

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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This week, President Obama traveled to Columbus, Ohio to celebrate the groundbreaking of the 10,000th Recovery Act roadway project and kick off Recovery Summer, during which workers will break ground on tens of thousands of Recovery Act projects. Also this week, President Obama met with insurers to discuss implementing new consumer protections provided by the Affordable Care Act as quickly as possible and highlighted the new Patients Bill of Rights created by that legislation. In addition, the President unveiled a new Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative; lauded House passage of the DISCLOSE Act, which will close many of the loopholes created by the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision; applauded Congressional reconciliation of Wall Street reform legislation; and maintained his focus on containing and cleaning up the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

What's Happening?

Recovery Summer: Last Friday, President Obama traveled to Columbus, Ohio, where he celebrated the groundbreaking of the 10,000th Recovery Act roadway project with workers and local officials. The Columbus project will support more than 300 jobs; and it is just one of thousands of Recovery Act projects moving forward this summer.



Over the next six weeks, tens of thousands of Recovery Act projects are scheduled to break ground – and that means many new jobs for workers all across the country. Expected Recovery Act projects include transportation, clean water, home weatherization, and national parks. This July alone, workers are expected to undertake more than 10,000 road projects and improve nearly 30,000 miles of road.

In his remarks in Columbus, the President noted the job-creating impact of the Recovery Act – in fact, the Recovery Act has created or saved nearly 2.5 million jobs to date – and talked about the jobs still to come this summer. The President said:

"[Recovery Act] projects haven't just improved communities. They've put thousands of construction crews – just like this one – to work...Instead of worrying about where their next paycheck is going to come from, Americans across the country are helping to build our future -- and their own futures...

"Ultimately, that's the purpose of the Recovery Act – not just to jumpstart the economy and get us out of the hole that we're in right now, but to make the investments that will spur growth and spread prosperity and pay dividends to our communities for generations to come."

Benefits of Health Reform: Monday was the 90 day anniversary of the signing of the Affordable Care Act. In recognition of that event, the President on Tuesday invited health insurers and state insurance commissioners to the White House for a meeting to discuss the importance of implementing the new consumer and patient protection elements of health insurance reform as quickly as possible. Following that meeting, the President delivered remarks highlighting the new Patient's Bill of Rights created by the Affordable Care Act. That legislation not only ends the worst practices of the insurance industry – including denying coverage to Americans with pre-existing conditions and rescinding coverage from Americans who get sick – it also provides Americans with greater choices and more control over their health care decisions. Already, Americans across the country are beginning to receive the benefits of reform. As the President said in his remarks:

"While it will take a few years to fully implement this law, we can already see it taking effect. Last month, 4 million small business owners found a postcard in their mailbox informing them that they could be eligible for a health care tax cut this year worth tens of thousands of dollars to help them cover their employees. And America's largest businesses are filling



out applications for critical relief to help them provide coverage for retirees who aren't yet eligible for Medicare.

"Two weeks ago, tens of thousands of seniors who fall into the Medicare prescription drug coverage gap known as the doughnut hole began receiving a \$250 check to help them afford their medicine. And by the end of the year, we estimate that 4 million seniors will receive this help. And by 2020, this law will close the doughnut hole completely...

"In many cases, young adults without insurance can now stay on their parents' plan until they're 26 years old -- that lifts a lot of worry from some parents' shoulders...[And] on July 1st, uninsured Americans who've been locked out of the insurance market because of a preexisting condition will now be able to enroll in a new national insurance pool where they'll finally be able to purchase quality, affordable health care -- some for the very first time in their lives."

Wall Street Reform: Early Friday morning, the Congressional conference committee that has been debating Wall Street reform legislation reached agreement on a compromise bill that reconciles the House and Senate versions of reform legislation. That compromise is one of the final steps to achieving historic Wall Street reforms that will strengthen the American financial system and extend new consumer protections to Americans. The bill will go to a final vote in the House and Senate shortly.

