

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:28 p.m. at the Julia Morgan Ballroom. In his remarks, he referred to Willie H. Mays, Jr., assistant to the president and former center fielder, Major League Baseball's San Francisco Giants; Clin-

ton Reilly, founder and owner, Clinton Reilly Holdings, and his wife Janet; Sen. John S. McCain III, in his capacity as the 2008 Republican Presidential nominee; Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; and former President William J. Clinton. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Ray D. Bradbury June 6, 2012

For many Americans, the news of Ray Bradbury's death immediately brought to mind images from his work, imprinted in our minds, often from a young age. His gift for storytelling reshaped our culture and expanded our world. But Ray also understood that our imaginations

could be used as a tool for better understanding, a vehicle for change, and an expression of our most cherished values. There is no doubt that Ray will continue to inspire many more generations with his writing, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Beverly Hills, California June 6, 2012

The President. Thank you.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you so much, everybody. Everybody, have a seat. You're going to make me blush. *[Laughter]*

A couple people I want to acknowledge this evening. First of all, your outstanding mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, is here. The wonderful attorney general of the great State of California, Kamala Harris, is in the house. Speaker John Perez is here.

I want to thank my wonderful friend who accepts a little bit of teasing about Michelle beating her in pushups—*[laughter]*—but I think she claims Michelle didn't go all the way down. *[Laughter]* That's what I heard. I just want to set the record straight—Michelle outdoes me in pushups as well. *[Laughter]* So she shouldn't feel bad. She's an extraordinary talent and she's just a dear, dear friend, Ellen DeGeneres. Give Ellen a big round of applause. I want to thank, in addition, an outstanding talent, Daren Criss. Give Daren—*[applause]*. President of the United States. It was an ex-

The event cochairs, Dana Perlman and Barry Karas. Yay!

And most of all, I want to thank Vito, not simply for that introduction, but for a lifetime of service and a lifetime of sacrifice. As I think about Vito's story and his career, the lives he's saved, the limbs he may have saved, I'm reminded that day that we signed the law repealing "don't ask, don't tell." And what was most moving was not just those in active service who were there in that auditorium to witness that history being made. It wasn't just the extraordinary warmth that people expressed towards Admiral Mullen, who I think showed extraordinary courage in helping to guide the Pentagon to the right place on that issue. But it was also seeing all these veterans, some of them 60, 65, serving in Vietnam, some in the Korean war, who were there, and thinking about all those years in which the wholeness of their life had not been fully acknowledged, that they had to live divided from themselves. And to see the tears streaming down the faces of some of them, that's as good as it gets when you're extraordinary privilege to be there.

And what Vito's story and the stories of those who were in that auditorium remind us of is—obviously, I could not be prouder of the work that we've done on behalf of the LGBT community. From the work we did to facilitate hospital visitations to ending the HIV/AIDS ban, to the work we did to pass the Matthew Shepard law, to repealing “don't ask, don't tell,” to all the administrative work that's been done by agencies to make sure that folks are fully recognized is something that I'm personally very proud of.

But what Vito's story also reminds us of is that the fight for equality and justice on behalf of the LGBT community is just part of a broader fight on behalf of all Americans. It's part of our history of trying to make this Union a little bit more perfect. The experiment that started well over 200 years ago, the genius of the Founders was a recognition that through this Declaration of Independence and our Constitution, that it would give the opportunity for people—even if those documents weren't perfect, even if the political structures were imperfect—it would give us as citizens the chance to fight to make it more perfect.

And so in successive waves, the history, the scope of this country has always been to further broaden the meaning of citizenship to include more and more people, to give better and better expression to our highest aspirations, to make the country more fair and more just and more equal. That's what wars were fought about. That's what the civil rights movement was about. That's what the women's movement was all about. That's what the workers' movement was all about, this constant progression to include more and more people in the possibility of the American Dream. And so this is just one more step in that journey that we've taken as a nation.

And it doesn't always go in a straight line; it goes in zigs and zags. And there are times where the body politic takes a wrong turn, and there are times where there are folks who are left out. But what makes America exceptional is that, eventually, we get it right. What Dr. King called the arc of the moral universe, it bends towards justice. That's what makes

America different. That's what makes America special.

And so when we came together back in 2008—and there are a lot of folks here who were fierce supporters even when nobody could pronounce my name—[laughter]—you guys, you didn't get involved because you thought it was a sure thing. The reason you got involved in this movement for change was those values of fairness and inclusion and opportunity that all of us have benefited from felt like they were being betrayed, that Washington wasn't living up to those values and those ideals.

And so we made a commitment to each other. That campaign wasn't just about me; it was about us. It was about the American people recognizing that we had taken a wrong turn, taking surpluses to deficits because of tax cuts for folks who didn't need them and weren't even asking for them, fighting two wars on a credit card. We had seen an economy that was very good for a few but more and more people were struggling just to get by, just to keep up. And it all came crashing down in the worst recession in our lifetimes.

