

confidence that Government can work and Congress can work is if we have Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House, because Nancy knows how she can get things done and deliver on behalf of the American people.

So, just to bring things full circle—Christine, I could not be more grateful for having helped start this amazing journey that we’ve been on. But if we’re really going to bring it full circle, it means that we’re assuring that the progress that we’ve made continues. And your presence here gives me confidence that we can make that happen.

Remarks at a Reception for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in La Jolla

October 24, 2016

The President. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Thank you. You’re still fired up, still ready to go! Thank you so much. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. I’ve got a few things to say.

First of all, I just want to thank Mark and Hanna for opening up this spectacular home. Please give them a big round of applause. In addition, we’ve got one of the outstanding Members of Congress who has had my back on a bunch of tough stuff, Scott Peters. Where’s Scott? There he is.

So I’m trying to figure out why I didn’t move to—[laughter]—San Diego right now. I’m looking around and I’m thinking somewhere I took a wrong turn—[laughter]—and I didn’t end up here, looking out over the Pacific Ocean. It looks pretty good.

Audience members. Yes!

Audience member. And the golf course.

The President. And the golf course is good too. [Laughter] But it’s not too late. Well, Michelle and I will have to do some negotiations, but—[laughter]. Because it is true our lease is running out. [Laughter] So we’ve been going around, checking to make sure that Bo and Sunny didn’t ruin the carpet and—[laughter]. Because we want our security deposit back when we leave. [Laughter]

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:57 p.m. at the residence of Christine Forester. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Democratic congressional candidate Col. Douglas Applegate, USMC (Ret.); and former Rep. Michele M. Bachmann. 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.

But listen, it’s wonderful to be here. When I came here in 2005, I was a Senator and was campaigning for other Senators. In 2007, I was just beginning my race for the Presidency. And there were so many good friends here in San Diego who were early investors in a guy who—whose name nobody really could pronounce. [Laughter] And fast-forward 8 years later, you think about the incredible journey that we’ve taken.

When I took office, we were on the verge of a Great Depression: the worst financial and economic crisis of my lifetime and most people’s lifetimes here. We were losing 800,000 jobs a month. The financial system was locked up. It was global, not just national. People were losing their homes, their pensions.

Eight years later, we’ve created 15 million new jobs. We have cut the unemployment rate in half; 401(k)s have recovered. We have provided health insurance for 20 million Americans who didn’t have it before. And for those who already had health insurance, now you can’t be barred because of a preexisting condition. Women can’t be charged more than men just for being a woman. Preventive care, mammograms are all covered. Young people can stay on their parent’s plan up until they’re 26 years old.

We've seen an expansion of Pell grants that are helping young people go to college. High school graduation rates the highest they've ever been. College enrollment are the highest that they have been.

We have doubled the production of clean energy. We have actually been able to slow carbon emissions faster than any other nation on Earth, even as we were growing rapidly.

We have been able to make sure Iran doesn't have a nuclear weapon. We've been able to get bin Laden. We've been able to pull our troops back home so that they can be with their families.

By almost every measure, we can say and prove that America is better off than when I got started. But all that progress is at risk because if my successor does not continue on this progress—if my successor is interested in reversing the gains we've made that have driven the uninsured rate to the lowest in history; if my successor reverses the kinds of tax policies and jobs policies that resulted in the largest jump in income and the biggest drop in poverty that's been recorded in a couple of generations last year; if my successor doesn't believe in climate change and isn't worried about the oceans rising; if my successor does not believe in an inclusive America where everybody who works hard and is willing to do their part has a place; if we have a successor who divides us rather than brings us together, then a lot of these gains could slip away.

And that is why I have been working so hard and Michelle has been working so hard to make sure that probably as qualified a person as has ever run for this office is the 45th President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

Now the good news is that at the moment, the polls show that Hillary is enjoying a lead. But I want to make sure that everybody understands: This has been an extraordinarily volatile race and a volatile time, and so we can't take anything for granted. Voting has already begun. There are a lot of States like Ohio and Florida that are way too close to call. We're still 2 weeks away and that means that we have to roll up our sleeves and work as hard as we

can to make sure that people actually turn out to vote.

The majority of the American people believe in a higher minimum wage. The majority of the American people believe that we should do something about climate change. The majority of the American people want to invest in every child so they get a great education. But not everybody votes. And we don't always have working majorities in Congress, and we don't always turn out the kind of votes that result in the policies that we want. But this is one of those moments where we can't afford to sit back and just assume that everything is going to work itself out. The stakes are just too high.