In remarks celebrating the breakthrough, the President said:

"We are poised to pass the toughest financial reform since the ones we created in the aftermath of the Great Depression...The reforms making their way through Congress will hold Wall Street accountable so we can help prevent another financial crisis like the one that we're still recovering from.

"We'll put in place the toughest consumer financial protections in our history, while creating an independent agency to enforce them...Credit card companies will no longer be able to mislead you with pages and pages of fine print...you'll have the clear and concise information you need to make financial decisions that are best for you and your family.

"Wall Street reform will also strengthen our economy in a number of other ways. We'll make our financial system more transparent by bringing the kinds of complex deals that help trigger this crisis...And we'll create what's called a resolution authority to help wind down firms whose collapse would threaten our entire financial system. No longer will we have companies that are 'too big to fail'."

Father's Day: On Monday, President Obama celebrated Father's Day by unveiling a new White House Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative at the Town Hall Education Arts & Recreation Campus in Washington, DC. That Initiative will advance the President's efforts to impact father absence in America through partnerships with fatherhood and family-serving groups and role models across America. The Initiative will include community forums on fatherhood held by the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, community outreach, newsletters featuring articles and resources on fatherhood, and community forums with the National Parent Teachers Association, among other things.



In his Father's Day message, the President said:

"My own father left my family when I was two years old. I was raised by a heroic mother and wonderful grandparents who provided the support, discipline and love that helped me get to where I am today, but I still felt the weight of that absence throughout my childhood. It's something that leaves a hole no government can fill. Studies show that children who grow up without their fathers around are more likely to drop out of high school, go to jail, or become teen fathers themselves.

"And while no government program can fill the role that fathers play for our children, what we can do is try to support fathers who are willing to step up and fulfill their responsibilities as parents, partners and providers. That's why last year I started a nationwide dialogue on fatherhood to tackle the challenge of father absence head on."

The DISCLOSE Act: On Thursday, the House of Representatives passed the DISCLOSE Act, legislation that will close many of the loopholes created by the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision, restore transparency to the political process, and ensure the voices of American voters are heard. Specifically, the DISCLOSE Act requires corporations and organizations to disclose their role in political ads and to disclose the donors whose contributions helped to make those corporate ads possible, ensuring that voters have the information they need to make informed choices about candidates. In response to House passage of the Act, the President said:

"I congratulate the House of Representatives on today's passage of the DISCLOSE Act, a critical piece of legislation to control the flood of special interest money into our elections. The DISCLOSE Act would establish the strongest-ever disclosure requirements for election-related spending by special interests, including Wall Street and big oil companies, and it would restrict spending by foreign-controlled corporations. It would give the American public the right to see exactly who is spending money in an attempt to influence campaigns for public office...and it ensures that corporations who spend money on American elections are accountable first and foremost to the American people. I urge the Senate to act swiftly on its version of the bill, and I look forward to working with both chambers on prompt enactment of final legislation."

Ongoing Response to the Oil Spill: This week, the President continued to emphasize the importance of containing and cleaning up the BP oil spill. Approximately 37,000 personnel are currently responding to the spill and working to protect the shoreline and the Gulf Coast environment. In addition, more than 6,200 vessels and dozens of aircraft are assisting in containment and cleanup efforts. Approximately 2.6 million feet of containment boom and 4.24 million feet of sorbent boom have been deployed to contain the spill, and about 25.6 million gallons of an oil-water mix have been recovered. In addition, the President continues to work on behalf of the people of the Gulf Coast to ensure that all those whose lives and livelihoods have been affected by the spill are compensated for their losses.

Organizing for America

We've Got an App for You: This week, OFA launched a groundbreaking new app for the iPhone and iPad – a tool that will empower Democrats across the country to get connected and involved in new ways. With this app, OFA supporters will be able to call Congress and make their voices heard on the issues that matter most to them; they'll be able to find local events and connect with local Democrats; and they'll gain access to the latest political news. In addition, users will receive 'AirMail' messages detailing how they can give involved and help the President.

