

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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This week, President Obama continued his push to urge Republicans in Congress to pass the American Jobs Act – letting the GOP know that “we can’t wait” by signing an executive order and presidential proclamation that aid in our economic recovery and create jobs now. In addition to participating in the G-20 Summit in France, the President spoke in Washington, D.C. about the need to put Americans back to work by passing the transportation infrastructure piece of his jobs plan – which Republicans in the Senate proceeded to vote against in unison later in the week. The Democratic National Committee released three new web videos hitting Romney for his out-of-touch policies and record of flip-flopping on the issues. And both the DNC and Democratic state parties across the country continued their efforts to hold Republicans accountable with a range of events, actions and statements nationwide.

President Obama Signs Executive Order and Issues Proclamation, Stresses that “We Can’t Wait”

This week, President Obama signed an executive order directing the FDA to take action and further reduce and prevent drug shortages to protect consumers and prevent price gouging. He also signed a Presidential Proclamation designating Fort Monroe in Hampton, Virginia as a National Monument under the Antiquities Act. Ensuring that Fort Monroe is restored and used again helps grow the local economy and creates jobs – nearly 3,000 of them, according to estimates from an economic analysis.

These actions follow a series of executive actions that the Obama Administration is taking now to help the middle class and are part of continued efforts to emphasize to Congressional Republicans that “we can’t wait” – it’s time for them to work with the President to pass the American Jobs Act now. During his remarks at the signing of an Executive Order this week, the President said:



“So, as a consequence, I’m going to be signing an executive order today that directs the FDA to step up work to reduce the drug shortages and protect consumers. We’ll still be calling on Congress to pass a bipartisan bill that will provide additional tools to the FDA and others that can make a difference. But until they act, we will go ahead and move.”

To watch video of these remarks, you can go [here](#).

The President Urges Congress to Pass Infrastructure Component of American Jobs Act

On Wednesday, the President spoke in front of the Key Bridge in Washington, D.C., where he urged Congress to pass the transportation infrastructure component of his jobs bill, the American Jobs Act. This section of the American Jobs Act, if passed, would immediately invest \$50 billion in our country’s transportation infrastructure and invest \$10 billion in the formation of a bipartisan National Infrastructure Bank. These two initiatives would together create hundreds of thousands of jobs for construction workers who will rebuild our roads, bridges, railways and runways.

During his speech, the President said:

"We can't wait for Congress to do its job. If they won't act, I will. And that's why today, I'm announcing that we are actually going to expedite loans and competitive grants for new projects all across the country that will create thousands of new jobs for workers like these. If there's money already in the pipeline, we want to get it out faster. And this comes on the heels of our recent efforts to cut red tape and launch several existing projects faster and more efficiently. See, construction workers, they want to do their jobs. We need Congress to do theirs."



"But here's the good news: Congress has another chance. They already voted once against this thing; they've got another chance. This week, they've got another chance to vote for a jobs bill that will help private sector companies put hundreds of thousands of construction workers back on the job rebuilding our roads, our airports, our bridges and our transit systems."

You can view the President's remarks by going [here](#).

At G-20 Summit, President Obama Meets with World Leaders, Holds Press Conference

This week, President Obama participated in the G-20 Summit in France. In addition to meeting with a number of world leaders and taking part in various working sessions, the President delivered remarks at a press conference on Friday, where he said:



"Over the past two years, those of us in the G20 have worked together to rescue the global economy, to avert another depression, and to put us on the path to recovery. But we came to Cannes with no illusions. The recovery has been fragile. And since our last meeting in Seoul we've experienced a number of new shocks -- disruptions in oil supplies, the tragic tsunami in Japan, and the financial crisis in Europe."

"As a result, advanced economies, including the United States are growing and creating jobs, but not nearly fast enough. Emerging economies have started to slow. Global demand is weakening. Around the world, hundreds of millions of people are unemployed, or underemployed. Put simply, the world faces challenges that put our economic recovery at risk."

