

## **President of the United States Tells Nation**

**“We are all in this together...”**

**And talks about “fundamental principles of social justice...”**

“That large heartedness \_ that concern and regard for the plight of others \_ is not a partisan feeling. It is not a Republican or a Democratic feeling. It, too, is part of the American character. Our ability to stand in other people’s shoes. A recognition that we are all in this together; that when fortune turns against one of us, others are there to lend a helping hand. A belief that in this country, hard work and responsibility should be rewarded by some measure of security and fair play; and an acknowledgement that sometimes government has to step in to help deliver on that promise.” – President Barack Obama, 09/09/09

At MASW, we would expect these words from a speaker at an MASW Annual Conference.

But to hear them from the President of the United States addressing a Joint Session of Congress and a national television audience?

Wow.

In quoting a letter from the late Sen. Ted Kennedy about national healthcare reform, President Obama said, “it concerns more than material things. What we face, is above all a moral issue; at stake are not just the details of policy, but fundamental principles of social justice and the character of our country.”

Again, at MASW we provide leadership and advocacy on “fundamental principles of social justice” all the time; it is who we are and what we do.

But to hear this from the President in a prime-time address?

Wow.

Seated immediately behind the President, as is tradition at these events, was the Vice President. We at MASW are reminded that Vice President Joe Biden’s economic policy team is headed by Jared Bernstein, who was senior economist at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington when he delivered the closing keynote at our 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on October 25, 2006.

Bernstein’s work focused on the clash between the political philosophy of “you’re on your own” with the political philosophy of “we’re all in this together,” especially in his books, such as *All Together Now: Common Sense for a Fair Economy*.