

That's why we launched free personalized job services—job search services through the Veterans Gold Card program and an online Veterans Job Bank to help veterans find jobs that meet their talents. And by the way, if there are any veterans here who need those services, you can find that at [whitehouse.gov/vets](http://whitehouse.gov/vets). And then, later this month, the VA will hold a jobs fair in Detroit where 12,000 more opportunities will be available to veterans.

And that's also why I challenged business leaders to hire 100,000 post-9/11 veterans and their spouses by the end of next year. Because don't forget our military families; they're serving alongside our veterans. Michelle and Jill Biden—that's Michelle Obama and Jill Biden—[*laughter*]—just in case you were curious. [*Laughter*] You might not know which Michelle I was talking about. [*Laughter*] They're leading this effort with respect to military families, nationally—it's called Joining Forces—to mobilize all of us to support today's military families and their veterans.

And so far, the good news is participating businesses have hired more than 70,000 veterans. And they've pledged to hire 175,000 more in the coming years. And I want to thank Honeywell not only for being an active partner in this initiative, but right here, Honeywell has hired 900 veterans over the past year, and for employing 65 veterans just here at Golden Val-

ley. So give them a big round of applause. Proud of them. Proud of them.

Standing up for our veterans, this is not a Democratic responsibility, it's not a Republican responsibility, it's an American responsibility. It's an obligation of every citizen who enjoys the freedom that these heroes defended. So we've got to meet our obligations today just like folks here at Honeywell are doing.

And as Commander in Chief, I want all of our servicemembers and veterans to know we are forever grateful for your service and your sacrifice. Just like you fought for us, we'll keep fighting for you—for more jobs, more security, for the opportunity to keep your families strong—because you'll help us keep America on top in the 21st century. We're going to keep fighting, just as you did, to show just why it is that the United State of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:18 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Ryan Sullivan, employee, Honeywell's Golden Valley manufacturing facility, who introduced the President; David M. Cote, chairman and chief executive officer, Honeywell International Inc.; Reno, NV, residents Paul and Valerie Keller; Spc. Nicholas Colgin, USA, 82d Airborne Division; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

## Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Minneapolis, Minnesota June 1, 2012

*The President.* Thank you. Well, it is good to be back in Minnesota. I want to, first of all, say thank you to your outstanding Governor, Mark Dayton. We are proud of him. I had the extraordinary honor of serving with Mark when I first arrived in the Senate, and I know he's really sorry not to still be in the Senate. [*Laughter*] But he did a great job then, and he's doing a great job now, because he's passionate about people and wanting to make sure that they have opportunity. And so we're really grateful to him. And I know you guys are very pleased

that the Vikings are staying here in Minnesota. [*Laughter*] That is a priority.

I don't know—is R.T. still here? Your mayor was here a while—he was. I love him too, so just—[*laughter*]—you let him know that. R.T. is one of my dearest friends. He was actually part of the “draft Obama” movement, a very early supporter. Even before I was a supporter, or Michelle was a supporter, R.T. was a supporter. [*Laughter*] So I love him.

It is wonderful to be back here and to see the great work that Mark's doing and R.T. and

your Senators and your congressional delegation.

As Mark mentioned, we've gone through, these past 3½ 4 years, as tough a period in our country's history as anything in our lifetime, certainly anything since the 1930s. And we're not out of the woods yet. We've still got work to do. There's still far too many people than we want who are out there looking for work, too many people whose homes are still underwater. But as Mark indicated, what we have tried to do for the last 3½ 4 years is just to make dogged progress, to just be persistent, to just stay at it.

And because of that, we were able to ensure that we didn't plunge into a full-blown depression when we first came into office. We were able to make sure that the financial system stabilized. People forget, the month that I took office we had lost 800,000 jobs in that month alone——

[*At this point, a baby cried.*]

*The President.* Yes, it was terrible! [*Laughter*] And we had lost 3 million jobs even before I was inaugurated. And so slowly, by making sure that the Recovery Act allowed teachers and firefighters to stay on the job, by making sure the projects all across the country got started to rebuild our roads and our bridges and projects that needed to get done, by making sure that everybody had a little more money in their pockets with tax cuts for the middle class—98 percent of workers—because of all those steps, the economy started to stabilize.

And then it started to move forward, and businesses started to invest again. And we made a commitment to double our exports. And so suddenly people were thinking about not just how much we consume, but what do we produce, what do we make, which is at the heart of who we are as Americans. How can we continue to innovate? How can we continue to adapt to this rapidly changing global economy?

So we're not there yet, but the good news is, we've made enormous strides over these last 3½ years. But the reason that some of you worked so hard back in 2008, the reason I decided to run for office, wasn't just to deal with

the immediate crisis. It was also to address problems that had been lingering for decades that we hadn't taken care of. For decades, we had had a health care system that was broken and getting more and more expensive, providing less and less quality care to everybody, and was becoming increasingly unaffordable, not just for individual families, but also for businesses and for our Government.