And so even before the election, we understood that we had a lot more work to do, that we had to recapture that sense of possibility and fairness; the notion that anybody in America can make it if they try; that if you're willing to work hard and take responsibility, that you can buy a home, start a business, raise a family, not have to worry about going bankrupt because you get sick; send your kids to college so that they can do even better than you can, and that that opportunity is available for everybody, regardless of what you look like or where you come from, what your last name is, who you love.

That's what we were fighting for in 2008. And we didn't know at the time that we were going to have this extraordinary recession and that 4 million jobs would be lost before I was even sworn in and 800,000 jobs would be lost the month I took office.

And so it's been a challenge and it's been a struggle for a lot of Americans all across the country. The good news is, it turns out that Americans are tougher than tough times.

Americans are tougher than tough times. And so small businesses kept their doors open and kept folks on payroll, even if it meant that the owner of the small business wasn't pulling any salary in for a year or two, living off savings or credit cards. It turns out that the 55-year-old who lost their job in an assembly plant, they were willing to go get trained and find a new job in a high-tech industry or working as a nurse or some new door opened.

There were those who said we should let Detroit go bankrupt, but because we made a bet on American workers and American businesses, GM is back on top and the American auto industry has recovered. Businesses got back to the basics, so that we've created more than 4 million jobs, more jobs in manufacturing than any time since the 1990s, 800,000 jobs just this year alone.

And so we've made progress. And I keep a little checklist in my desk at the Oval Office. I've got a to-do list. *[Laughter]* And every so often, I take a look at it and I say, you know what, we're doing okay.

The Lilly Ledbetter law that makes sure that we get equal pay for equal work—check. Doubling fuel economy standards on cars to make sure that not only consumers are saving money and we're reducing imports of foreign oil, but we're also helping to save the environment—check.

Making sure that young people can go to college, rechanneling tens of billions of dollars that were being used—that were going to banks as middlemen for the student loan program, saying let's just pay the students directly, let's give that money directly to them, so that millions of kids out there are getting Pell grants and having lower debt totals, opening up college opportunity so that we'll once again be number one in the world in the percentage of college graduates—check.

Making sure that 30 million Americans have access to affordable health care and 2.5 million young people can stay on their parent's plan and seniors get discounts on their prescription drugs and preventive care is there for everybody and women can control their own health care choices—check.

Ending the war in Iraq—check. Beginning the transition in Afghanistan, going after Al Qaida, defeating Usama bin Laden—check. We've got some stuff done these last 3½ years, with relatively modest cooperation from the other side. *[Laughter]* I think that's a fair characterization. *[Laughter]*

But here's the thing. A lot of people are still hurting out there. Unemployment is still too high. A lot of folks still have homes underwater. People who were lucky enough to have work, a lot of them have trouble making ends meet. A lot of young people, they're still burdened by debt. Parents are still worried about how to pay for college and their own retirement. We've made enormous progress, but we didn't come together in 2008 just to get back to where we were in 2007, right? We made a commitment consistent with that commitment I talked about at the beginning of my remarks, that commitment to widen opportunity for everybody, everybody getting a fair shot, everybody doing their fair share, everybody playing by the same set of rules.

And on that task we've still got a lot more work to do. We've got to make sure that America has an energy policy that works. We're producing a lot more oil and a lot more natural gas, but we've got to invest in solar and wind and biodiesel, to continue to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, to do something about climate change, while at the same time creating hundreds of thousands of jobs. That's work that remains to be done.

We've still got to reform a broken immigration system, because we're a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. And it makes no sense for us to exclude extraordinary talent who could be starting businesses and contributing to the growth and competitiveness of the United States of America. We've still got to do that.

We've still got a lot more work to do to attract jobs back to the United States. The good news is, is that companies are starting to recognize there are no workers that are more productive than U.S. workers. Some of them are starting to relocate. We've got to make sure we've got a Tax Code that rewards companies

that are creating jobs here instead of shipping jobs overseas. That's a priority.

We've got to make sure that our education system is working for every child, whether in East L.A. or South Side of Chicago or Anacostia or some rural town in Iowa. We've got to make sure that every kid is getting the education they need in math and in science and technology, that they can afford to go to college without breaking the bank.

We still have more work to do internationally. We have restored our respect around the world in our alliances, but we can do more.

And so, in some ways, this election is going to be more important than the last one. We've got to consolidate the great work that we've done, but we've also got to win a basic contest of ideas between us and the other side.

Mr. Romney is a patriotic American who has experienced great success in his life and seems to have a beautiful family, but his idea—similar to the idea of Republicans in Congress, about how we grow the economy, how we make sure everybody gets a fair shot—is very different. His basic idea is, you know what, if those of us at the top are doing really well then everybody else presumably will benefit too. *[Laughter]* And so it's not enough just to continue the Bush tax cuts; we've going to tack on another \$5 trillion worth of tax cuts.

