

it, but it's precisely because of that extraordinary power that the Court has traditionally exercised significant restraint and deference to our duly elected legislature, our Congress. And so the burden is on those who would overturn a law like this.

Now, as I said, I expect Congress—I expect the Supreme Court actually to recognize that and to abide by well-established precedence out there. I have enormous confidence that in looking at this law, not only is it constitutional, but that the Court is going to exercise its jurisprudence carefully because of the profound power that our Supreme Court has. As a consequence, we're not spending a whole bunch of time planning for contingencies.

What I did emphasize yesterday is there is a human element to this that everybody has to remember. This is not an abstract exercise. I get letters every day from people who are affected by the health care law right now, even though it's not fully implemented. Young people who are 24, 25, who say, you know what, I just got diagnosed with a tumor. First of all, I would not have gone to get a checkup if I hadn't had health insurance. Second of all, I wouldn't have been able to afford to get it treated had I not been on my parent's plan. Thank you and thank Congress for getting this done.

I get letters from folks who have just lost their job; their COBRA is running out. They're in the middle of treatment for colon cancer or breast cancer, and they're worried when their COBRA runs out, if they're still sick, what are they going to be able to do, because they're not going to be able to get health insurance.

And the point, I think, that was made very ably before the Supreme Court, but I think most health care economists who have looked at this have acknowledged, is there are basically two ways to cover people with preexisting conditions or assure that people can always get

coverage even when they have bad illnesses. One way is the single-payer plan: Everybody is under a single system, like Medicare. The other way is to set up a system in which you don't have people who are healthy, but don't bother to get health insurance, and then we all have to pay for them in the emergency room. That doesn't work, and so, as a consequence, we've got to make sure that those folks are taking their responsibility seriously, which is what the individual mandate does.

So I don't anticipate the Court striking this down. I think they take their responsibilities very seriously. But I think what's more important is for all of us, Democrats and Republicans, to recognize that in a country like ours—the wealthiest, most powerful country on Earth—we shouldn't have a system in which millions of people are at risk of bankruptcy because they get sick or end up waiting until they do get sick and then go to the emergency room, which involves all of us paying for it.

Mr. Singleton. Mr. President, you've been very, very generous with your time, and we appreciate very much you being here.

The President. Thank you so much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia, in his capacity as President-elect of Russia; Republican Presidential candidates former Rep. Newton L. Gingrich and former Gov. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; Erskine B. Bowles and Alan K. Simpson, Coauthors, National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform; Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, and Debbie Bosanek, assistant, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.; and Christine Lagarde, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund.

Remarks at the Easter Prayer Breakfast April 4, 2012

The President. Good morning, everybody. Please, have a seat. Have a seat. Well, welcome

to the White House. It is a pleasure to be with all of you this morning.

In less than a week, this house will be overrun by thousands of kids at the Easter Egg Roll. [Laughter] So I wanted to get together with you for a little prayer and reflection, some calm before the storm. [Laughter]

It is wonderful to see so many good friends here today. To all the faith leaders from all across the country—from churches and congregations large and small, from different denominations and different backgrounds—thank you for coming to our third annual Easter Prayer Breakfast. And I'm grateful that you're here.

I'm even more grateful for the work that you do every day of the year: the compassion and the kindness that so many of you express through your various ministries. I know that some of you have joined with our Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. I've seen firsthand some of the outstanding work that you are doing in your respective communities, and it's an incredible expression of your faith. And I know that all of us who have an opportunity to work with you draw inspiration from the work that you do.

Finally, I want to just express appreciation for your prayers. Every time I travel around the country, somebody is going around saying, "We're praying for you." [Laughter] "We've got a prayer circle going. Don't worry, keep the faith. We're praying." [Laughter] Michelle gets the same stuff. And that means a lot to us. It especially means a lot to us when we hear it from folks who, we know, probably didn't vote for me—[laughter]—and yet expressing extraordinary sincerity about their prayers. And it's a reminder not only of what binds us together as a nation, but also what binds us together as children of God.

Now, I have to be careful; I am not going to stand up here and give a sermon. It's always a bad idea to give a sermon in front of professionals. [Laughter] But in a few short days, all of us will experience the wonder of Easter morning. And we will know, in the words of the Apostle Paul, "Christ Jesus . . . and Him crucified."

It's an opportunity for us to reflect on the triumph of the resurrection and to give thanks for the all-important gift of grace. And for me, and I'm sure for some of you, it's also a chance to remember the tremendous sacrifice that led up to that day and all that Christ endured, not just as a Son of God, but as a human being.

For like us, Jesus knew doubt. Like us, Jesus knew fear. In the garden of Gethsemane, with attackers closing in around him, Jesus told His disciples, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death." He fell to his knees, pleading with His Father, saying, "If it is possible, may this cup be taken from me." And yet, in the end, He confronted His fear with words of humble surrender, saying, "If it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may Your will be done."

So it is only because Jesus conquered His own anguish, conquered His fear, that we're able to celebrate the resurrection. It's only because He endured unimaginable pain that wracked His body and bore the sins of the world that He burdened—that burdened His soul that we are able to proclaim, "He is risen!"

So the struggle to fathom that unfathomable sacrifice makes Easter all the more meaningful to all of us. It helps us to provide an eternal perspective to whatever temporal challenges we face. It puts in perspective our small problems relative to the big problems He was dealing with. And it gives us courage, and it gives us hope.

We all have experiences that shake our faith. There are times where we have questions for God's plan relative to us—[laughter]—but that's precisely when we should remember Christ's own doubts and eventually His own triumph. Jesus told us as much in the Book of John, when He said, "In this world you will have trouble." I heard an amen. [Laughter] Let me repeat. [Laughter] "In this world, you will have trouble."

Audience members. Amen!

The President. "But take heart!" [Laughter] "I have overcome the world." So we are here today to celebrate that glorious overcoming, the sacrifice of a risen Savior who died so that we might live. And I hope that our time together

er this morning will strengthen us individually, as believers and as a nation.

And with that, I'd like to invite my good friend, Dr. Cynthia Hale, to deliver our opening prayer. Dr. Hale.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:43 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cynthia L. Hale, founding and senior pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church in Decatur, GA.

Remarks on Signing the Stop Trading On Congressional Knowledge Act of 2012

April 4, 2012

Thank you. Please, have a seat, have a seat. Well, good morning, and welcome to the White House. I want to thank my outstanding Vice President, Joe Biden, for being here. And we are joined by Members of both parties in Congress who helped to get this bill to my desk. So I'm very grateful to them.

I want to recognize Congresswoman Louise Slaughter and wish her a speedy recovery. She broke her leg yesterday, so she can't be here in person. I think she'll be okay. But she first introduced the STOCK Act in 2006, and I know how proud she is to see this bill that she championed finally become law.

Lately, I've been talking a lot about the choices facing this country. We can settle for a country that—an economy where a shrinking number of people do exceedingly well, while a growing number struggle to get by. Or we can build an economy where everybody gets a fair shot, everybody is doing their fair share, and everybody plays by the same set of rules.

Now, that last part, the idea that everybody plays by the same rules, is one of our most cherished American values. It goes hand in hand with our fundamental belief that hard work should pay off and responsibility should be rewarded. It's the notion that the powerful shouldn't get to create one set of rules for themselves and another set of rules for everybody else.

And if we expect that to apply to our biggest corporations and to our most successful citizens, it certainly should apply to our elected officials, especially at a time when there is a deficit of trust between this city and the rest of the country. And that's why, in my State of the Union, I asked Members of the House and the

Senate to send me a bill that bans insider trading by Members of Congress, and I said that I would sign it right away.

Well, today I am happy to say that legislators from both parties have come together to do just that. The STOCK Act makes it clear that if Members of Congress use nonpublic information to gain an unfair advantage in the market, then they are breaking the law. It creates new disclosure requirements and new measures of accountability and transparency for thousands of Federal employees. That is a good and necessary thing. We were sent here to serve the American people and look out for their interests, not to look out for our own interests.

So I'm very proud to sign this bill into law. I should say that our work isn't done. There's obviously more that we can do to close the deficit of trust and limit the corrosive influence of money in politics. We should limit any elected official from owning stocks in industries that they have the power to impact. We should make sure people who bundle campaign contributions for Congress can't lobby Congress, and vice versa. These are ideas that should garner bipartisan support. And they certainly have wide support outside of Washington. And it's my hope that we can build off today's bipartisan effort to get them done.

In the months to come, we're going to have plenty of debates over competing visions for this country that we all love: whether or not we invest in the things that we need to keep our country safe and to grow our economy so that it's sustained and lasting; whether or not we'll ask some of our wealthiest Americans to pay their fair share; how we're going to make sure