These apps build upon the new www.raiseyourvote.com website, and offer voters and supporters even more new ways to get involved and get active online this year. You can check out the apps and download them for yourself at <http://my.democrats.org/page/content/iphone2010>.

Holding Republicans Accountable

How Republicans Would Govern: This week, the DNC launched two new ads holding Republicans accountable for their close ties to big oil, big business, and other special interests. The first ad, "How Republicans Would Govern," highlights Republican apologists for BP – leaders like Rand Paul, Michele Bachman, Eric Cantor, and Joe Barton, who have continually defended big oil in the face of a national tragedy – and points to the GOP's record of defending those with the biggest wallets to the detriment of American workers, families, and small businesses. As DNC Communications Director Brad Woodhouse said:

"It's not news that Republicans have perpetually chosen to stand up for those with the deepest pockets, just take a look at their stance on Wall Street reform and health insurance reform. But what is surprising is that while Gulf residents, workers, and businesses seek relief from the worst environmental disaster this nation has ever faced, Republican leaders would have the gall to come out in support of big oil companies, stating that the Administration should 'stop demonizing BP,' and that holding them accountable is 'un-American' and the \$20 billion escrow fund is 'extortion' and a 'shakedown.' If anything here is 'un-American,' it's the Republicans' choice to shamelessly pander to big oil while the President works day-in and day-out to get much needed relief to the Gulf region."

The second ad, "On Their Side," underscores Republicans' ongoing defense of corporate giants and features Michael Steele's suggestion that we put our trust in Wall Street rather than hold it accountable for sending our economy into crisis.

You can watch both ads at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gP3OG8oPmE> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcyxAzdMAN8>, respectively.

Key Issues in the News and Background

Talking Points: The Recovery Summer

- The Recovery Act has already saved or created about 2.5 million jobs across America, provided tax cuts to 95 percent of working Americans, and funded critical investments in our nation's infrastructure.
- With all that progress, it would be easy to assume that the greatest impact of the Recovery Act has passed, but this summer could actually be the most active season for Recovery Act projects to date.
- Tens of thousands of Recovery Act projects are set to begin this summer, creating jobs for hard-working Americans and opportunities for businesses all across the country. This, in short, is the Recovery Summer.
- Some of the projects include:
 - **Transportation Projects.** Six times more highway projects are expected this July compared to last July – projects will increase from 1,750 last summer to more than 10,000 this summer. While road projects improved 9,000 miles of highway last summer, this summer they will improve 30,000 miles – the equivalent of ten cross-country road trips.
 - **Clean Water Projects.** This summer, the Recovery Act will fund more than 2,800 clean water and drinking water projects, a twenty-fold increase over the 100 projects of this kind that took place last summer.
 - **Home Weatherization Projects.** This summer, the Recovery Act will provide for the weatherization of 82,000 homes, 27 times the 3,000 homes that were weatherized last summer.
 - **National Parks Projects.** This July, more than 800 projects will be underway at America's national parks, eight times the 100 that took place last July.
- While the Recovery Act has already saved or created 2.5 million jobs, the job-creating impact of the Recovery Act will continue to grow through the end of the year. In fact, the Recovery Act is on track to support 3.5 million jobs by December 31.
- As thousands of road, bridge, rail, and other projects begin in states across the country, Americans will be able to see the impact of Recovery Act dollars in their communities as Recovery funds support long-deferred infrastructure projects and good jobs for local workers.
- These projects will not only provide a short term boost to communities, they will help to set the stage for long-term economic and job growth.
- This summer, the impact of the bold decisions made by President Obama and Democrats in Congress to tackle the economic crisis will become clearer than ever.
- When Democrats were fighting for the Recovery Act, Republicans in Congress criticized recovery attempts and opposed the Administration's efforts to create jobs. They made a cynical calculation that if the President failed, they would win. But the President persevered.
- The President's actions, and those of Democrats in Congress, brought the American economy back from the brink, providing immediate relief for struggling families and out of work Americans with job-creating shovel ready projects. And this summer, the job creation will continue.
- In addition, through the Recovery Act, the Administration made targeted investments in projects like advanced vehicle manufacturing, expanded broadband, and smart energy technologies that can serve as a foundation for 21st century economic growth.