And one of the reasons that I'm so proud of Hillary is that she doesn't take anything for granted. She is somebody who works hard every single day. And it's not always flashy. It's not always fully appreciated. She is somebody who does her homework and knows her policy and grinds it out, and if she's knocked down, she gets back up. And I'm here to tell you, because if you haven't been in that Oval Office and sat in that chair, you don't know what it's like. Those qualities of persistence and a dogged passion for doing the right thing and working hard on behalf of working families all across the country, that's what counts. That's the kind of President you want.

You don't want a President who's spending time tweeting all the time. [*Laughter*] You want a President who is serious about keeping America safe and expanding prosperity for all people. And I've seen Hillary work. She's been in the room. She was there when we made the decision to go after bin Laden, even though we weren't absolutely certain and there were huge risks involved in doing it. She has traveled to over a hundred countries and is well regarded and well respected all around the world.

She knows that the decisions that we make are not abstract and you don't just poll to see how it's going to turn out, because it's going to have an impact on a veteran or a soldier or some young person who's trying to go to college for the first time, or some young person who was brought here as an immigrant at the age of 2 or 3 or 4 and are American by every

standard except for a piece of paper. And she knows that that young person wants to contribute to this country as well, and we've got to make sure that we give him a chance. She understands that.

So she is eminently qualified, really well prepared, has the temperament, has the work ethic, has the policy chops to be an outstanding President. And then there's the other guy. [Laughter]

And I'm not going to belabor why this other guy is not fit to hold this office, because every time he talks—[laughter]—you get more proof that that's not the guy that you want as President of the United States. And I will tell you, the—some of you may be aware of the fact that, like, Michelle does not really love politics. [Laughter] She's—this was not her first choice to—for me. She would have preferred a quieter life, a little bit more out of the limelight. She thought I'd do okay so she said, all right, go ahead. [Laughter] But the passion that she's brought to campaigning this time speaks to the degree that this is—this election is different. The choice is different, and I talked about this at the convention.

We always have differences between Democrats and Republicans, and that's a good thing. I am not somebody who believes that any single party has a monopoly on wisdom. Democrats have their blind spots, and we want a healthy two-party system where serious folks enter into a debate around how do we make sure that we're growing the economy. How do we make sure that there are good jobs? How do we make sure that our young people are prepared for a competitive 21st-century economy? How do we make sure that we keep this country safe and don't overextend ourselves, but are vigilant in dealing with things like terrorism? Those are legitimate things to debate.

And in the two campaigns that I had, the first against John McCain and the second against Mitt Romney, I did not agree with them on a whole bunch of things. And I was pretty confident that the policies that I was offering the American people were more likely to help the average American be safe and be prosperous and certainly were more likely to help future generations. But I always felt as if

John McCain and Mitt Romney were basically honorable people. I always thought that—[ap-*plause*]—I always felt as if push comes to shove, they would do the right thing if they ended up occupying the position of President. I didn't—I wasn't concerned about the Republic if they had won.

I—and so part of the reason Michelle is working the way she is, is because she understands, as I understand, that some more fundamental values are at stake in this election. It has to do with our basic standards of decency. How do we treat people? Do we treat people who are of a different faith as part of the fabric of America, or do we label them as something foreign, not a “real American,” and thereby subject to different standards when it comes to how our laws apply? Do we think of women as equal and full citizens, capable of doing anything, or do we think of them as objects of either scorn or lust or our own satisfactions?

Do we think of the Constitution as something fundamental that all of us have an obligation to try to uphold, or do we think that it's just something that we can pick and choose from at our convenience depending on what's expedient? Do we think that Government is something serious, that we have an obligation to make sure that, to the best of our abilities, we leave the country a little bit better off than how we found it? Or do we think that it's an infomercial or a reality TV show—[laughter]—and we can say anything or do anything without any fidelity to the truth whatsoever, just make stuff up? So that at a certain point, everything is contested; there's no solid ground because you can just say anything and do anything.

And my conclusion, Michelle's conclusion is, is that we can't have that in the Oval Office. Because what is true is, is that our kids watch us. I said when I ran for President in 2008, I was not a perfect man, and I would not be a perfect President, but I took seriously the fact that in this job, our kids are paying attention. The entire world is paying attention. And it's important to try to uphold those basic standards even though you know occasionally you're going to make a mistake; even though

you know that even when you get it right, you're not going to get necessarily a hundred percent of what you want. It is important to understand the responsibility of this office. And I'm—I don't think I'm alone in thinking that Donald Trump doesn't believe that and he doesn't care about it.

America is great. America can survive just about anything. But what America cannot have for any prolonged period of time is to have the person who is the only elected official elected by all the people of the United States, and who speaks on behalf of this Nation in world affairs, as a fundamentally unserious person and somebody whose standards of ethics and tolerance and how they treat other people is corrosive. We can't have that.

And that's why this is so important. That's why we've got to work as hard as we can, not just to make sure that Hillary wins, but to make sure she wins big. To send a clear message about who we are as a people. To send a clear message about what America stands for. That is why everybody here has got to work as hard as they can over these next 2 weeks. We want to win big! We want to win big! We don't just want to eke it out, particularly when the other guy is already starting to gripe about how the game is rigged. [*Laughter*] Come on.

I was saying the other day, I—those of you who have been involved in sports as you were growing up, or actually, even if you're just playing in the playground when you're like 5 or 6 years old—[*laughter*]—you always met those—you know there was always the kid who, like, if they weren't winning, they'd be all like starting to have a tantrum and start whining and complaining about this isn't fair. [*Laughter*] Well, no, you just got beat—[*laughter*]—that's all. And so we don't want there to be any kind of confusion—[*laughter*]—because that, too, is corrosive of our democracy.

Our democracy depends on consent. It's reliant on the good graces of both parties saying, once an election is over then we come together as a country. And once again, it appears that Hillary's opponent is not prepared to play by those same rules. So we've got a lot of work to do.

Now, I just want to touch on the fact that it's not enough just to elect Hillary Clinton as President. If you look at all the legislative gains, with a few exceptions, that I've accomplished during my 8 years as President, 80 percent of them, 85 percent of them occurred in the first 2 years when we had a Democratic Congress. And that doesn't mean that we were not constantly reaching out to Republicans. I still remember the first couple weeks I was in office, where we knew we had to take bold significant steps to get the economy back on track, and driving up to meet with the House Republican caucus to work with them to shape a recovery package, and hearing that before I had even gotten to the Capitol, John Boehner had released a news release saying, "We're not going to vote for it," before they had even sat down with us.

So we reached out. For the most part what we got in return was obstruction, and so we just went ahead and did what we needed to do to rescue the auto industry; to make sure that the economy started growing jobs again instead of shedding them; to make sure that in a country as wealthy as ours, everybody had the opportunity to get basic health care; to make sure that our young people were able to afford a college education.

We made extraordinary gains because we had a majority, despite a stated strategy by Mitch McConnell, the head of the Senate, that their most important goal was simply to defeat me in the next election. This is right after I had been elected. [*Laughter*] I mean, there wasn't even like a—sort of a, I don't know, 6-month pause where we said, "We'll try to govern for a while."

And then, even though we maintained our majority in the Senate, the House went Republican. And from that point forward, what we saw consistently was gridlock, obstruction, "no," threats to shut down the Government in order to defund Planned Parenthood, a willingness to potentially risk the full faith and credit of the United States Government unless they were going to get their way on slashing Medicaid and Medicare and other programs

that people rely on. And that's how it's been ever since.

Over the last 2 years, the Senate has also been in the hands of the majority, and I was actually anticipating that I was going to be using my veto pen a lot. I figured, well, you know, House Republicans, Senate Republicans, they're going to get together, they're going to pass these laws I don't like. I'm going to—I was getting my arm exercise. [Laughter] And, turns out they can't even pass their own stuff. [Laughter] I haven't even been able to use my veto pen. They are not organized enough to get their own priorities passed through Congress. It's Keystone Cops up there. [Laughter]

And the reason this is important is because now that they are beginning to suspect that their nominee may not end up winning and becoming President of the United States, the primary argument that the Republican Party is making—and they are pouring millions of dollars, tens of millions of dollars, maybe more into all the battleground States and States all across the country—the main argument that the Republicans are making is, you need to elect us as, quote, unquote, “a check” on Hillary Clinton. A check.

And I just want to translate that for you. A check means that we will continue in an unprecedented fashion to block the appointment of perhaps the most qualified jurist ever to be nominated to the Supreme Court, Merrick Garland. A check means the possibility of another Government shutdown unless we get some crazy riders that are attached to the budget that have nothing to do with the budget, but have to do with the particular social agenda of the Freedom Caucus, so called. A check means further efforts to block just basic progress on us trying to reduce our carbon emissions and deal with climate change because the official position of the Republican Party is to deny that the planet is getting warmer, despite what 99 percent of scientists all around the world say.

