

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

October 21, 2011

This week, President Obama announced the end to the war in Iraq, and that all of our troops will come home by the end of the year. He also went on a three-day bus tour to talk directly to the American people about the American Jobs Act – speaking to communities throughout North Carolina and Virginia about the importance of passing the jobs plan. The President also addressed the American people on the death of Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, and he signed into law the Korea, Panama and Colombia Free Trade Agreements and the renewal of Trade Adjustment Assistance for American workers. The Democratic National Committee announced the appointment of Rev. Derrick Harkins to lead the Democratic Party's outreach to people of faith and Greg Hinton to be the DNC's Chief Diversity Officer. Additionally, the DNC and Democratic State Parties across the country continued their push to keep the American public informed on Republican presidential frontrunner Mitt Romney's damaging proposals for middle-class families and continued habit of flip-flopping on major policy issues.

Ending the War in Iraq

This week, President Obama announced the end to the war in Iraq, and that all of our troops will come home by the end of the year. This fulfills one of his core commitments and is an example of President Obama's strength and leadership in keeping our country safe. Making the announcement today, President Obama said:



"As Commander-in-Chief, ensuring the success of this strategy has been one of my highest national security priorities. Last year, I announced the end to our combat mission in Iraq. And to date, we've removed more than 100,000 troops. Iraqis have taken full responsibility for their country's security.

"A few hours ago I spoke with Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki. I reaffirmed that the United States keeps its commitments. He spoke of the determination of the Iraqi people to

forge their own future. We are in full agreement about how to move forward.

"So today, I can report that, as promised, the rest of our troops in Iraq will come home by the end of the year. After nearly nine years, America's war in Iraq will be over.

"Over the next two months, our troops in Iraq – tens of thousands of them – will pack up their gear and board convoys for the journey home. The last American soldier[s] will cross the border out of Iraq with their heads held high, proud of their success, and knowing that the American people stand united in our support for our troops. That is how America's military efforts in Iraq will end."

President Obama Goes on Three-Day Bus Tour to Talk About American Jobs Act

From Monday through Wednesday of this week, the President went on a three-day bus tour to talk to the American people about the importance of passing the American Jobs Act, which will get more Americans working again and put more money back into the pockets of middle-class families and small businesses. The bus tour included several stops in communities throughout North Carolina and Virginia, including the Asheville Regional Airport in North Carolina; West Wilkes High School in Millers Creek, North Carolina; Guilford Technical Community College in

Jamestown, North Carolina; Greenville County High School in Emporia, Virginia; Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Hampton, Virginia; and Fire Station 9 in North Chesterfield, Virginia.



Throughout the bus tour, the President highlighted the fact that the American Jobs Act will keep so many of America's teachers in the classroom, police officers on the beat, and firefighters protecting our communities. During his stop at Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Virginia, the President and First Lady Michelle Obama both delivered remarks on the importance of hiring American veterans. During the First Lady's speech, she said:

"So, for all of you troops, veterans, and military spouses here today, we're proud of you, and we want people to know

that you have so many skills that are just second nature to all of you -- things like time management, organization, people skills, complex decision-making, and so many other incredible skills.

"And that is really the reason why we're here today -- because those are precisely the skills that we need in workplaces across America. But the truth is that sometimes employers may not always know about all that you have to offer. They might have trouble understanding a military resume. Or they might see a spouse who's lived in five cities in seven years as a red flag rather than a reality of military life.

"But today, I am proud to announce that the American Logistics Association has said they're going to step up and do something about that. So today they're committing to hiring 25,000 veterans and military spouses in the next two years. They do not want to miss out on your potential. They want America's businesses to have the best, most talented, most hardworking employees around."



The President followed up the First Lady's remarks, saying:

"If you can save a life in Afghanistan, you can save a life in a local hospital or in a local ambulance. If you can oversee millions of dollars of assets in Iraq, you can help a business balance its books here at home. If you can juggle the demands of raising a family while a husband or wife are at war, you can juggle any demands of any job in the United States of America.

"We ask our men and women in uniform to leave their families -- our Guardsmen and Reservists to leave their jobs. We ask you to fight, to sacrifice, to risk your lives for our country. The last thing you should have to do is fight for a job when you come home. Not here. Not in the United States of America."

To watch video of the President and the First Lady's remarks, you can go [here](#).

