
SYMPOSIUM

KEYNOTE REMARKS

GINA MCCARTHY

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INTRODUCTION BY RICHARD REVESZ

I'm delighted to introduce our keynote speaker Gina McCarthy. A career public servant, Gina has spent three decades working to protect public health and the environment. At the state level, she served in senior positions in Massachusetts under five governors, Democratic and Republican, including Mitt Romney. Also at the state level, she was the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Currently, she is a professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, where she directs the Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment.

While many people know Gina from her state days and now from her Harvard days, I think most people in this country know her from her federal days—and in particular, from her work in the Obama administration. She was at EPA for the whole Obama administration, first as the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation, which is, in my world, the office that produces all of the important rules. And then, she served as Administrator, which is the position that supervises the production of all these important rules. Her accomplishments are extraordinary.

When you think of the big rules in the history of this country that produced the greatest benefits, these are rules that came out of Gina's tenure at EPA. For example, the Mercury and Air Toxic Standards on their own avoid about 10,000 premature deaths a year. When you add up the benefits from all her rules, Gina has literally saved hundreds of thousands of lives a year. There are few people

in the world who have saved this many lives! And it was during Gina's tenure at EPA that our country took a serious and structured approach to controlling greenhouse gas emissions through the Clean Power Plan (CPP), car standards, and standards for methane leaks from oil and gas installations.

Very sadly, some, but by no means all, of Gina's legacy is being imperiled by this administration. But a lot of it is chugging along just fine, continuing to save large numbers of lives. And some of the imperiled legacy will reassert itself once the efforts of the current administration are struck down by the court, as has happened to virtually all of its efforts to stay, delay, and suspend regulations. These efforts have virtually all been struck down by the courts, given the poor quality of the analysis. I'm confident that the Trump administration's future efforts to repeal and roll back rules will suffer the same fate.

One of the reasons why the Trump administration is having these difficulties is because the analysis behind EPA rules during Gina's tenure was so extraordinary. Not that it was always easy to digest it. If you are tired one of these nights, you could read all 1,600 pages supporting the CPP. And, that doesn't even begin to include all of the relevant documents: the Regulatory Impact Analysis, the legal justification, and the technical support documents. In these thousands of pages, there is excellent analysis.

This administration is going to have great difficulties dismantling Gina's legacy because it's very hard to undo things that cause so much good to the American people. And for that, we owe Gina an enormous debt of gratitude. I'm delighted that she's here to give our keynote address at the end of this conference.

REMARKS OF GINA MCCARTHY

Well, first of all, let me congratulate the Institute for Policy Integrity on your tenth birthday. That is about the year that my three children got really obnoxious. So, I'm hoping you do the same because there is a lot to get obnoxious about. And it's great to see so many of my colleagues from the administration continuing to be out there and be vocal and be positive about the work that we can continue to do together, even when it gets a little bit more difficult every day. It is amazing what a difference a couple of years makes. I really hope amidst all of the discussion that people got a chance to thank Ricky for all of his work and his team's work. It is

extraordinary. It's work that's looking at how we can support good rulemaking no matter who does it, in a way that is going to be legally sound—and when it's not, challenge it.

But also, there's an expertise here that is more and more interesting and important, which is looking just below that analysis at how you do the economic work of the agency and look at benefit-cost analysis. The challenge is getting people excited about it. You tell them the CPP is in danger, people are ready to comment and litigate. You tell them they're no longer going to consider co-benefits and, as you can imagine, people just don't get excited. But we need them to because cost-benefit analysis matters to the rulemaking process and even its outcome in the courts and the court of public opinion. It's one of the rules of the road that every major rule has to follow, like it or not. So, thank you for being an incredibly strong voice in challenging rollbacks of sound rules and the rulemaking process. I know you must be proud that you have so many students at this event and so many students who have joined the staff at EPA and done terrific work. Thank you for all your success. There is no doubt we are going to need all of your expertise and commitment in the courts as we move forward because we cannot rely on Congress as a backstop for good policy these days.