You can also watch video of President Obama and President Sarkozy of France speaking about the G-20 Summit by going [here](#).

New DNC Web Videos Slam Mitt Romney for Flip Flops, Out-of-Touch Policies

This week, the Democratic National Committee released a new web video taking Mitt Romney to task for supporting efforts to pass so-called "Personhood" Amendments in Florida and elsewhere. These dangerous initiatives would restrict a woman's right to choose even in cases of rape, incest and life of the mother, and they could all but ban most forms of birth control. To watch this video, you can go [here](#).

The DNC also released a new web video on Romney's new economic plan, which will hurt the middle class. The video, titled "Mitt Romney's Spending Plan," can be viewed [here](#).

Closing out the week, the DNC unveiled another video as part of www.WhichMitt.com, its website featuring Mitt Romney's ever-growing list of flip-flops. This video highlights the ultimate flip-flop: Mitt Romney changing positions on whether or not he changes positions. To view it, you can go [here](#).

Holding Republicans Accountable

The DNC and Democratic state parties continued their efforts to hold Republicans accountable for their failed agenda and policies hurting middle-class Americans. As Mitt Romney traveled to New York for fundraising events, Congressman Jerry Nadler (D-NY) sent an open letter to Romney, in which he asked, "On behalf of my constituents, why have you so consistently put the needs of working- and middle-class people last?" And the Nevada Democratic Party also held a press conference hitting Mitt Romney on his foreclosure comments.

Following the news that Mitt Romney was supporting efforts to pass so-called "Personhood" Amendments in Florida and other states – dangerous initiatives restricting a woman's right to choose even in cases of rape, incest and life of the mother and potentially all but banning most forms of birth control and IVF– DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz held a press conference call with Orange County, Florida Democratic Party Chair Mercado discussing these divisive efforts and Mitt Romney's support for them.

You can read an account of the call here:

Wasserman Schultz 'sounding alarm' on personhood movement, rips Romney

DNC Chairwoman **Debbie Wasserman Schultz** tore into the movement to place "personhood" amendments on state ballots, including Florida, calling the effort "the most extreme assault on a woman's right to choose in a generation."

Her Thursday comments come ahead of a decision by Mississippi voters on Proposition 26, an amendment that would deem any fertilized egg a person, on Tuesday. The Weston congresswoman said Democrats are watching a similar effort to gather signatures for a proposed constitutional amendment on Florida's 2012 ballot.

Getting the question on Florida's ballot would require 676,811 petitions. Senate President **Mike Haridopolos** has already signed a petition, his office [confirmed last week](#).

"We're sounding the alarm bells now because it's absolutely critical that Floridians understand just how extreme this Personhood campaign is," said Wasserman Schultz, of Weston. "Even though we're a year away, and it's a 60 percent requirement for passage, we want to make sure that people are aware of this now so they don't sign the petition."

DNC Chair Wasserman Schultz was also in Pittsburgh this week, where she held a press conference with area Members of Congress and local elected officials on the need to pass the American Jobs Act and infrastructure funding. Later in the week, following a Senate vote in which Republicans voted in unison to block the transportation infrastructure component of the President's jobs bill, DNC Chair Wasserman Schultz released a statement in which she said:

"It's almost hard to believe: This is now the third time in a matter of weeks that Republicans in the Senate have voted in unison to block part or all of the American Jobs Act, which would create jobs and strengthen our economy. First, Republicans filibustered the President's jobs bill in its entirety—then, when President Obama and Democrats tried to move forward with legislation that would prevent hundreds of thousands of teachers and first responders from losing their jobs, the Senate GOP shot that down, too.

"Today, they did it again—voting to block legislation that would make an immediate \$50 billion investment in America's roads and bridges and a \$10 billion investment to create a bipartisan National Infrastructure Bank. This bill would create hundreds of thousands of jobs for construction workers who will rebuild our nation's crumbling roads, bridges, rails and runways—and it would help transform our infrastructure to keep American businesses competitive in the global economy. But Republicans keep standing in the way."