For decades, we hadn't had an energy policy. So not only were we polluting the planet, but we were also finding ourselves sending billions of dollars to other countries because of our dependence on foreign oil.

For decades, we had seen manufacturing leave our shores and losing the competition when it came to trade around the world. For decades, our education system was working really well for a few, but for a lot of our young people, they weren't being equipped with the skills that they needed to compete.

And so what we've been fighting for is not just to right the ship short term, it's also to make sure that over the long term we're building an economy that can last, an economy with a firm foundation.

That's why we tackled health care, so that we can make sure that 30 million people are able to get access to insurance, but also so that we can start bending the cost curve because that's the primary contributor to our deficit.

That's why we took on education and said we're going to give more money in exchange for more reform, making schools accountable, but also making sure we're not just teaching to the test, making sure that we're unleashing the creativity and all the possibilities of good teachers working with inspired students.

That's why we made sure that college was more affordable, and we took tens of billions of dollars that were previously going to banks and made sure that that money was going directly to our students to help them pay for college education.

That's why we invested in clean energy so that we've actually doubled clean energy production in this country. And while oil and gas production are up higher than they've been in 8 years, our dependence on foreign oil is actu-

ally down as low as we've seen in almost a decade—under 50 percent—and we were able to get a doubling of fuel efficiency standards on cars, which means that sometime halfway in the next decade we're going to have cars that get 55 miles to a gallon, and everybody's car will get 55 miles to a gallon. And that's going to save consumers thousands of dollars, but it's also going to make sure that we're taking a whole bunch of carbon out of the atmosphere.

So, on each of these fronts, what we've tried to do is deal with the immediate challenges in front of us, but also think long term.

Now, throughout this process, the other side's had a different vision. My hope, when I came into office, was that we would have Republicans and Democrats coming together because the Nation was facing extraordinary challenges. It turns out that wasn't their approach, to put it mildly. *[Laughter]* Their approach, in part, was that if we can beat Obama, then that should be our primary focus. But there was also a philosophical difference, because their vision is one in which if a few are doing very well at the top, then that's somehow good for everybody. And what I tried to point out to them was that throughout our history, when we've done well, the reason we became an economic superpower was because we created a platform where everybody can succeed, where everybody is getting a fair shot and everybody is doing their fair share and everybody is playing by the same rules.

And so a lot of the tussles that we've had over the last 3½ years have had to do with this difference in vision, and it will be coming to a head in this election. We're going to have as stark a contrast as we've seen in a very long time between the two candidates. I mean, 2008 was a significant election, obviously. But John McCain believed in climate change. *[Laughter]* John believed in campaign finance reform. He believed in immigration reform. I mean, there were some areas where you saw some overlap.

In this election, the Republican Party has moved in a fundamentally different direction. The center of gravity for their party has shifted. And so things that we used to be able to

take for granted, it's been more difficult to take for granted over the last 3½ years.

And let's just take one example: deficit reduction. We have a significant long-term debt that has to be dealt with. Now, our top priority should be putting people to work right now, because if our economy is growing faster, that actually will help reduce the deficit. But there's no doubt that it's unsustainable for us to keep on having health care costs in Medicare and Medicaid go up 6, 8, 10 percent, when the overall inflation rate and growth rate are coming in lower. That's a recipe for long-term disaster.

So what we've said is, look, let's cut out waste, let's streamline programs, let's reorganize Government where we can. Let's end the war in Iraq. Let's wind down the war in Afghanistan. Let's use some of those savings for deficit reduction. Let's tackle Medicare and Medicaid in an intelligent way that preserves this critical social safety net, but also achieves significant savings. And let's ask those of us who've been most fortunate, just to pay a little bit more. And if we put that package together, we can achieve \$4 trillion of savings and we can pay right now to rebuild our roads and our bridges and rehire some teachers and grow the economy right now. We can package that together to make progress.

And we couldn't get them to take yes for an answer, because, ideologically, the notion of billionaires and millionaires paying a little bit more in taxes didn't adhere to the philosophy that they've been fighting for over the last several years.

Now, I believe that if we're successful in this election—when we're successful in this election—that the fever may break, because there's a tradition in the Republican Party of more common sense than that. My hope and my expectation is that after the election, now that it turns out the goal of beating Obama doesn't make much sense because I'm not running again—*[laughter]*—that we can start getting some cooperation again and we're not going to have people raising their hands and saying—or refusing to accept a deal where there's \$10 of cuts for every dollar of tax increases, but

that people will accept a balanced plan for deficit reduction.

My expectation is, is that we can get a highway transportation bill done that puts people back to work right now and rebuilds our infrastructure to succeed over the long term.

My hope and expectation is, is that they'll recognize we need immigration reform because we're a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. And it actually is better for our economy, and by the way, it saves us money if all those folks who are working underground are above ground and paying taxes. It's actually good for our economy.