- As a result, public and private economists alike say the Recovery Act is driving GDP and job growth, and it has put America on the path towards economic recovery.
- But even with the progress made to date, we still have a long way to go to achieve full recovery.
 - Because the economic crisis is bigger than anyone predicted, the President believes it is necessary to continue to support job creation measures that will build on the Recovery Act's success. In short, he thinks it's important to continue doing what works.
 - And while experts may say the American economy is in recovery, the President won't consider our recovery complete until things get better for American families.
- But as Recovery Act projects gear up in communities across America, one thing is clear – we cannot return to the failed policies of the past. We cannot go backward. We must continue to move forward.

Talking Points: Implementing the Affordable Care Act

- Three months ago this week, President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act. As a result of that law, families and small businesses across the country will be able to save money by purchasing health care more affordably; our national long-term structural deficit will be reduced; millions of uninsured Americans will finally be able to get the coverage and the care they need; and all Americans can count on more stability and greater control of their health care decisions as a result of new consumer protections.
- While the law will not be fully implemented for a few years, many of the benefits of reform are already coming to Americans. For example:
 - Last month, four million small business owners across the country were notified about their potential eligibility this year for a health care tax cut worth tens of thousands of dollars that could help them to cover the cost of insurance for their employees.
 - This month, tens of thousands of eligible seniors began receiving \$250 rebate checks from the federal government to help them purchase prescription medications that fall within the Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage gap known as the donut hole. By the end of the year, it is estimated that 4 million seniors will receive such checks. And by 2020, the Affordable Care Act will close the donut hole entirely.
 - Beginning this year, young adults without insurance of their own will be able to remain on their parents' health insurance through age 26. Health insurance companies are required to make that change by September, but many have already done so, helping young Americans across the country to avoid a costly coverage gap.
 - And this July 1st, uninsured Americans with a preexisting condition will gain the ability to enroll in a new, national insurance pool where they can purchase quality, affordable health care – perhaps for the first time in their life.
- In addition, the President has announced that, under the Affordable Care Act, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Treasury will be issuing new regulations that will end some of the worst practices of the insurance industry and put in place the strongest consumer protections in history. As a result, every American will finally be able to count on a real Patient's Bill of Rights.
- That Bill of Rights is long overdue, and it is a victory for every American. It is not intended to punish insurance companies, but will instead establish basic rules that will make the American health care system more consumer-friendly and cost-effective, finally enabling every American to rest easy in the knowledge that their health insurance will be there when they need it.
- In particular, beginning this December, some of the insurance industry's most abusive practices will be brought to a timely end. Specifically:
 - Insurance companies will no longer be able to discriminate against children with preexisting conditions or deny them coverage.
 - Insurance will no longer be able to rescind an individual's coverage when they get sick, even if they made an unintentional mistake on their insurance application.

- Insurance companies will no longer be able to cap lifetime coverage or establish restrictive annual limits.
 - And the barriers that currently exist between the American people and their doctors will be torn down – Americans will be able to keep the primary care doctor or pediatrician they choose.
- Unfortunately, despite the efforts of President Obama and Democrats in Congress to ensure Americans have stability, security, and access to care, the Republican Party still opposes any change to the status quo. They want to repeal health insurance reform and return America to the broken system we had before.
- The President refuses to let that happen. He won't let America go back to a system that allowed insurance companies to discriminate against sick children; to strip away individuals' coverage when they got sick; and to place lifetime limits on health care, preventing Americans from getting care when they needed it most. He will do everything in his power to protect Americans' new, hard-won health care rights.