



WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

January 16, 2015

President Proposes to Expand Paid Sick Leave

This week, President Obama traveled to Baltimore, Maryland to announce his plans to expand paid leave in order to benefit working families. On Thursday, the President signed a presidential memorandum implementing six weeks of paid leave for federal employees after the birth or adoption of a child. The President also urged Congress, states, and employers to implement paid leave policies that would allow workers to take the necessary time off in order to care for themselves, a sick child or an ailing parent.



View the President's message [here](#).

The White House reports that 43 million Americans do not receive paid sick leave, which is detrimental to personal health, family health, and public health. The President is providing a fair amount of paid sick leave will help further strengthen the economy by allowing workers the flexibility to care for their families while not sacrificing their livelihood.

As he spoke about the plan, the President said, "The good news is the economy has picked up speed. We are past the point of crisis. We've seen 58 straight months of job growth. We have seen 11 million jobs created. The economy is stable and is building momentum. Now we have to make sure that that economy is benefitting everybody."

Per the White House, the announcement is a part of the President's plans to forward and support policy that helps middle class families benefit from the improving economy. The President also encouraged that "not only that these laws are adopted nationally, but also that employers start adopting these policies as well."

While speaking at a café in Baltimore, the President explained, "By adopting this working families agenda, thinking about how we can provide more flexibility to families, thinking about how we can make sure that moms and dads don't have to choose between looking after their kids and doing what they need to do at work, thinking about all those families that are now trying to care for an aging parent -- that kind of flexibility ultimately is going to make our economy stronger and is just one piece of what needs to be a really aggressive push to ensure that if you work hard in this country then you can make it."

The President has also said that paid leave is a subject he will "amplify in the State of the Union about how we can support working families so that they have the tools to succeed in this new economy." Initiatives like paid leave support middle class families, strengthen the American economy, and allow families to thrive.

***NEW* DNC Video for Christie State of the State: 'A Record we can Celebrate'**

This week, Chris Christie delivered what could be his *final* State of the State address as Governor of New Jersey – at least that would be the case if, ahead of a presidential run, he does what [two-thirds of New Jerseyans want and resigns from office](#). If indeed this is Christie's final address, it's important to take a look at one central question: **what is the "state of the state" under Governor Christie?**

So we at the DNC are taking a look back at Christie's four years of leadership for the Garden State and launching what may be the first Governor Christie legacy video – ***A Record We Can Celebrate***:



Watch the video [here](#).

Under Christie:

- New Jersey ranked **at or near last in the nation in job creation** and has an unemployment rate higher than the national average.
- New Jersey has seen a record-breaking [eight credit downgrades](#).
- New Jersey's property taxes are the [highest in the nation](#), and Christie has raised net property taxes on seniors and the middle class by [more than 20 percent](#).
- New Jersey's debt has increased more than **fifty percent** – from [\\$51 billion](#) in 2009 to more than [\\$78 billion](#) today.
- New Jersey has [distributed \\$4 billion in tax giveaways for corporations](#) – more than *three times* the total amount given out in the *ten years* before he became governor – and the practice has been ["largely unsuccessful"](#) in boosting the state's economy.
- In 2009, when Christie was elected, New Jersey was [the 24th best state in which to do business](#). Now, **it's 43rd**.
- The governor's administration **remains under federal and state investigation**, amid ethical questions surrounding the George Washington Bridge scandal.

So this is the "State of the State" under Chris Christie – a failing economy, fiscal disorder, a broken budget, higher taxes for seniors and the middle class, and giant giveaways to big corporations for jobs that don't materialize, with a cloud of ethical scandal hanging over it all. What a record to launch a presidential campaign on.

[Rand Paul hits New Hampshire with a bang!](#)

During his first foray into New Hampshire of 2015, the self-proclaimed Republican champion of outreach and broadening the GOP's appeal [Rand Paul said](#):

*"You know the thing is that all of these programs – there's always somebody who is deserving. **Everybody in this room knows somebody who is gaming the system.** What I tell people is if you look like me and you hop out of your truck, you shouldn't be getting a disability check. **Over half the people on disability are either anxious or their back hurts, join the club.** Who doesn't get up a little anxious for work every day and their back hurts? Everybody over 40 has a back pain."*

Just take a look at the damage Paul did in **just one day** in New Hampshire. Imagine an entire campaign! Or four entire years in the White House! Yikes.