My expectation is, is that if we can break this fever, that we can invest in clean energy and energy efficiency, because that's not a partisan issue, that's a sensible approach to making sure that our economy is going forward and we have control over it over the long term.

So, so much is at stake in this election. And Minnesota is going to be important, and all of you are going to be critically important to that process. This is going to be a very close race. It's not a close race actually because the other side has a whole bunch of great ideas—they don't. [Laughter] They are just churning out the same ideas that we saw in the decade before I took office: the same ideas, the same you're-on-your-own philosophy, the same tax cuts and deregulation agenda that helped get us into this mess in the first place. But it's going to be close because there are a lot of folks out there who are still having a tough time and the economy is still fragile.

And right now our biggest challenge is the situation not here in the United States, but coming overseas. I mean, Europe is having a significant crisis, in part because they haven't taken as many of the decisive steps as were needed to deal with the challenge. And that's weakening Asia, and that means it's harder for our exporters. All this stuff makes a difference in a global economy.

So it's going to be close. And that means that we're going to have to be working just as hard and we have to be just as passionate, we have to be just as committed, just as excited as we were the last time.

Now, admittedly, I'm grayer now. [Laughter] And so—and I've been President for a while, so you know, you're never as cool as you were that first time. [Laughter] Right? But I tell you, I am still so absolutely convinced in America's future. I travel a lot around the world, and when you ask folks where they look to for leadership, it is still the United States of America.

When they think about what country embodies universal aspirations, they still talk about the United States of America. And there is not a country on Earth that wouldn't trade places with us, because we still have the best workers in the world. We still have the best universities in the world. We still have the best scientists and the best innovation in the world. We've got the best free market and the most dynamic entrepreneurs in the world.

Ironically, the—some of the very things that the Republicans don't like are part of what makes our free market so strong, because the rules we put in place for transparency and accountability and consumer protection means our products are better and our investments are safer. And that's the reason why money rushes here when we've got problems all around the world—is precisely because there are rules in place that everybody is supposed to abide by.

And so we've got all the tools to make the 21st century an American century just like the 20th century was. And the question is, are we going to seize it? And that's where all of you come in. This little guy who has been eating his feet the whole time I've been talking—[laughter]—when I think about why I ran for office, I think about Malia and Sasha.

*Audience member.* Henry.

*The President.* —and Henry. [Laughter] And what's your name?

*Audience member.* Dmitry.

*The President.* Dmitry. I think about them and what kind of country are we leaving for them.

The truth is, probably, our kids in this restaurant are going to be okay. We've been incredibly blessed, most of us. We've been incredibly lucky. But the quality of their lives will

also depend on whether every other child in America has got a shot, whether they're doing well, whether they feel invested in the American Dream.

Now, it doesn't do us any good if our kids are succeeding, but the environment is ruined. They can't protect themselves from that. It's not going to do much good if they're doing very well, but they're having to drive on dilapidated roads and bridges and their airports don't work and broadband lines are better someplace else and innovation has taken place somewhere else. I don't want them ever to have to think about moving to someplace else to have more opportunity. That's what we fight for.

So I used to say, back in 2008, I'm not a perfect man, and I won't be a perfect President. But I promised I would always tell people what I thought, I'd always tell people where I stood, and I would fight as hard as I could to make sure that Henry and Malia and Sasha and Dmitry and our kids have a better future. And I've kept that promise.

And the reason I've been able to keep that promise is because I get a chance in this job to

meet Americans from every walk of life, and I travel all across the country. And what I said in that first speech I made on the national stage I still believe, which is: Black, White, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, gay, straight, disabled or not, we're one people. And the decency and strength and resilience of the American people, it comes shining through every place I go: in VFW halls, in a small business, in teachers who I meet, and firefighters and our incredible men and women in uniform.

This is a country full of good people who want to do the right thing, and they deserve a government who reflects that decency. That's what we've tried to give them, and that's what we're going to keep on giving them for the next 5 years.

So thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:37 p.m. at the Bachelor Farmer restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Raymond T. Rybak, Jr., of Minneapolis, MN; and Sen. John S. McCain III, in his capacity as the 2008 Republican Presidential nominee.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report Regarding the Waiver of Sanctions Against North Korea *June 1, 2012*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Pursuant to section 1405 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252) (the “Act”), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing the enclosed report prepared by my Administration. This report includes information related to the issuance of any waivers under the authority of section 1405 of the Act of certain sanctions against North Korea and to certain other matters relating to North Korea.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Daniel K. Inouye, chairman, and W. Thad Cochran, vice chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Carl M. Levin, chairman, and John S. McCain III, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; John F. Kerry, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Harold Rogers, chairman, and Norman D. Dicks, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, chairman, and Adam Smith, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services; and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chair, and Howard L. Berman, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs.