

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

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This week, the President and his team have been closely monitoring Hurricane Irene as it tracks toward the East Coast of the United States and were monitoring the situation with the rest of the world as the Libyan people reached a tipping point in their fight for freedom.

Libya



Earlier this week, President Obama spoke about the ongoing situation in Libya. The President emphasized that Qaddafi and what is left of his regime must accept that their time is up. They must give up power once and for all. The President welcomed the progress the Libyan people have made in pursuing an end to the Qaddafi regime.

In his remarks, President Obama said:

"For over four decades, the Libyan people have lived under the rule of a tyrant who denied them their most basic human rights. Now, the celebrations that we've seen in the streets of Libya shows that the pursuit of human dignity is far stronger than any dictator. I want to emphasize that this is not over yet. As the regime collapses, there is still fierce fighting in some areas, and we have reports of regime elements threatening to continue fighting.

"Although it's clear that Qaddafi's rule is over, he still has the opportunity to reduce further bloodshed by explicitly relinquishing power to the people of Libya and calling for those forces that continue to fight to lay down their arms for the sake of Libya."

To watch the President's full remarks, you can go [here](#).

Hurricane Irene

As Americans up and down the East Coast prepare for Hurricane Irene, the President has directed FEMA to work with state and local officials to make sure all necessary steps are taken to help people in the path of the storm. FEMA has

set up Incident Support Bases in areas that might be hit and has sent National Incident Management Assistance Teams to states up and down the eastern seaboard.

You can read the FEMA blog for up to date information at <http://blog.fema.gov/>. For tips on creating an emergency plan for your family and putting together an emergency supply kit, visit www.ready.gov or www.listo.gov.

Holding Republicans Accountable

Earlier this week, the Associated Press reported that Republicans in Congress are balking at President Obama's desire to extend a payroll tax cut that affects millions of middle class Americans for another year. Republicans are more than willing to fight for tax breaks for large corporations, special interests, and the wealthiest Americans, but they won't fight to keep more money in the pockets of America's middle class workers. Democrats and Members of Congress in states across the country held press conference calls this week to call out Republicans for their blatant hypocrisy.

In Iowa, Chairwoman Sue Dvorsky said "If you're wealthier than 98 percent of the country or you represent special interests or a large corporation, Republicans will fight tooth and nail to make sure you're exempt from paying your fair share. But if you're like 1.7 million Iowans and pay a payroll tax on most of what you earn, these self-proclaimed, anti-tax Republicans want to raise your taxes." And Congressman Braley added: "The thing that's so hypocritical about the Republicans' position on this payroll tax increase that they're proposing is that it has an enormous impact by hitting chiefly the middle class and the working poor."

You can read the AP story [here](#).

Below you can see more stories about the hypocrisy of Republicans whose staunch anti-tax stance only holds true for the wealthiest Americans and special interests.

Republicans want to raise your taxes, Braley and Iowa Democratic Chairwoman say today

Des Moines Register // Jason Clayworth

Two high-ranking Iowa Democrats went on the attack today against a Republican call to allow a tax break on payroll taxes to expire at the end of this year. American workers typically pay 6.2 percent of their wages toward Social Security with the employer paying an equal amount. The tax is not assessed on income above \$106,800 a year. Congress last year approved President Obama's plan to reduce the workers' share to 4.2 percent for a year, which shaved \$1,000 off of the payroll taxes of a person making \$50,000. Obama in Iowa last week urged Congress to extend the break, which costs the federal government around \$120 billion in uncollected revenue. In response, some Republicans have pushed back, saying it would make the nation's debt bigger. Iowa Democratic Party Chairwoman Sue Dvorsky and U.S. Rep. Bruce Braley, D-Waterloo, today told reporters that the Republican pushback is hypocritical, noting the fierce resistance of the GOP to raise taxes on the wealthiest Americans.

Sal Pace rails against raising payroll tax

Colorado Independent // Scot Kersgaard

As Speaker of the House John Boehner prepares for a weekend fundraiser for Rep.Scott Tipton in Aspen, Tipton's Democratic challenger, Sal Pace, went on the offensive Tuesday, saying he's had it with a Republican Congress that publicly rails against any and all taxes while quietly working to end a small tax break enjoyed by workers for the past year. "I can't understand their logic and rationale at all. How can they say they support working families and not support extending this tax cut?" Pace said about Congressional Republicans in a phone interview. That tax break, which went into effect this past January, reduced the payroll tax from 6.2 percent to 4.2 percent for one year. The tax is scheduled to go back to 6.2 percent in January 2012. The payroll tax is designed to fund Social Security and is separate from income taxes. While the working poor often pay no income taxes, nearly everyone who gets a paycheck pays the payroll tax. President Obama has said he would like to extend the cut.