Key Issues in the News and Background

Talking Points: We Can't Wait – Preventing Drug Shortages, Protecting Consumers and Preventing Price Gouging

- Americans are proud that we lead the world in developing some of the most advanced prescription drugs that save lives and fight diseases. Unfortunately, there are times when we run low on certain drugs – which drives up costs and puts patients at risk.
- In the last five years, the number of drug shortages has nearly tripled. Even as the FDA has successfully prevented many of the shortages, there is more we must do.
- We can't wait to act, so President Obama signed an executive order directing the FDA to take action and further reduce and prevent drug shortages to protect consumers and prevent price gouging.
- The President also called on Congress to work together to pass legislation that will provide the FDA with new tools to prevent drug shortages.
- Americans can't wait for an increasingly gridlocked Congress to do its job, and the President will continue to act where they won't.
- The President will continue fighting to restore security for middle-class Americans and rebuild an economy that works for everyone – not just the wealthiest.
- The problems facing our country are serious and the stakes are high. The American people need bipartisan solutions from their leaders in Washington, but Republicans in Congress continue to put party before country and block legislation that will get more Americans back to work and grow the economy.
- President Obama will continue pushing Congress to pass the American Jobs Act piece by piece, but will use executive action to ease the burdens on the middle class because Americans can't wait.

- These actions aren't a replacement for the bold action we need to spur job creation and economic growth, but they will have an impact.
- As President Obama continues taking executive actions, it's up to Republicans in Congress to do what is right for the country. Republicans have a chance to vote on a bill that would immediately invest \$50 billion in our nation's surface transportation infrastructure and a \$10 billion investment to create a bipartisan National Infrastructure Bank. These two initiatives will put hundreds of thousands of construction workers back on the job rebuilding our roads, runways, and rails.

Executive actions last week:

- On Monday, President Obama outlined a series of steps that will make it easier for responsible homeowners who have little or no equity in their homes to capitalize on current low mortgage rates.
- On Tuesday, the President issued a challenge to Community Health Centers to put 8,000 veterans to work – roughly one veteran for every health center site – over the course of the next three years. The Administration is also working to increase opportunities for veterans who have medical training to obtain jobs as physician assistants.
- On Wednesday, President Obama announced an executive action that improves college affordability and makes it easier for students to pay back their federal student loans.
- And on Friday, the Obama Administration directed agencies to start taking steps to expedite the process of transferring federal research and development from laboratories to the marketplace. Additionally, the Administration called for the creation of BusinessUSA, a one-stop, central online service that allows businesses that are interested in either beginning to export or increasing exports to gain access to information about federal programs that are available – so that they won't have to waste their time trying to sort through all the federal bureaucracy.
- These actions build upon existing efforts to act in the interest of the middle class. One such effort was our decision to quit waiting for Congress to make the necessary changes to No Child Left Behind, and to provide states with the flexibility needed to ensure that our children are meeting higher standards.
- The Administration took action to significantly decrease the amount of time it takes for small businesses to receive payment when they are in a contract with the federal government.
- The Administration also did away with regulations that are out of date, which will save billions of dollars for hospitals and patients. The Administration will keep doing its job – it's time for Congressional Republicans to do theirs. It's time for Congress to put the needs of the American people first, not partisan politics, and do the right thing for our country.

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Talking Points: The President Designates Fort Monroe a National Monument

- President Obama today signed a Proclamation designating Fort Monroe as a National Monument under the Antiquities Act.
- In the words of President Obama, "Fort Monroe has played a part in some of the darkest and some of the most heroic moments in American history." Fort Monroe is the site of the first slave ships landing in the

new world, and it was a refuge during the Civil War for slaves who escaped the South seeking freedom – which led President Lincoln to sign the Emancipation Proclamation.