The President Addresses Death of Muammar Qaddafi

On Thursday, following the news that Libyan rebel forces had wrested control of Qaddafi's hometown of Sirte and brought the ruthless dictator to justice, President Obama delivered remarks to the American people. During his address, the President said:

"Today, the government of Libya announced the death of Muammar Qaddafi. This marks the end of a long and painful chapter for the people of Libya, who now have the opportunity to determine their own destiny in a new and democratic Libya.

"For four decades, the Qaddafi regime ruled the Libyan people with an iron fist. Basic human rights were denied. Innocent civilians were detained, beaten and killed. And Libya's wealth was squandered. The enormous potential of the Libyan people was held back, and terror was used as a political weapon.

"Today, we can definitively say that the Qaddafi regime has come to an end. The last major regime strongholds have fallen. The new government is consolidating the control over the country. And one of the world's longest-serving dictators is no more."

You can watch the President's remarks [here](#).

President Obama Signs New Free Trade Agreements, Renewal of Trade Adjustment Assistance

On Friday, the President signed the Korea, Panama and Colombia Free Trade Agreements and the renewal of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for American workers. President Obama emphasized that these trade agreements will significantly boost American exports, support tens of thousands of American jobs and protect labor rights, the environment and intellectual property. Additionally, the renewal of TAA will guarantee that workers affected by trade will have the best shot at securing a good job, maintaining the strength of the middle class.

DNC Announces New Hires

On Monday, the DNC, DCCC and DNCC announced that Greg Hinton will serve as Chief Diversity Officer of the organizations, effective October 24, 2011. Hinton will serve as the first ever Chief Diversity Officer for the DNC and DCCC and will advise the DNCC (Democratic National Convention Committee) on diversity staffing and minority procurement. This position grew out of the Democratic Party's ongoing efforts to make sure that the party – from employment to procurement and contracting – reflects the diversity of our country.

DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz said of the appointment:

"We're thrilled to have Greg Hinton join the DNC as the Chief Diversity Officer. The Democratic Party has long been dedicated to including talented people who reflect the diversity of our great country, and Greg will bring his talents to bear as we make sure we are living up to that commitment. I'm proud we're taking this critical step forward and look forward to working closely with Greg as we strive to take our values of inclusion and strength through diversity to the next level."

Of his new role, Hinton said:

"Diversity in hiring, contracting and procurement has always been of utmost importance to the Democratic Party and I'm proud to serve in this role to help maintain that commitment. Our party is stronger because of our diversity, and in this new role I will be working to make sure we are harnessing our diverse

experiences and points of view in the most effective way possible. I am honored to be doing this work on behalf of the President and the Democratic Party and believe this new position is a reflection of the Party's strong commitment to diversity and inclusion."

On Thursday, the Democratic National Committee announced the hire of Rev. Derrick Harkins to lead the Democratic Party's outreach to people of faith. Rev. Harkins is a national leader in the faith community with strong and diverse ties to the African-American church, evangelicals and the progressive faith community. He serves as the senior pastor at the historic Nineteenth Street Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., and he serves on the boards of the National Association of Evangelicals, World Relief and Faith in Public Life, a progressive faith-based organization.

Following the appointment of Rev. Harkins as Faith Outreach Director, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz released the following statement:

"I am excited for Rev. Harkins to join our team. I look forward to working with Rev. Harkins to build on the successes we've had as a Party in reaching out to people of faith from all walks of life and backgrounds. The faith community will be an integral part of President Obama's successful re-election and the success of Democrats across the country in 2012."

To see the full DNC press release on the appointment of Rev. Derrick Harkins, you can go [here](#).

DNC Releases New Web Videos Slamming Mitt Romney on Continued Flip-Flops

This week, the DNC also continued to keep the heat on Mitt Romney for his continued flip-flops on a number of different issues. Following Tuesday's Republican presidential debate, where Mitt Romney tried to mislead voters about his record on immigration, health care and housing, the DNC released a web video titled "Did Mitt Forget?" It can be viewed [here](#).



Later in the week, as part of its new website highlighting Mitt Romney's various flip-flops, www.WhichMitt.com, the DNC released two new videos hitting Romney for his longstanding habit of changing his tune to fit each new audience.

The first video spotlights Mitt Romney's ever-changing positions on health care and can be watched [here](#).

The second video slams Romney for his recent flip-flops on immigration – you can view it [here](#).