As we've seen, this administration is taking some actions that seem unprecedented. They are trying to use very old laws to allow the federal government to intervene in regional energy markets and force consumers to pay more money for dirty fuel that's harmful to their health.¹ They're taking climate science off the White House webpages.² They're actually pulling out or intending to pull out of the Paris Climate Agreement.³ They're telling the agencies that they can't consider climate impacts when they're looking at

¹ See Miranda Green, *DOE Looking 'Very Closely' at Cold War-Era Law to Boost Coal, Energy Production*, HILL (May 9, 2018), <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/386891-doe-looking-very-closely-at-using-cold-war-era-law-to-boost-coal>.

² See "Climate Change" References Removed from White House Website, COLUM. L. SCH. SABIN CTR. FOR CLIMATE CHANGE L. (Jan. 20, 2017), <http://columbiaclimatelaw.com/silencing-science-tracker/references-to-climate-change-removed-from-white-house-website/>.

³ See Andrew Restuccia, *Trump Administration Delivers Notice U.S. Intends to Withdraw from Paris Climate Deal*, POLITICO (Oct. 4, 2017, 5:23 PM), <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/08/04/trump-notice-withdraw-from-paris-climate-deal-241331>.

infrastructure projects.⁴ There are so many rollbacks and attacks on science happening, that I could go on and on. But we will find our way through this. We have to get through this. There is no choice.

As Ricky noted in the introduction, we did issue a large number of rules. One of the reasons why we did so many was that during the prior eight years, the George W. Bush administration took very few steps to conduct mandatory regulatory reviews and updates.⁵ And when they did, the courts determined that some of the updates were simply not legal.⁶ Mandatory duty lawsuits had been filed and the courts had set what to us looked like impossible deadlines for rulemaking, but we did our jobs. In fact, we didn't just do our jobs, we did the job that you would want government to do. We conducted the kind of outreach that good governance demands. Thankfully, the team at EPA was the best that anyone could hope for. Some of them are sitting here in this room. Unfortunately, neither Janet McCabe or Joe Goffman are here, and they have been my comrades in arms during my time at EPA and I will forever be grateful for their dedication, creativity, boundless energy, and endless wonky knowledge of the Clean Air Act. Together, we took extraordinary measures to engage not just the regulated community, but the public we serve, because we firmly believe that a democracy that is of, by, and for the people, demands it.

We would never have sat inside EPA and made fundamental decisions about what actions would best serve the mission of that agency, meet the letter and spirit of the law, and take account of the best current science available, without consulting EPA experts so we could identify the most reasonable, cost-effective path forward.

⁴ See Rashaan Ayesh & Amy Harder, *Trump Repealing Another Obama-Era Climate Change Policy*, AXIOS (June 21, 2019), <https://www.axios.com/trump-repealing-another-obama-era-climate-policy-8f7feca8-2043-4088-b2b3-47572bc1661c.html>.

⁵ See JOHN LARSEN & MICHAEL OBEITER, WORLD RES. INST., AN UPDATED RESPONSE TO EEI'S TIMELINE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS (2012), http://pdf.wri.org/factsheets/factsheet_updated_response_to_eei_timeline_of_environmental_regulations.pdf (listing a number of pollutants for which an endangerment finding was made, but the Bush administration's EPA failed to impose new compliance obligations within the obligated timeframe).

⁶ See, e.g., *New Jersey v. EPA*, 517 F.3d 574 (D.C. Cir. 2008) (striking down the Bush administration's proposed emission of hazardous air pollutants from power generators rule); Katherine Seelye & Jennifer Lee, *Court Blocks U.S. Effort to Relax Pollution Rule*, N.Y. TIMES (Dec. 25, 2003), <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/25/us/court-blocks-us-effort-to-relax-pollution-rule.html>.

And we wouldn't have simply relied on our own judgement without also broadly reaching out to see what others thought, including the regulated entities. As a result, I remain incredibly proud of the work that we did, and I'm proud of Ricky and his team at the Institute for Policy Integrity for the defense of those rules, because they deserve to be defended. I believe one of the biggest challenges we face today is not whether or we did a good job on our rules, but the fact that every single rule is either actively being proposed for rollback or getting in the queue.⁷ And the list doesn't just include ones finalized during the Obama administration, they include rules that have been on the books for many years that represent fundamental health protections—not just rules that limit carbon pollution, but traditional and conventional pollutants.⁸ And as far as I can see, the federal government is attacking these final rules without providing any justification beyond their interest in taking a different approach and achieving a different outcome. Final rules are time-consuming and challenging to do—for good reason. They often set standards or requirements that result in large investment by the regulated community to protect public health and natural resources from even larger threats. Final rules do not stand the test of time without a large investment of time and energy, yet this administration seems willing to throw rollback proposals up in the air without any legal or scientific justification just to see where they might land. That is not how government should act. That is not providing certainty to the business community or the public.

