this tale is told. We’re here in part because of you and because of all those Americans—the Civil War vets, the civil rights foot soldiers, the champions of this effort on Capitol Hill—who, for more than a century, kept the dream of this museum alive.

It includes our leaders in Congress, Paul Ryan and Nancy Pelosi. It includes one of my heroes, John Lewis, who, as he has so often, took the torch from those who came before him and brought us past the finish line. It includes the philanthropists and benefactors and advisory members who have so generously given not only their money, but their time. It includes the Americans who offered up all the family keepsakes tucked away in grandma’s attic. And of course, it includes a man without whose vi-

sion and passion and persistence we would not be here today: Mr. Lonnie Bunch.

What we can see of this building—the towering glass, the artistry of the metalwork—is surely a sight to behold. But beyond the majesty of the building, what makes this occasion so special is the larger story it contains. Below us, this building reaches down 70 feet, its roots spreading far wider and deeper than any tree on this Mall. And on its lowest level, after you walk past remnants of a slave ship, after you reflect on the immortal declaration that “all men are created equal,” you can see a block of stone. On top of this stone sits a historical marker, weathered by the ages. And that marker reads: “General Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay spoke from this slave block . . . during the year 1830.”

I want you to think about this. Consider what this artifact tells us about history, about how it’s told, and about what can be cast aside. On a stone where day after day, for years, men and women were torn from their spouse or their child, shackled and bound, and bought and sold, and bid like cattle; on a stone worn down by the tragedy of over a thousand bare feet—for a long time, the only thing we considered important, the singular thing we once chose to commemorate as “history” with a plaque were the unmemorable speeches of two powerful men.

And that block, I think, explains why this museum is so necessary. Because that same object, reframed, put in context, tells us so