Holding Republicans Accountable

On Tuesday, the Republican presidential candidates met in Las Vegas for their next debate. The DNC issued a debate prebuttal memo outlining the GOP candidates' failed policies, which said:

"The Las Vegas debate, like all of the previous Republican presidential debates, will continue to show a sharp contrast between the President, who is working hard to create more jobs and grow the economy, and

the GOP candidates, whose plans would fail to create jobs, could actually make the economy worse, and would simply provide more tax breaks for special interests and millionaires and billionaires—all while opposing economic relief for the middle class and commonsense protections for families and consumers.

“As the GOP presidential candidates and their Republican allies in Congress attempt to push through policies that would devastate the middle class and undermine our nation’s economic security, they refuse to work with President Obama to pass the bipartisan American Jobs Act, the President’s jobs proposal that would get more Americans back to work and put more money back into the pockets of middle-class families and small businesses.

“This debate will demonstrate that for the American people, the choice is clear: the President is committed to fighting for the interests of the middle class, while Republicans are only interested in fighting for special interests and protecting the wealth of the privileged few.”

Also on Tuesday, the Virginia Democratic Party’s Veterans and Military Families Caucus held a press conference call with Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and veterans from across Virginia to discuss how veterans and military families will benefit from the American Jobs Act – and why Republicans are wrong for continuing to stand in the way of the President’s job plan.

Finally, Democratic state parties across the country – including South Dakota, Iowa and Oklahoma – continued the push to hold Mitt Romney accountable for his continued flip-flops and ineffective policies that will hurt the middle class and simply continue to help only millionaires, billionaires and special interests.

After Mitt Romney said that we should let the foreclosure crisis “run its course and hit the bottom,” DNC Communications Director Brad Woodhouse issued the following statement:

“Mitt Romney’s comment to the Las Vegas Review-Journal that we shouldn’t try and stop the foreclosure crisis but should let it ‘run its course and hit the bottom’ is appalling and wrong. Romney demonstrated yet again just how out of touch he is with Nevadans - a statement so extreme, that even right wing Republican Nevada U.S. Senator Dean Heller was forced to condemn it.

“While Romney’s comments are appalling, it’s not unexpected from someone who made a fortune firing workers and sending jobs overseas. It should come as no surprise that he wants to let Wall Street write its own rules and thinks that corporations are people. Romney’s not advocating for any policies that would get Americans back to work, he supports doubling down on the failed policies of the past that caused the economy downturn.”

The DNC, Nevada and Florida Democratic Parties held a press conference call to announce a new effort to highlight Mitt Romney’s callous position on housing foreclosures on Friday.

Key Issues in the News and Background

Talking Points: American Jobs Act Bus Tour

- President Obama on Monday launched a three-day bus tour to talk about the American Jobs Act. He began the tour at the Asheville Regional Airport in North Carolina, where he spoke about the critical need to pass the American Jobs Act to get Americans working again and grow our economy.
- Following this stop, the President headed to West Wilkes High School in Millers Creek, North Carolina, to talk about the need to keep America’s schoolteachers in the classroom.
- During the tour, President Obama will press Congress to proceed with creating jobs now by passing the American Jobs Act. Currently, members of Congress can get started and work together to pass every component of the American Jobs Act, moving from one piece to the next, beginning with the proposal to stop the layoffs of teachers and ensure that police and firefighters stay on the job.

- The \$35 billion in support provided to states and local communities would save the jobs of roughly 400,000 teachers – so that they're able to stay in our schools, where we need them – and ensure that firefighters stay on the job and police officers remain on the beat.
 - The state of North Carolina could be provided with over \$900 million to support the jobs of roughly 13,400 teachers all over the state, as well as funding for police officers and firefighters.
- Now it is time for congressional action – members of Congress now have an opportunity to do what's right and move forward. The time has come for them to declare whether or not they think we ought to protect the jobs of veterans, educators, construction workers, firefighters and police officers – and whether we should ask the wealthiest Americans to give a little more so middle-class Americans and small businesses can get a little relief. It's for them to decide if they support creating jobs that will build our economy.
- Those in Congress have a choice – they can tell the people they represent what exactly they oppose about practical, bipartisan policies that would lead to job creation, or they can pay attention to the vast majority of Americans who are demanding action.
- With so many folks looking for work and middle-class families across the country trying to get back on their feet, doing nothing is simply not an option. The American public will not accept Congress doing nothing – it's time for members of Congress to do the job they were elected to do, set aside partisan politics, and move forward with passing a jobs plan immediately.
- A number of independent economic experts, such as Moody's and Macroeconomic Advisers, have agreed that the American Jobs Act will lead to measurable gains in growth and employment next year. Moody's economist Mark Zandi, for instance, issued a report predicting that "The plan would add 2 percentage points to GDP growth next year, add 1.9 million jobs, and cut the unemployment rate by a percentage point."
- Meanwhile, some of these same economists have examined the Republican plan and stated that it will not do anything substantial to give our economy a short-term boost – and warning that the GOP plan could in fact lead to job loss.
- The time has come for Congress to act – our congressional leaders need to prioritize country over party and pass the American Jobs Act.