Arizona Democrats support extending federal payroll tax cut

Arizona Republic // Alia Rau

Three Democratic Arizona lawmakers held a teleconference Tuesday to voice concerns about proposals to raise the federal payroll tax. President Barack Obama wants to extend a George W. Bush-era payroll tax cut now set to expire on Jan. 1. The tax cut decreased the amount most workers pay to 4.2 percent of their wages, from 6.2 percent. Obama worked with Congress last year to extend the tax for a year. Now, Obama wants to extend the cut for another year. But according to the Associated Press, some congressional Republican lawmakers oppose the extension, saying it is not the best route toward spurring employment and improving the economy. They instead suggest reducing income tax rates for individuals and companies. During Tuesday's teleconference, Senate Minority Whip Paula Aboud, D-Tucson, Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Phoenix, and Rep. Ruben Gallego, D-Phoenix, all said they support continuing the payroll tax cut.

Latino Dems pressure GOP on extending payroll tax cut

Univision // Juan E. Gastelum

Latino Democrats on Tuesday criticized Republican leaders who said they will allow a temporary tax break for middle class Americans to expire at the end of the year. The officials sold the extension as a way to stimulate the economy by providing the middle-class with extra money to spend on goods and services. They said that blocking such an extension would be an affront to working people and Latinos, who lost 66 percent of their median household wealth in the recession. "Republicans finally found a tax hike they can approve," said Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-Texas) in a conference call hosted by the Democratic National Committee. "Not only is it hypocritical to the pledge Republicans signed to not raise taxes, it's bad policy." At issue is the payroll tax reduction Congress approved back in December as part of a broader bipartisan deal to renew the Bush-era tax cuts. In the deal, the workers' portion of the tax — which is matched by employers at the normal rate of 6.2 percent of wages — was slashed to 4.2 percent.

Critican plan para aumentar impuestos a clase media

Notimex

Dirigentes del Partido Demócrata criticaron hoy un plan del Partido Republicano, que en su opinión aumentaría los impuestos a la clase media de Estados Unidos, en momentos en que ese sector busca ahorros para cubrir sus gastos. La vicepresidenta del Partido Demócrata, Linda Chávez-Thompson, dijo que los republicanos buscan evitar el recorte de impuesto para grandes corporaciones y más ricos del país, pero quieren que expire un recorte de impuesto sobre la nómina que beneficia a la clase media.

"Cada centavo que ahorran los latinos lo ponen en la economía", dijo Chávez-Thompson, en una rueda de prensa con el representante demócrata Henry Cuellar. En diciembre pasado, el presidente estadounidense Barack Obama y la oposición republicana acordaron un recorte de dos puntos porcentuales, del 6.2 al 4.2 por ciento, sobre el impuesto a la nómina.

Key Issues in the News and Background

Talking Points: Hurricane Irene

- FEMA, along with the whole federal government, is working with states and territories as Hurricane Irene hits land in Puerto Rico and threatens the East Coast. FEMA's regional offices in Atlanta, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston are in constant contact with state and local officials in areas that could be impacted or have already been impacted to make sure they have the support needed to respond. Because of the unpredictable nature of hurricanes, we are preparing for multiple scenarios, including potential impact to major metro areas and critical infrastructure.

- This morning, President Obama held a conference call with Chief of Staff Bill Daley, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, Brennan and other White House officials to get an update on Hurricane Irene's potential track and FEMA's efforts to prepare for the impact of the storm on the East Coast. The President directed his team to continue coordinating with state and local officials and make sure they have all resources needed to properly respond.
- Residents in areas that could be affected should monitor weather conditions and listen to state and local leaders for advisories and potential orders to evacuate.
- In preparation for the storm, FEMA National Incident Management Assistance Teams are now in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia in anticipation of further deployment to areas along the East Coast. FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams are also being deployed to Connecticut, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, to work with state, tribal, and local officials to make sure all their needs are being met and they are fully prepared for potential disaster response and recovery. State Liaisons are currently located in North Carolina, South Carolina, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Liaisons moved for New York, New Jersey, Virginia, and Maryland.
- Fort Bragg, North Carolina has been designated as an Incident Support Base to help federal operations respond to Hurricane Irene, and Incident Support Bases are being set up in Massachusetts and New Jersey to support states within those regions. Incident Support Bases allow FEMA and federal partners to hold commodities- such as water and blankets- closer to areas that could be impacted by severe weather. This makes moving supplies to affected areas faster and easier should they be requested or needed.
- FEMA is just one part of our national emergency management team – state and local emergency management agencies and first responders up and down the east coast are also preparing for this storm, along with the entire federal family, state, tribal and municipal governments, the faith-based and non-profit communities, the private sector and most importantly the public.
- FEMA is just one piece of the national emergency management team- state and local first responders and emergency management agencies along the potential path of the hurricane are preparing for the storm, along with the entire federal family, state, tribal and municipal governments, the non-profit and faith-based communities, the private sector and most importantly the public.
- If you are located in an area that could be affected by severe weather, now is the time to prepare yourself and your family. Make sure to prepare an emergency supply kit- complete with non-perishable food, medications, and personal documents. For tips on creating an emergency plan for your family and putting together an emergency supply kit, visit www.ready.gov or www.listo.gov.
- Follow Administrator Fugate on Twitter @CraigatFEMA or take a look at [FEMA's blog](#)
- Listen to your state and local officials and make sure you know your evacuation route in case evacuation orders are given.