- Located in Hampton, Virginia, Fort Monroe closed down in September as a military base. However, as a result of the President's proclamation today, Fort Monroe's legacy carries on as a national monument.
- By ensuring that Fort Monroe is restored and used again, the Administration is creating jobs and aiding in the growth of the local economy in Hampton Roads.
- As a matter of fact, an economic analysis that the Fort Monroe Authority commissioned in 2009 estimates that implementing the Fort Monroe Reuse Plan will lead to the creation of almost 3,000 jobs in Virginia.
- Taking these steps won't operate as a replacement for the bold action needed in Congress to grow the economy and restore security for middle-class families, but they will have an impact.
- President Obama will continue pushing Congress to pass the American Jobs Act in a piece-by-piece fashion to put Americans back to work and put more money in the pockets of folks already working.
- Now members of Congress have the chance to cast their vote for legislation that would immediately invest \$50 billion in America's surface transportation infrastructure and invest \$10 billion to form a bipartisan National Infrastructure Bank. These two initiatives will together put hundreds of thousands of construction workers back on the job with projects that rebuild our roads, runways, and rails.

Background on Antiquities Act and Fort Monroe

The Antiquities Act was first exercised in 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt in order to designate Devil's Tower in Wyoming as America's first national monument – since then, 14 presidents have used it to ensure the protection of some of America's most unique natural and historic features – including the Grand Canyon, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Today is the first time the President has exercised his authority under the Antiquities Act.

A historic fort in the Tidewater region of Virginia, Fort Monroe played a key role in slavery's history in America. Fort Monroe, built between the years of 1819 and 1834, has claimed a strategic coastal defensive position as far back as the Virginia Colony's earliest days. It was the location where Dutch traders first took African slaves in 1619. Fort Monroe remained in Union hands during the Civil War, and it became a refuge for slaves who escaped the South seeking freedom. In 1861, it was also the site of General Benjamin Butler's "Contraband Decision" – a historic moment that created a path to freedom for thousands of those enslaved during the Civil War, which was a lead-up to President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

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Talking Points: Putting Construction Workers Back on the Job

- The President today spoke in front of the Key Bridge in Washington, D.C. and urged Congress to pass the transportation component of his jobs bill, the American Jobs Act. This section of the American Jobs Act, if passed, would immediately invest \$50 billion in our country's transportation infrastructure and invest \$10 billion in the formation of a bipartisan National Infrastructure Bank.
- These two initiatives will together create hundreds of thousands of jobs for construction workers who will rebuild our roads, railways and runways.

- Investing in the rebuilding and repair of America's infrastructure is something that has support from both Republicans and Democrats. As Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell put it, "Roads and bridges are not partisan in Washington." And as Republican Congressman Paul Ryan said recently, no one can deny that "infrastructure does create jobs."
- The reality is that there is only one thing blocking our path: simple partisan politics. Sadly, Congressional Republicans are more focused on the next election than they are on the next generation.
- This is not acceptable. We can't wait for members of Congress to do their job, and so where they refuse to take action, President Obama will.
- President Obama will keep fighting to ensure that America's middle class has a sense of security again, and he will continue working to rebuild an economy where all Americans can succeed – not just the wealthiest few. It is critical that we out-innovate, out-educate and out-build the rest of the world.
- While Congress considers legislation that will get hundreds of thousands of construction workers back on the job rebuilding our nation's infrastructure, the Administration will refocus on executive actions that advocate for middle-class families because our country simply can't wait.
- Today, the Administration unveiled a number of common-sense measures that will enhance the review and approval process for transportation-related projects, aid in cutting through red tape, and leverage more funds from the private sector to create jobs and spur private sector growth. These are the steps being taken by the Administration:
 - Directing the Department of Transportation (DOT) to provide \$527 million in competitive TIGER grant awards by the end of the year – this would be months ahead of schedule. The TIGER grant program puts Americans back to work rebuilding America's roads and bridges, as well as doing work on innovative transportation infrastructure projects such as streetcar and light rail systems.
 - Directing the DOT to reduce the amount of time the application process takes for next year's round of TIFIA funding – putting projects on the fast track and getting American workers back on the job faster. TIFIA offers as much as one-third of the funding needed for bridge, tunnel, toll, transit and additional transportation projects on a large scale – this amounts to yearly TIFIA funds of \$110 million that can support a total of \$3 billion in construction projects.
 - Creating a Transportation Rapid Response Team, under the leadership of CEQ and DOT, that will put reviews of surface transportation projects on the fast track. This team will identify and carry out best practices for improving the transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of environmental review and permit decisions with respect to projects in transportation, in addition to protecting the health of the public and getting Americans back on the job.