And they are finding new ways to try to rollback final rules, including rethinking the way the agency has been evaluating science for decades,⁹ dismantling science advisory boards,¹⁰ and even the way cost-benefit analysis is conducted across federal agencies.¹¹ To

⁷ See Nadja Popovich et. al., *83 Environmental Rules Being Rolled Back Under Trump*, N.Y. TIMES (Sept. 12, 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html>.

⁸ See *id.*

⁹ See Coral Davenport & Mark Landler, *Trump Administration Hardens Its Attack on Climate Science*, N.Y. TIMES (May 27, 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/27/us/politics/trump-climate-science.html>.

¹⁰ See Rene Marsh, *Trump Administration Dismisses Climate Change Advisory Panel*, CNN (Aug. 21, 2017, 11:02 PM), <https://www.cnn.com/2017/08/21/politics/white-house-climate-change-committee-dismantled/index.html>.

¹¹ See Beth Gardiner, *Fuzzy Math: The Strategy Behind Trump's EPA Deregulation Push*, YALE ENV'T 360 (June 6, 2019), <https://e360.yale.edu/features/fuzzy-math-the-strategy-behind-the-trump-epa-deregulation-push>.

be honest, when Reagan in 1981 decided that every new significant rule needed to be evaluated through cost-benefit analysis, I thought it was akin to the road to hell paved with bad intentions, and I still think that at times. However, these are rules of the road and you have to follow them if you want to do your job and finalize rules. If you do not follow those rules, you are going to have people challenge your rules in the courts, and they will win.

My most important message before we open it up for questions is: don't let yourself get discouraged. As challenging as it is to see so much progress made at EPA now under fire, we have to pull ourselves up every morning and stay positive. You have to keep in mind that yes, even though the CPP is in limbo, clean energy has taken off, and that is not going to change because clean energy is now winning in the market. So, stand tall, stand together, turn the chaos of today into a reason why every single one of us has to stop being complacent, speak up, and get active. You might even need to march to stand up for our democracy. That's what we did in the sixties. That's what we did in the seventies. And that is what we have seen happen across the country since the Women's March on January 21, 2017. All you young people: buy bellbottoms, wear a madras shirt, and stand up for what you believe in. As we said decades ago when I was in high school and college, information is power. And that remains true today. Let's work together and provide real facts in support of the law and science. Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

We have a situation where EPA is exercising its discretion to cause massive net harms. Many of us are actually trying to communicate this, and I'm not sure that we're doing as effective a job as could be done because it's such an incredibly outrageous thing. Can you guide us on how to tell the story about the totally extraordinary action of the government?

I think one of the big challenges we face stems from work I'm trying to do at Harvard. We do a terrible job telling our story. We've done a terrible job engaging the public on climate change. People understand it's happening. In places like Puerto Rico, there is no real question about whether climate change is real. And that's not the only place in the United States where extreme weather events are happening. Think about the hurricanes that hit North Carolina and

South Carolina.¹² But we just don't communicate effectively about the overwhelming consensus in the science community on climate change, or take time to explain the significant health consequences we are facing even today in ways that people can relate to. And, I don't think we are supporting grassroots organizations that are so needed to drive actions.

In my world, every big step forward started at the local level. I tell people, climate change is carbon pollution. I very seldom call it climate change, although that's what most people call it, because I want people to see climate change as pollution and not some far away problem that no one can fix. We've done a pretty damn good job on pollution. We can tackle carbon pollution as well, and it's important that we do. Pollution holds people down, especially those most vulnerable: kids, the elderly, and minority and low-income communities. Climate change is an equity issue. That is why we worked hard in the design of the CPP to make sure every community would benefit by having access to the clean energy resources.

So many young people like those at Harvard, are outraged about what's going on at the federal level because they care so deeply about equity and justice. And I try to remind them that while we worked hard during the Obama years, the federal government is not the only actor or level of government where change can happen. While the federal government is, at best, not acting on climate change right now, cities and states are stepping up. We should make sure that we are giving people the information they need to demand and support climate action.

We will never get this administration to care that the proposed Affordable Clean Energy rule is moving in a direction that is contrary to the mission of the agency. They are proposing *not* to protect public health and the environment, and to proceed in a way that's more costly than the CPP it would replace. It's good to comment on the proposed rule, but I don't think we're ever going to change the direction of any final rule other than through court action. So now is the time to go out and support grassroots organizations to drive change in towns, cities, states, and regions,

¹² See Laura Parker, *Hurricane Florence's Rains May Be 50% Worse Thanks to Climate Change*, NAT'L GEOGRAPHIC (Sept. 13, 2018), <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2018/09/hurricane-florence-rain-climate-change-science/>.

and to drive change in the voting booths where change is most necessary.

We live in a very polarized society, and the political parties are far apart these days. They believe in different science and different facts and different economics. You are rare among high ranking public officials that you actually worked with administrations of both parties. Do you have advice on how one can engage Republicans in these kinds of issues?

I think the first thing I will admit to you is that the Republicans I worked for were in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and they looked a little bit like moderate Democrats. But honestly, it's the same way I worked with industry. You have to understand what people care about. You have got to connect at a gut level. I don't know of any Republican that would have failed to pick up the phone and call me if they had a health problem in their own community. And I would remind them of that. There are consequences to defunding EPA, and one is that we're not going to be there when you need us. And so you've got to try to remind them what you do for a living, all the resources that EPA and the rest of the federal government provides to their communities, and why that support remains important to their constituents. EPA is all too often criticized by both sides of the aisle—that's just the way it seems to work, and it's not very productive. But I think climate has upped the ante significantly because it's become so partisan and so polarizing. I am not sure that anything other than changes in Congress or the administration will make a difference in the partisanship surrounding climate change.

There are very necessary environmental policies that would lead to coal miners being worse off as a result. On the other hand, it would be wrong to say that because of their situation, we can't take actions that are going to have enormous net benefits to the country. Is there a way to take coal miners' plight seriously? Is there an intelligent way to deal with this so they actually get help, and don't get used as political pawns in this broader existential debate between the parties?

The only way to deal with it is to recognize that—and I think it's one of the challenges we face today—a lot of people feel like

they have no power and that the world is changing at a pace that they cannot keep up with. But the way in which leaders representing coal states have promised to essentially reverse the market to make coal profitable again in the United States is disingenuous at best. They know as well as anyone that the coal industry has been declining since the eighties, and people in the coal industry have been losing their jobs for many decades. There are significant challenges in rural communities across the country that must be addressed, and it's time to launch a concerted effort to boost the economies in these areas, not by looking backwards at the failing coal industry, but by looking to the future. But I have been hard-pressed to find examples of when we have taken on this kind of challenge.

I spent time at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health doing a fellowship last year and Governor Beshear, the former Governor of Kentucky, was also a fellow. And under his leadership, Kentucky became one of the first states to really jump on board with the Affordable Care Act.¹³ And we spent some time talking because one of the things that he did was to recognize that he could use the Affordable Care Act to direct resources to coal country where he could build healthcare facilities and put people to work.

You need to have that kind of state and local leadership, and resources to provide workable solutions to shifts in the marketplace.

What advice do you give to senior EPA career people who've been there for a long time across several administrations? Should they try to stick it out through this administration?

I had one consistent piece of advice for them before I left and that was to stay at the agency and do your jobs as long as you possibly can. I did not know that it would be as difficult as it is. Frankly, under Secretary Scott Pruitt, the disrespect for the career staff has been palpable and it must have been really hard to see a

¹³ See Caroline Humer, *Kentucky Governor Announces Medicaid Expansion Under Obamacare*, REUTERS (May 9, 2013, 7:05 PM), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-healthcare-kentucky/kentucky-governor-announces-medicaid-expansion-under-obamacare-idUSBRE94817R20130509>; *Status of Medicaid Expansion Decisions: Interactive Map*, KAISER FAMILY FOUND., <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/status-of-state-medicaid-expansion-decisions-interactive-map/> (last updated Nov. 15, 2019) (showing that Kentucky was among the first states to expand Medicaid).

handful of inexperienced folks come in and rewrite rules without the input of the career staff—or even worse, ignoring their input. I think that the new administrator, Andrew Wheeler, is much more respectful of the staff. Does that mean the decisions are going to come out differently? Not likely, because everybody who takes that job knows what the wishes of this President are and what he expects to see happen.