And we say we're concerned about the deficit, but if we're willing to blow a hole through the deficit like that, the only way to make it up is then to cut out all those things that we have done together as a nation to make us stronger: investments in research and development and science, investments in infrastructure, investments in helping kids go to college, investments in taking care of our veterans, making sure that if you're disabled or you're a poor child or you're a senior citizen that you've got a basic baseline where you can live with dignity and respect and get the help that you need.

I don't think that's how you grow an economy. That's not the history of what's made us great. The history of what's made us great is us doing certain things together. We love the free market and we love risk-taking and we love folks getting rich. But we also believe in public

schools, because that helps make us an economic superpower. We believe in investing in the Hoover Dam and the Golden Gate Bridge, because that gave us a platform for success. We believe in investing in research that created the Internet, so that all those companies could be created. We believe in doing some things together, because it works for all of us.

So there's a fundamentally different vision about what's going on. And a lot of this debate is going to be about the economy, but also obviously there's a different vision about how we create an inclusive America. I refused to let anybody reimpose a law that would force Vito back into the shadows when he is serving on our behalf and our safety and our security. That's not something I will tolerate. So we're going to have a lot of work to do.

The good news is, I'm convinced that the American people share those values I talked about at the beginning of my remarks, those values that built this country. People aren't paying attention to the day-to-day stuff that goes on in Washington. It all just seems cynical and negative and dysfunctional. *[Laughter]* Right? They're not going—listening to the back-and-forth, the tit-for-tat. And they're anxious. They're anxious. Even if they're doing pretty well themselves, they're anxious about the future of their country. They're anxious about the prospects for their kids, whether their kids will have a better life than they did. And that anxiety can be tapped into.

You're going to see hundreds of millions of dollars of negative ads because the other side is not offering anything new. The same old stuff, the same stuff—the same set of ideas that helped get us into this mess in the first place, they're just regurgitating them all over again. But what they're going to do is they're going to say, well, you know what, you're still not satisfied, and it's Obama's fault. That's the essence of their campaign. It's very easy to put on a bumper sticker. *[Laughter]* "It's Obama's Fault." *[Laughter]*

And so we're going to have to work through that. And because there are a lot of folks who are still hurting out there this will be a very close election. Not because people buy what

they're selling, but just because a lot of folks have given up feeling that anything is going to make their lives better. But the thing we discovered in 2008 is when people come together, when Americans come together—neighbors, friends, coworkers, spouses, lovers—when folks come together and say it's time for a change, change happens.

I go home to Hawaii a lot, and—every Christmas—and we usually stay right near the Kaneohe Marine Base, which is a beautiful piece of real estate that the Marine Corps got somehow. [Laughter] And they let me work out at the gym there. And it's actually pretty depressing working out with marines because they're all 2-percent body fat—[laughter]—and they're benching 500 pounds and stuff. But they tolerate me because I'm their Commander in Chief, so—[laughter].

So, last time we were back, I was working out, and during the course of a week, probably four marines came up and said, thank you for ending “don't ask, don't tell.” It's meant so much to me, it's meant so much to my spouse, meant so much to my partner. The day before I was leaving, one marine came up—young man—and he says—he was very fit—[laughter]—first of all, he said to me, “You're not doing that exercise right”—[laughter]—“sir.” He said “sir.” [Laughter]

But then he said: “I can't tell you how much it means to me that you repealed ‘don't ask, don't tell.’ It really made me proud of our country.” And I said: “I appreciate that. Was this something that you'd been wrestling with for a while?” And I imagined him dealing with his partners, similar to the stories that Vito told. He said: “No, sir, I'm not gay. It was important to me because I've had friends in my

unit that were, and I know how much that tore them up, and I didn't think it was right. And I think we're a better Marine Corps because they can be who they are and serve our country. And these are just outstanding marines that I've been proud to call a friend.”

And I tell that story so that if anybody out there asks you what this campaign is about, you tell them it's still about hope and change. You tell them I still believe in the American people, in the innate goodness of this country. I still believe in that vision where we all come together, that out of many, we are one. And there are more things we have in common than things that drive us apart.

And if you remember that and you're willing to work just as hard or harder this time as you did the last time, we'll finish what we started. We will win this election. And we will remind the world just why it is that the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. at the Beverly Wilshire hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa of Los Angeles, CA; Rep. John A. Perez, speaker, California State Assembly; comedian and talk show host Ellen DeGeneres; actors Darren Criss and Barry Karas; Dana Perlman, cochairman, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual Leadership Council of the Democratic National Committee; Col. Vito Imbasciani, State surgeon, California Army National Guard; Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN (Ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Beverly Hills June 6, 2012

The President. Thank you so much, everybody. First of all, I just want to thank Ryan and David for opening up this incredible home and arranging perfect weather. We are grateful to you for your hospitality.

I want to also acknowledge John Emerson, who is here, and has been just a great friend, and worked on my behalf for a very, very long time and helped to pull this thing together.

I will not be singing tonight.

Audience members. Aww.