I was in Florida last week, and you had Marco Rubio down there who, in a debate said, “I really don't buy all this stuff,” and there are—there's like 2 feet of water—[laughter]—on a sunny day

in streets in the middle of cities in South Florida, coming up through the ground. [Laughter]

So a check means no to raising the minimum wage. A check means no to equal pay for equal work legislation. A check means that we're not going to invest in early childhood education. A check means that we're not going to get serious about dealing with all the major issues that the American people desperately want to see dealt with.

And so I—it is really important that we push back and defeat this argument that somehow the duly elected President of the United States should simply be blocked from doing anything by the opposition party. They're not making an argument that we want to work with her to get things done. They are saying, we are going to say no to everything. That's what they mean by a check.

And the reason that they want to approach it this way and—is that we've become so cynical about Washington. And so often it's portrayed as this equivalent problem of Democrats and Republicans just not getting along, that our attitude ends up being, “Well, you know what, if we can just split the difference; and our attitude is a plague on all their houses, then nothing will get done, but at least there won't be too much damage done.”

And that's what the Republicans are counting on. They're counting on people thinking that gridlock is the best we can do because that plays to their basic philosophy that Government has no role in helping a kid aspire to something higher. Government has no role in making sure somebody has health care. Government has no role in making sure that we are caring for the environment and for the planet.

So they're okay with gridlock, but you know what? We can do so much better than that. The frustration, the anger that we are seeing in our politics is a direct result not of doing too much, but because we don't seem to just get basic stuff done. Congress just shuts down, stuff that used to be self-apparent, stuff that Democrats and Republicans used to agree on—rebuilding our infrastructure. We could cut down the unemployment rate by another percentage point; grow the economy by another

er percentage point just by rebuilding roads, bridges, airports. Creating a new smart grid for how we distribute power, putting people back to work all across the country, including, by the way, some of the very folks who are so frustrated that it's led them to start voting for Donald Trump.

Well, if you're frustrated about more jobs and a faster growing economy, you've got to understand how this happened. It happened because the Republican Party wanted to put a check on progress. We've got to vote against that. We've got to push back against that. We've got to make a bold, sustained, serious argument that America can do better than just gridlock; that Democrats have a responsibility to work with Republicans, but Republicans have to want to actually get something done to move this country forward.

And if your only argument is to do nothing and that is the best that America can do, you do not deserve to be serving in Washington as a Congressman or as a Senator, because we've got enough of doing nothing. We need folks who are there ready to roll up their sleeves and do something to actually move this country forward. That's what we're fighting for.

So we've got some work to do the last 2 weeks. And I will tell you that it has been obviously the honor and the privilege of my life to serve as your President. But I always remind people of something that Justice Louis Brandeis once said: The most important office in a democracy is the office of citizen. I won't

be President in a few months, but I will remain a citizen just like you. And the way this country works is that each of us carry a certain responsibility, a certain duty to make sure that this grand experiment in democracy sustains itself, that it continues.

This is not a spectator sport. We have to be involved. And over the next 2 weeks, everybody here is going to have a test about the degree to which we are fulfilling that duty. And if you are not doing every single thing that you can, if you don't think this is the highest priority of concern to your family and your children and your grandchildren, then you haven't been paying attention.

And if all of you fulfill that duty, fulfill that responsibility right alongside me, right alongside Michelle, well, Hillary is going to be all right. And we're going to have a Democratic Congress. And we're going to get some stuff done. And we will be able to say to ourselves that this was a moment in which America chose its best and not worst self.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. at the residence of Mark and Hanna Gleiberman. In his remarks, he referred to 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; former Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner; and Sen. Marco A. Rubio.

Remarks During a Conference Call With Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Enrollment Assisters and Volunteers *October 27, 2016*

Thank you so much, Dora. And thank you for the incredible work that you've done in the Rio Grande Valley. I know you've just signed up people tirelessly. And from vetting in-person assistance in the local Head Start programs so that you can reach parents, hosting 24-hour enrollment events with elected officials, going out on field trips to help agricultural workers get themselves and their families covered—you have done it all.

And for those of you who are listening, you should know that Dora's nickname is Dora the Explorer because she goes after everything. And it's the reason that we've seen so much success all across the country, is because of people like Dora and all of you who are on this call.

This is the largest call we've ever hosted from the White House. We've got over 25,000