

**Remarks at the National Governors Association Dinner**

*February 24, 2013*

Welcome, everybody. It is wonderful for us to have you here at the White House. Michelle and I are so happy to host you, and I want to start by acknowledging your outstanding chair, Jack Markell, and your vice chair, Mary Fallin. But more importantly, I want to recognize the First Lady of Delaware and the First Gentleman of Oklahoma because we know that the spouses put up with an awful lot. That's who this dinner's really for. *[Laughter]* And we hope that you all get a chance to celebrate a little bit tonight.

Last year, I got to see firsthand some of the great work that our governors are helping to accomplish all across the country. Now, it's true that I had the chance to see some accomplishments in some States more than others: Ohio—*[laughter]*, Iowa—*[laughter]*, Colorado—*[laughter]*, Virginia. But I hope to see more of you this year, the rest of you.

But all of you have helped to steer your states through some of the nation's toughest times. You've had to make hard choices. You've had to make wise investments and mobilize the constituencies to do what needs to be done to grow your State. And that work is paying off. Companies are bringing jobs back to our shores. New homes are popping up in our neighborhoods. Small businesses are revitalizing our communities.

And many of you also had to deal with some incredible natural disasters. And, obviously, it's always painful to see the loss and the hardship that our families have suffered, but it's always wonderful to see the way in which governors in particular are able to lead and mobilize their states and their communities, rallying around neighbors, friends and communities.

So we know we've got more work to do—more jobs to create and more children to educate, and more roads to repair. The task before us is to find smart, common-sense solutions to each of these challenges that we can move forward on. And I'm looking for good partners. Because while nobody in this room sees eye to eye on everything, we know that when we work together—Democrats and Republicans, North, South, East and West—we can accomplish so much more than we can on our own. Whether it's helping our citizens rebuild from a horrific hurricane or a turbulent economic storm, we're stronger when we work together as a team.

One of my predecessors, a former Governor himself, put it well: "America is nothing if it consists merely of each us"—"if it consists merely of each of us," Woodrow Wilson said. "It's something only if it consists of all of us."

And nearly 100 years later, I expect that those words continue to be true, and they should be guiding all of our efforts.

So I want to wish everybody a toast. For the good that we've accomplished together, for the good that's yet to be done. I look forward to a year of progress working with all of you. I am grateful for your service. To those who are recently elected, congratulations. We look forward to seeing you again over the next several years. Cheers.

*[At this point, a toast was offered.]*

And with that, I would like to present your chairman—Jack Markell.

*[Gov. Jack A. Markell of Delaware made brief remarks.]*

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 7:20 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Carla Markell, wife of Gov. Markell; and Wade Christensen, husband of Gov. Mary Fallin of Oklahoma. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Gov. Markell.

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