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Talking Points: Day Three of American Jobs Act Bus Tour

- On Day 3 of the American Jobs Act bus tour, President Obama and the First Lady paid a visit to Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Hampton, Virginia, where they spoke about the importance of hiring American veterans and giving our courageous service members a real chance to share in the opportunities they fight to defend.
- First Lady Michelle Obama made the announcement that the American Logistics Association and its 270 associated companies have made a commitment to employing 25,000 veterans and military spouses by the close of 2013 – completing 25% of President Obama's call to the private sector to employ or provide training to 100,000 veterans and military spouses.
- President Obama put it this way: "If you can save a life in Afghanistan, you can save a life in an ambulance. And if you can oversee millions of dollars in assets in Iraq, you can help a business balance its books here at home. We need them to keep making America stronger. Our companies need skilled workers – like our veterans – to grow. There's no reason why we can't connect the two."
- After the Hampton stop, the President visited North Chesterfield, where he met with first responders and talked about the need to pass the American Jobs Act, in a piece-by-piece fashion, to ensure that police officers stay on the beat and firefighters remain on the job.

- During the American Jobs Act bus tour, President Obama listened to the concerns of working Americans in Asheville, North Carolina, spoke with educators in Jamestown, North Carolina, and met with veterans in Hampton, Virginia. At every single stop throughout the tour, the president heard the same message: those representing us in Washington ought to focus on the next generation more than the next election. Members of Congress need to do their job, set aside partisan politics, and act right now on creating jobs.
- It's time for congressional action – members of Congress now have an opportunity to do what's right and move forward. The time has come for them to declare whether or not they think we ought to protect the jobs of veterans, educators, construction workers, firefighters and police officers – and whether we should ask the wealthiest Americans to give a little more so middle-class Americans and small businesses can get a little relief. It's time for them to decide if they support creating jobs that will build our economy.
- Those in Congress have a choice – they can tell the people they represent what exactly they oppose about practical, bipartisan policies that would lead to job creation, or they can pay attention to the vast majority of Americans who are demanding action.
- With so many folks looking for work and middle-class families across the country trying to get back on their feet, doing nothing is simply not an option. The American public will not accept Congress doing nothing – it's time to focus and get the American Jobs Act passed now.

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Talking Points: Ending the War in Iraq

The President's announcement today follows through on one of his core promises: ending the Iraq war in a responsible manner, and bringing America's troops home.

- When President Obama came into office, we had 150,000 American troops on duty in Iraq – by the end of 2011, all of our nation's troops will come home from Iraq.
- This is the full completion of the plan President Obama shared with the American people in February 2009. Last August, we brought an end to our combat mission. By the time this year comes to a close, we will also end our troop presence in Iraq.
- At the same time, the people of Iraq have proven they are capable of securing their own nation.

President Obama's announcement is part of the broader effort to bring America's wars overseas to a close.

- While we put an end to the Iraq war, our nation has commenced transition efforts in Afghanistan, and we're starting to bring our troops back home.
- We had a total of 180,000 American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan when President Obama entered office – by the time this year comes to a close, that number will be sliced in half and will continue to go down.
- As we bring these wars to a close, we are shifting our focus on rebuilding our own country.

As the President continues to show over and over again, he does what he says he will do.

- The President said he would finish the Iraq war on a timetable, and that's what he's done.
- The President said he would pursue Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, and that's what he's done.
- The President said he would proceed with a drawdown in Afghanistan, and that's what we will do.

The President's announcement comes at a point when the United States has demonstrated tremendous strength in carrying out our national security.

- America has decimated the leadership of al Qaeda – they're on a path to being defeated.
- America helped stop a massacre in Libya, and helped the people of Libya put an end to the Qadhafi regime.
- We are ending the Iraq war in a responsible manner.
- And we have reestablished and repaired our international alliances and our reputation in the world.

This is the bottom line: The President's actions have made our nation stronger and more secure, and they've proven his strength as the Commander-in-Chief.