I think that the challenge that you're seeing now for the career staff is threats of reorganization in the regions and headquarters for the sole purpose of shifting career staff into jobs they won't want or areas of the country that require relocation that families find objectionable. That way they can start whittling down the staff. I think many of the staff who are of retirement age have already left. But there are many, many more that are staying, and I think they're going to try to continue to do their jobs effectively.

After the 2020 election, we can hope for a transition to an administration that would want to put in place good, rational policies. Obviously, the transition will be complicated because of what this administration did, but also it presumably won't be the case that the goal should be to put back in place every single policy in identical form. How should we think about how to put a rational climate change policy together for an administration whose interests may not be identical to the Obama administration's, because time has passed, things on the ground have changed, and all these things have happened?

There are a lot of efforts already underway on what to do next and how to prepare for a potential shift that allows a more rational approach to the agency's work. People are doing exactly as you suggest, which is thinking ahead rather than look back. We all know already that CPP could be much tougher next time around because we've gone way past anticipated levels of carbon reductions, so you can't rely on the old analysis. I think a new administration is going to have a big job to do.

But I do worry about the future if we fail to stop the level of partisanship that is fueling the attacks on EPA. I never thought I'd worry about the rule of law at EPA and across the federal family, but I do worry about it. We cannot have every administration focused on undoing the work of the one before and making final rules meaningless.

We have never in our history had final rules questioned the way that they are today. On the other hand, I don't think we are going to see many of the final rules successfully rolled back by the end of 2020.

Lastly, it's important also to keep in mind that if you don't maintain the rule of law, nothing else matters and that requires enforcement to ensure compliance with standards and rules. The agency has whittled its staff size down and through policy changes has reduced even further its enforcement presence. These are fundamental problems that must be fixed. So, it's not just the rules themselves we need to worry about, it's the staffing and the policies being implemented across the regions that will need to be rebuilt, and that work will not get done in a day. And the reputation that the United States has enjoyed across the globe has suffered, and that will not recover for a very long time.

Do you see some scenario where there can be agreement between the Democrats and some Republicans, where they'd say, look, this sort of sector by sector regulation is cumbersome and is difficult and so on, and some sort of legislative solution could work better? Is that just totally fanciful thinking, or should we be thinking about that in connection with the next presidential transition?

I do think we should be thinking about that. I am much less pessimistic now than I was even just a few months ago. I think underneath all of the drama, there are many Republicans who actually understand that climate change is happening. They understand the risks. I think the business community underneath it all is speaking more loudly than they have before about the international and the domestic risks that they are facing and the need for action.

When I spend time at Harvard and enjoy the company of young people, I see real opportunities for change. But they need to be reminded that as hard as today may be, life can change very dramatically, very quickly—just as it did in the last election. I could never have predicted that Governor Scott would ever sign a gun control law, but none of us ever want to have another Parkland School tragedy to prompt needed change.

Why are partnerships with industry so difficult to forge? How can we do better in this regard?

The one thing that's interesting right now is that even the private sector is not being listened to by this administration. The administration is pushing proposals that even the regulated community doesn't support. EEI, the Edison Electric Institute, wrote to the EPA Acting Administrator to tell him not to rethink the Mercury and Air Toxic Standards, but EPA is rethinking it even though it was finalized in 2011 and is just about fully implemented. You can forge relationships with industries even though they may not want to have the work conducted in a public forum. We had tremendous amounts of very deep discussions with the utility industry. They had information and understanding about the energy sector that we did not have. If we had treated them as public enemy number one, we never would have had the ability to get the work done in a way that would be reasonable and appropriate. And the utilities for the most part, trusted that EPA could have substantive discussions with them in a way that would enable us to do our job and be respectful of their legitimate business needs. I got to know and to like many of the utility CEOs. I was able to better understand the world they live in. I now know that most of them are now investing heavily in renewable energy and energy efficiency, and that fact won't change even in the unlikely event that the administration's rollbacks succeed.

