

remember what I said during the last campaign. People don't remember. People have a revisionist history. They remember the time from Grant Park until the inauguration. They don't remember how hard it was to get to Grant Park. *[Laughter]*

But I told you then, I said real change, big change is hard and it's going to take time. It takes more than a single term. It takes more than a single President. Most of all, what it requires is individual citizens like you who are committed to keeping up the fight, to pushing and struggling and nudging the country so that it slowly inches closer and closer and closer to our highest ideals.

The other thing I told you in 2008 was I'm not a perfect man. If you hadn't talked to Michelle, you—*[laughter]*—in the interest of full disclosure, I told you I'm not perfect, and I won't be a perfect President. But you know what I promised? I said I'd always tell you what I thought, I'd always tell you where I stood,

and I'd wake up every single day fighting as hard as I can for you. I've kept that promise. I've kept that promise.

So, if you're willing to keep pushing with me, if you're willing to keep struggling with me, if you're continuing to reach out for that vision of America that we all share, I promise you change will come. If you are willing to get just as involved and engaged and motivated in 2012 as you were in 2008, I promise you we're going to finish what we started. If you stick with me, if you press with me, we will remind the world once again just why it is that America is the greatest country on Earth.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. Thank you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. at the Biltmore Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

## Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Pinecrest, Florida February 23, 2012

Thank you. Well, good afternoon, everybody. What a spectacular setting and a beautiful evening. I want to thank Chris and Irene and the whole Korge family. You guys have been great friends for a really long time. So please give them a big round of applause.

You have one of the finest Senators in the country, Bill Nelson. I expect you to send him back to Washington. Plus, he's an astronaut. I always say this. *[Laughter]* You know, there are a lot of folks who are Senators; there aren't that many astronauts. So we are so proud of him. And what can I say about Debbie Wasserman Schultz? She is tireless, she is smart, and she is just fearless. And so we could not have a better person to help lead the party.

And to so many of you who have been supportive for so long, all the people that Chris mentioned, but a lot of folks who are here who have worked tirelessly not only on behalf of my campaign, but on behalf of good causes here in Florida and around the country, I am grateful to all of you.

I just noticed, by the way, we've got one other person that needs to be acknowledged because some of you will be spending some time with him in September, and that is the mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina, our host for the Democratic National Convention, Anthony Foxx is in the house.

Now, in settings like this, where I'm among friends, I try to not speak long at the top because I want to spend most of my time in a conversation with you, in answering questions and getting ideas and comments from you. And part of the reason I don't have to speak long at the top is because Chris stole a bunch of my lines. *[Laughter]*

Think about where we were in 2008. And sometimes people forget. The stock market was in a freefall. We were losing 750,000 jobs a month. The bottom had fallen off of the housing market. The entire financial system was locked up. Blue-chip companies couldn't borrow money. And people weren't certain wheth-

er we were going to spiral into a Great Depression.

Three years later, instead of losing 750,000 jobs a month, we created 250,000 last month. Over the last 2 years, we've created 3.7 million jobs in the private sector. And we've actually seen manufacturing job growth for the first time since the 1990s. So the economy is moving in the right direction. We've got some headwinds: Europe is still weak; gas prices are a huge burden on families. But overall, considering where we were and where we could have been, I think most Americans recognize that things have stabilized and we're moving in a better direction.

The challenge we have is we don't want to just get back to where we were, because part of what led me to run in the first place was the recognition that for too many families, the middle class idea, the American Dream was slipping away. Wages were stagnant. A few of us were doing very well, including most of us who are here today. But there were a whole bunch of folks who were having trouble just hanging on to their home, hanging on to the idea of sending their kids to college. And those who wanted to get in the middle class, who wanted to follow the same path that so many of our families, our parents, our grandparents followed—working hard, playing by the rules, dreaming big dreams—those ladders were being taken away from too many people.