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Talking Points: Employment Situation in October

- The employment report released today shows private sector growth of 104,000 jobs in the month of October as well as a reduction of the unemployment rate, which edged down to 9.0 percent.

- Despite strong headwinds throughout the year slowing down economic growth, we have now seen 20 straight months of private sector job growth, for a total of 2.8 million jobs over that period. Still, we need a faster rate of economic growth to get more Americans working again.
- President Obama will not rest until every single American who is seeking work can find a job. For that reason, he introduced the American Jobs Act.
- Sadly, Republicans in the Senate have voted in unison for the third time in a matter of weeks to block legislation that would grow the economy and get Americans back on the job. They said “no” to helping the more than one million construction workers who are looking for a job – “no” to putting them back to work with projects needed to rebuild America, including our crumbling roads, bridges, runways and transit systems. This makes absolutely no sense – especially when the employment report from today reveals that America lost 20,000 construction jobs last month.
- Americans deserve an explanation from their Republican elected officials in Congress – why did they refuse to put out-of-work Americans, many of whom were hit hardest by the downturn in the economy, back to work with jobs rebuilding our country?
- The American people deserve to know why the GOP simply will not come to the table and do what is needed to create jobs and restore our economic security immediately.
- The time has come for Congressional Republicans to put the good of the country before partisan politics and listen to the people who elected them to do their job.
- If Congressional Republicans continue to obstruct the American Jobs Act, we will see an expiration of the payroll tax cut at the end of 2011. This will lead to an increase in taxes for the average middle-class family, preventing these families from being able to receive the \$1,500 tax cut proposed by the President. This is not acceptable.
- Republicans need to be worried less about their own job and focused more on jobs for the American people. Until they agree to act, President Obama will proceed with executive actions that move America forward because our country can’t wait.

Recent executive actions by the President:

- In Las Vegas, President Obama outlined a series of steps that will make it easier for responsible homeowners who have little or no equity in their homes to capitalize on current low mortgage rates.
- Last week, the Administration issued a challenge to Community Health Centers to put 8,000 veterans to work – roughly one veteran for every health center site – over the course of the next three years. The Administration is also working to increase opportunities for veterans who have medical training to obtain jobs as physician assistants.
- President Obama announced an executive action that improves college affordability and makes it easier for students to pay back their federal student loans.
- The Administration directed agencies to start taking steps to expedite the process of transferring federal research and development from laboratories to the marketplace. Additionally, the Administration called for the creation of BusinessUSA, a one-stop, central online service that allows businesses that are interested in either beginning to export or increasing exports to gain access to information about federal programs that are available – so that they won’t have to waste their time trying to sort through all the federal bureaucracy.

- These measures are not a replacement for the bold congressional action that is needed to help our economy recover and help middle-class families get ahead, but they do have an impact.

Additional points:

- We need to regain economic security for middle-class families by returning to the core values that made America great. America works best when we work together – when we ensure that Wall Street and Main Street are playing by the same set of rules – where honest, hard work and responsibility are rewarded.
- Our nation can't simply cut and slash our way to economic security for the middle class. We need to out-innovate, out-educate and out-build the rest of the world in order to move forward.
- The American Jobs Act is about rebuilding the economy for the long haul, producing the jobs of the future and making American-made products that will sell in the global economy – rather than outsourcing jobs, allowing for costly loopholes, and making reckless fiscal deals at the expense of America's middle class.
- The American Jobs Act is part of President Obama's plan for growing our economy, and Congress needs to pass it now to get more Americans back to work and put more money back into their pockets.

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