[Union-Leader: Rand Paul raises interest, ire during visit to NH](#)

U.S. Sen. Rand Paul's first visit to New Hampshire this year as a likely presidential hopeful drew a rebuke from Democrats for a comment he made about people on disability benefits. Paul, during a breakfast meeting with legislators Wednesday, made a remark about certain people "gaming the system." The Democratic National Committee circulated a video clip of Paul's comments and New Hampshire Democratic Party Chairman Ray Buckley called it insulting to people with disabilities.

[NH Journal: Buckley, Dems say Paul's disability comments sound like Romney](#)

Just a few hours into his first presidential campaign-style visit to New Hampshire Wednesday, Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul was taken to task by Democrats for saying that "over half the people on disability" do not deserve to receive federal assistance. Leading the criticism was New Hampshire Democratic Party chairman Raymond Buckley, who is also a vice chair of the Democratic National Committee. He called Paul's comments "ridiculously reminiscent" of 2012 GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney's comments that 47 percent of Americans are dependent on the government and would never vote for him.

[AP: Paul: Some game system to get undeserved disability payments](#)

Republican Sen. Rand Paul said Wednesday that some people "game the system" to receive disability payments they don't deserve and later criticized the federal government for not doing an adequate job policing a system he says needs reform.

View the rest of the articles on our Factivists site [here](#).

And lest we forget...

[Real Clear Politics: Paul Says He'd Be "Happy" to Dissolve the U.N.](#)

*Speaking to a room full of gun rights advocates at the Londonderry Fish & Game Club, Paul said that while the concept of having a multinational body to "discuss diplomacy" isn't necessarily a bad one, he objects to the current structure, in which the United States has to foot "a huge chunk" of the U.N.'s bill. **"I dislike paying for something that two-bit Third World countries with no freedom attack us and complain about the United States,"** Paul said. **"There's a lot of reasons why I don't like the U.N., and I think I'd be happy to dissolve it."***

Joni Ernst to give the SOTU response? Of course she is.

This week, the GOP announced that Iowa Senator Joni Ernst will deliver their reaction to the President's State of the Union address next week. Of course they did. She fits perfectly into the GOP's ideology of putting special interests and the wealthy ahead of middle class American families.

Instead of supporting policies that will benefit working families, Joni Ernst, like the Republican Party as a whole, chooses time and time again to stand with big corporations or those special interests that helped get her elected. Just look at Ernst's record:

- Ernst would protect tax breaks for companies that ship American jobs overseas, while Democrats in Congress want to get rid of special loopholes and maneuvers that allow corporations to avoid paying their fair share.
- Ernst has supported the Paul Ryan budget which would have cut taxes for the wealthy and corporations and extended the Bush tax cuts for those at the top. Meanwhile Democrats have and will continue to cut taxes for middle class families.
- Ernst would cut Pell Grants and privatize student loans to help the bottom line of banks and lenders but not students. On the other hand, President Obama has laid out a plan to provide 2-years of community college for free, to any student who will work for it.
- Ernst refuses to stand up and support a women's right to equal pay or empower workers with the tools they need to fight wage discrimination by corporations. Conversely, President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and Democrats continue to work to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.
- Ernst would eliminate the federal minimum wage altogether, keeping the minimum wage in her home state of Iowa at seven dollars and twenty five cents per hour – just \$15,000 a year for a full time worker to live on. Instead, President Obama and Democrats continue to support an increased minimum wage that will expand opportunity for more families.

So while many may be surprised by today's announcement of Joni Ernst delivering the GOP response to the President's State of the Union, we're not, just look at her record and positions.

Joint DNC/TDP Memo: The Real Legacy of Rick Perry

FROM: Lily Adams, Democratic National Committee Deputy Communications Director, and Gilberto Hinojosa, Texas Democratic Party Chair
TO: Interested Parties
SUBJECT: The Real Legacy of Rick Perry
DATE: January 15, 2015

This week, Rick Perry is addressing the Texas Legislature for the last time as Governor. But while Perry will attempt to rattle off accomplishments from his tenure as Governor, what most Texans won't hear is the real legacy Perry is leaving behind, and what will ultimately define him as Governor of Texas.

Perry's legacy is more than the two-count Federal indictment hanging over his head, *the real legacy of Rick Perry is putting his allies and special interests ahead of Texas families, supporting an economy that works for the wealthy few, and leaving middle class and low income families behind.*

Rick Perry has created two states in Texas. One for those who are well connected and at the top who benefit from his policies, and one for working and middle class Texans who are left to pay for, or cope with his decisions.