As much as was done during your time at EPA, looking back, do you feel you should have gone much further, especially in light of what followed?

No. I understood the question and there were some things we could have tried to do more quickly in the end. But that is not my style. I think you have to be deliberate and do the best you can. When you cut corners, you do an injustice to the process and threaten the outcome. And I'm pretty much a public service freak. I work for the public, and I never felt it was appropriate to cut corners and simply put something on the table without doing it well.

But there's always things that you wish you could have done differently and better. There are always things left undone. But

that's part of what it means to work in public service. You do the best you can with the time you have.

If the climate rules had been done in President Obama's first term, they'd probably be at a different place now. If you had been asked during the first term, would you have, in retrospect, suggested that they move more quickly?

No, probably not. Because if you remember, we only lost by two votes on getting a cap-and-trade bill through Congress. There was every reason to believe that we had a big shot at success. And while I love rules, congressional action could have been a much deeper and more effective tool. So I think it was the right thing to try, but it didn't work.

Your administration used outreach and collaboration with communities to create receptivity. How can we best use those tools for renewed regulation in the next administration?

I think that's what the name of the game is right now. I've received calls from people who want to support climate action, want to know where they can make the most difference, and how to make sure that governors and mayors do the right thing. I tell them, fund grassroots organizations because they can make things happen. They can hold leaders accountable.

When I left the administration, I tried to think about what I was going to do. And one of the things I decided was to go back to the public health world. As I see it, EPA is a public health agency. And I believe that progress on climate can best be advanced by focusing on health. Everything you do to make the world healthier is going to also make the planet healthier. And I'm happy to not keep arguing about climate if I can get action to happen by focusing on health risks. I'm not going to ignore climate change or stop trying to broaden the base for climate action, but I am going to take advantage of every opportunity to drive change quickly.

I started thinking about it and how most of the progress at EPA has been based on making the health consequences clear and following in the footsteps of work that has been tested at the local, state, and regional levels. So I don't think that really creative new things come out of the federal government as much as it's driven from the bottom up.

You know, people get so frustrated that we haven't made any progress on climate. But we have been burning fossil fuels since primitive people have been on this earth. Let's not get discouraged! Let's realize that we are now at a time where technology evolves in moments, and there now are solutions to this and innovation will drive even more solutions. But we have to continue to motivate more and more people to act. And I don't know a better way to make that happen than by supporting grassroots organizations that can demand change.

There was a time when other countries looked to the United States for leadership and guidance. Now are there countries that you think have good policies in place with respect to climate change that we should be looking at for examples?

Both the European Union and China are realizing that they are not making the progress that they want. There's some work being contemplated in Paris that's really interesting in the transportation sector, but I love the idea that both the European Union and China are going to ban the internal combustion engine in 2040. I think that's fabulous. That is the kind of thing that instigates large-scale change. That drives technology forward. I love it. I just think it's exactly the kind of signal that we should be sending: a long-term signal similar to what we tried to do with the CPP. The kind of signal that this administration is trying to silence.

Now in China, I think they're doing some remarkable things and India is beginning to take some significant steps to advance solar energy. While we can always hope for more—and should—good things are happening.

I went to a meeting recently that the United Arab Emirates asked me to moderate, which was a panel of about thirty ministers of health from a variety of different countries, just talking about what can be done to reduce climate risks. I found it a bit embarrassing to be moderating the discussion knowing that there was no official U.S. delegate sitting at the table but the conversation was remarkably engaging. People around the table understood that the problem of air pollution is so extreme in many countries that it's becoming obvious that climate change is already having a significant health impact. And while health threats go well beyond air pollution, air pollution is the main reason why China has taken

on climate change so aggressively. That's why India is beginning to move.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In closing, let me thank the Institute for asking me here tonight. You have done incredibly important work to keep a check even on federal actions—even during the Obama administration. Government is at its best when folks that are clever and resourceful, like you, are engaged. Right now, we are facing threats to our democracy. We have to keep fighting and stay in the game. If we do, things will get better.

Some mornings it is hard to get up and face the news out of D.C. But then I go into Harvard and hang out with young people and remember that it's really their future that is at stake. We have to keep fighting. And I am proud of the work I have done while in public service and excited to keep supporting these efforts. And I'm still very proud to live in the United States of America. Thank you.