So what we've done, even as we focused on the economy, was also to say, what are those ingredients that are going to make sure that America has an economy that's built to last over the long term? And that means resuscitating, reviving American manufacturing, which is why I am so proud of what's happened in the auto industry, because it's an example of what can happen in manufacturing across the board. We had some folks who said let's let that die. Instead, GM is back to number one, seeing the greatest profits that it's seen in its history, hired back tens of thousands of workers. And that's true across the U.S. auto industry.

We said that we've got to start developing American energy. We've doubled clean energy since I've been President. And even as we've

increased production of oil, we've recognized we've got to transition so that our kids and our grandkids are able to enjoy not only economic growth and not be dependent on what's happening in the Middle East or someplace else, but also we're able to protect the planet.

We said that we've got to focus on American skills and education. And we now have 40 States that have initiated reforms because of what we did. And college is more accessible to more young people—millions of young people—because of policies that we put forward.

And at the same time, we said we've got to make sure that America is fair, that everybody gets a fair shot, which means that you don't have to worry about who you love to serve the country that you love, and we ended "don't ask, don't tell." It means that the first bill I signed into law said equal pay for equal work. I want my daughters paid the same as your sons when they get a job.

And it means that we have a tax system that encourages economic growth, that helps to bring down our deficit, that pays for the investments that we need and says folks like me can afford to do a little bit more, that it doesn't make sense to give me tax breaks I don't need if it means making some senior citizen pay more for her Medicare or making a student pay more for their student load or a veteran maybe doesn't get the kind of help that they need coming home and they've got posttraumatic stress disorder.

Internationally, I promised to end one war; it's ended. We're transitioning to end another one. We've restored respect for the United States around the world. And don't take my word for it. If any of you do international business, they will tell you that the attitude about America is fundamentally different now than it was when we first took office. And that makes us safer. And we've been able to do that without lessening the pressure—in fact, increasing the pressure—on those who carried out 9/11 and threatened to do us the most harm, which is why Al Qaida is on the ropes and bin Laden is no more.

So we've got a good story to tell about the last 3 years, but I'm not done yet. I need 5

more years. We need 5 more years to reform an immigration system that doesn't work and make sure that we are a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We need 5 more years because we still have to implement energy policies that work for everybody. And that means continuing to push on clean energy and energy efficiency.

I was over at the University of Miami, where these amazing engineering students are helping businesses right now save millions of dollars just by making their physical plants and equipment more energy efficient.

That's more work to do. We've got to follow through and implement health care reform legislation so that 30 million people have health insurance who wouldn't otherwise have it and to make sure that 2.5 million young people who already have health care because of that health care bill—because they can stay on their parents' health insurance—that they don't lose it.

We're going to have to make sure that we effectively implement Wall Street reform. I want our financial sector to be the most vibrant in the world, but I also want it to not engage in the kind of recklessness that may lead to another big bailout. We can't afford it.

And we're going to have to continue to invest in our infrastructure: the Port of Miami, all across the country, roads, bridges, airports, school buildings, science labs.

There's so much more that we've got to do, and I'm only going to be able to do it because of you. You are going to have to send back Bill

Nelson. You're going to have to elect Mr. Murphy. We're going to need strong partners in Congress, but—well, Debbie is probably—I don't know, what are you, 30 in the polls? [Laughter]

But the most important thing I'm going to need is all of you sustaining that same sense of hope and vision for the future that led you to get involved in that campaign back in 2008. And if you do that, we can't lose. Because the American people, they have deep in their core, deep in their gut, a belief that we are all in this together, that we look out for one another, that our country is at its best when everybody, regardless of what you look like, where you come from, what your last name is, what your sexual orientation is, regardless of who you are, you deserve a fair shot in life.

That's what America is about. That's what we're fighting for. That's what this election is going to be about. And that's why I'm grateful for your help.

Thanks, everybody. And thank you to the staff back there for all the great help. I appreciate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. at the residence of Christopher G. and Irene Korge. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Deborah Wasserman Schultz, chair, Democratic National Committee; and Democratic congressional candidate Patrick E. Murphy. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 23, 2012

*Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear 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 un-

less, 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