In education, Rick Perry has slashed billions of dollars from education funding. College tuition rates in Texas jumped by 55% since 2003, putting the dream of earning a college degree further out of reach for many Texans.

As Governor, Rick Perry has attacked the idea of raising the minimum wage which would benefit hundreds of thousands of Texans. Even though Texas has more workers that earn the minimum wage – or less – than any state in the country, Perry still refuses to help them.

And under Perry's watch, the percentage of Texans living in poverty in his state has gone from bad, to worse. Since Perry took office, poverty rates in Texas increased from 15.1% to 17.5% – which is higher than the national average. And yet Perry insists that Texas doesn't have an income inequality problem.

Instead of creating one Texas to lift everyone up, Rick Perry chose to leave millions of Texans behind. And in the case of Medicaid, Perry chose to send hard-earned Texas tax dollars to other states like California, instead of bringing them home to extend health care security to more people.

These are Governor Rick Perry's results after 14 years in the governor's mansion. Putting his allies, special interests and the wealthy few ahead of middle class, and low income families. Some legacy.

In the States

- On Tuesday, Wisconsin Democratic Party Chair Mike Tate released the following statement prior to Governor Scott Walker's State of the State address: "Wisconsin is in Scott Walker's rear-view mirror as he begins his campaign for president. For the past 12 months Walker promised Wisconsinites that he wanted to be our governor for the next four years, but in the eight days since his second term began we've heard more about Walker's plans to run for president than his plans for how to help working Wisconsin families." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Tuesday, New Jersey Democratic Party Chair John Currie released the following statement in response to Governor Chris Christie's State of the State address, calling attention to the fact that Governor Christie spent close to 40 percent of last year traveling outside the state: "New Jersey families deserve a governor committed to hard work and sacrifice, and not someone chasing his selfish political aspirations. In today's speech, the governor missed the opportunity to demonstrate a genuine interest in compromise, cooperation or contrition, and he showed little compassion for the families struggling in the poor economic environment that his policies continue to foster." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Tuesday, Maine Democratic Party Chair Phil Bartlett released the following statement in support of the economic priorities put forth by Speaker of the House Mark Eves and Senate Democratic Leader Justin Alford: "Maine Democratic leaders have outlined economic priorities that will help Maine's middle class get ahead. Our Party's vision is to strengthen Maine's economy from the ground up, brick by brick, in a way that really impacts people's lives. Democrats are investing in long-term solutions that will expand our job market, diversify our workforce and grow Maine's small businesses. The result will be growing more jobs and stronger wages." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Wednesday, Louisiana Democratic Party Executive Director Stephen Handwerk criticized Governor Bobby Jindal's use of state resources in order to advance presidential ambitions. Executive Director Handwerk released this statement: "We've known for a very long time that Governor Jindal spends most of his waking moments advancing his political future, rather than doing the job that Louisiana taxpayers are paying him to do. Now it's becoming clear that Jindal has no problem with using state employees and resources to advance his political future. Despite all of the crises facing Louisiana right now, Jindal is jetting off to Europe to burnish his foreign policy credentials. There is simply no acceptable reason why the governor's official press office should be working overtime to promote what is essentially a campaign speech." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Wednesday, the Florida Democratic Party revealed how Governor Rick Scott lied when telling reporters that FDLE Commissioner Gerald Bailey resigned on his own volition. Bailey said that he was forced out by Governor Scott, noting, "If he said I resigned voluntarily, that's a lie." The Florida Democratic Party had the following 5 questions for Governor Scott: "1. Why was Bailey, who served competently for years, forced to resign? 2. Why did Rick Scott lie repeatedly about this circumstances of Bailey's firing? 3. Why did Pete Antonacci lie to Bailey, in an apparent violation of Florida law, when he claimed the cabinet supported Scott's decision to fire him? 4. Why are cabinet members shirking their duties and simply doing as Rick Scott dictates? Not one of them could explain why they voted to replace Bailey — in fact, all three did little but praise him — although they share oversight of FDLE with Gov. Scott. 5. The Tampa Bay Times has reported that Pete Antonacci instructed Bailey to destroy public records. What other records has the Scott administration told state employees to destroy?" Read the full press release [here](#).