



WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

April 24, 2015

President Obama Addresses Climate Change and Highlights Efforts of Restoration and Protection

This past Wednesday, in celebration of Earth Day, President Barack Obama traveled to the Florida Everglades and spoke on the realities of climate change and the necessity of acting immediately against its effects in order to preserve the environment and restore the damage that has already been done.

President Obama stressed the immediacy of climate change, stating that it is a current issue, not a problem of the future. He addressed the various ways climate change damages the country's well-being, highlighting the fact that this is more than an environmental issue – it's a public health issue, a national security issue, and an economic issue.

“SIMPLY REFUSING TO SAY THE WORDS ‘CLIMATE CHANGE’ DOESN'T MEAN THAT CLIMATE CHANGE ISN'T HAPPENING.”

– PRESIDENT OBAMA

Read the President's full remarks [here](#).

“Climate change can no longer be denied. It can't be edited out. It can't be omitted from the conversation. And action can no longer be delayed,” said the President.

President Obama emphasized some of the important steps the country has taken in combatting climate change, including leading the way in clean energy usage, pledging to double the speed at which the U.S. cuts carbon pollution, and working with the international community to initiate collaboration and cooperation in fighting this global problem.

The President used his trip to the Everglades to discuss both the disastrous effects of climate change – such as rising sea levels affecting freshwater wildlife and drinking water in Florida – as well as stressing the need to restore and protect the national parks that serve as imperative components of the country's ecosystem. He set forth a number of proposals that would set the standard for prioritizing the importance of national parks, including dedicating \$25 million for national park restoration projects and starting the “Every Kid In A Park” initiative, which would give all fourth graders free admission to national parks for a year so they can learn about the history and science of the world around them.

“I'm going to keep doing everything I can to prepare and protect America from the worst effects of climate change, including fighting for clean air, clean water,” the President said. “Because in places like this, folks don't have time, we don't have time – you do not have time to deny the effects of climate change. Folks are already busy dealing with it.”

President Obama urged Americans to continue leading the effort in combating climate change, stating that it is the country's duty to stand up collectively to problems that affect the nation. He noted how “Americans from all walks of life” are confronting the challenge of climate change “because they know that simply refusing to say the words “climate change” doesn't mean that climate change isn't happening.”

In his remarks, the President prioritized protecting the planet and ensuring that the benefits of a strong and properly functioning environment can be enjoyed by future generations is a bipartisan issue.

MEMO: Jeb Bush & Marco Rubio's Earth Day Dilemma

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Holly Shulman, DNC National Press Secretary

DATE: April 22, 2015

RE: Jeb Bush & Marco Rubio's Earth Day Dilemma

This past Wednesday was Earth Day – a time to reflect on environmental policies and increase awareness about the effects of climate change.

On one hand – you have scientists, the Pentagon, and the American people who are highly concerned about climate change and want a leader to take steps to address it. On the other hand, you have a team of Republican candidates who deny all the facts to bury their heads in the sand and refuse to address it.

Quite the predicament.

One thing is for certain: Marco Rubio and Jeb Bush are way out of touch with mainstream America as they continue to deny climate science.

But don't just take our word for it – just look at their positions, and the scathing reviews:

Marco Rubio: "I do not believe that human activity is causing these dramatic changes to our climate the way these scientists are portraying it."

- Washington Post: Rubio's position on climate change is "[not just cowardly but intellectually hollow](#)" and "[fails a basic test of leadership](#)."
- Politifact: "Not only is Rubio incorrect, but he's ignoring a mountain of concrete, scientific research. [We rate his claim False](#)."
- Washington Post: "Marco Rubio's rhetoric on climate change [casts questions about his judgment](#)"

Jeb Bush: "I'm a skeptic. I'm not a scientist. I think the science has been politicized."

- The Guardian: "When it comes to climate change, [Jeb Bush is a lot more radical than his brother](#)."
- Grist: "[Category: Flat-Earther](#). While President George W. Bush never did anything about global warming, his brother goes further, by not even admitting it exists."
- Tampa Bay Times: "[Jeb Bush sounds sort of like Rubio](#) on climate change"

Sadly, the rest of the Republican Party's presidential hopefuls are right there with them:

- Chris Christie: "I'm a little skeptical" that global warming is caused by humans.
- Ted Cruz not only denied climate science, but even said "in the last 17 years, satellite data shows there's been no warming whatsoever."
- Bobby Jindal questioned the role of humans in climate change "and what, if any, dangers that change presents for Americans."
- Rand Paul is skeptical of climate change, saying "There is some question as to the validity of the science."
- Rick Perry claimed scientists were doubting climate change and accused scientists "to be manipulating data."
- Scott Walker has actively worked against legislation addressing climate change in Wisconsin.

So on this Earth Day, the question remains: if scientists, activists, public opinion, and the devastating [danger to their home state](#) aren't enough to convince them – what would it take for Marco Rubio, Jeb Bush and the rest of the Republican candidates to acknowledge one of the most pressing issues facing the next President of the United States?

The answer: A less extreme Republican Party and some backbone from the GOP's presidential candidates. Too bad neither of those things are likely to show up anytime soon.

The Feministing Five: Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz
FEMINISTING // SUZANNA BOBADILLA

For this week's Feministing Five, we spoke with DNC Chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz has been in the House for ten years, serving for Florida's 23rd Congressional District. She has been a national leader for reproductive rights and has fought for women's health care throughout her tenure.

Suzanna Bobadilla: Thank you so much for speaking with us! To get started, you've had quite a busy week. Can you explain what's going on?

Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz: Well, now that the 2016 presidential nomination process is fully underway on both sides of the aisle, my role as chair of the Democratic National Committee is to make sure that we show voters across the country the deep and stark contrast between the clown car of the Republican candidates and our candidates. Ultimately, when voters choose who they want to be President of the United States, it will be a Democratic nominee, whoever it is, because of the issues that matter most to them.

That's my job until we have a nominee — to highlight that contrast, particularly on issues that are going to drive voters' decisions, like the economy, jobs, health care, reproductive choice, pay check fairness, and LGBT equality.

SB: This past week, you were involved in a public conversation with Rand Paul's campaign about his stance on abortion. The back and forth had me thinking about a national survey that Vox conducted where 39 percent of Americans wouldn't define themselves as pro-life or pro-choice, but somewhere outside those boxes. As 2016 gets nearer, how do you anticipate reaching out to those folks?

DWS: Well, not the way that Rand Paul chose to. When he announced his candidacy, even on the first full day of his campaign, he did all that he could not to answer the question that he was asked about his views on reproductive choice. I think a discussion on reproductive choice will help voters decide who to vote for. The Republican candidates all have very different definitions of personal liberties than ours do — they all support government making decisions that would undo *Roe v. Wade*.

Our nominee would support a woman's right to make decisions with her doctor, and that is where the majority of the country is. Most voters don't think that their government should be involved in those decisions, and most voters think that the protections that *Roe v. Wade* provided should not be undone. The point that I tried to make during the back-and-forth with Rand Paul was that there have been abortion restrictions that states have made, I don't agree with most of those, but we do have the rights for a woman to make her own choice in this country and if the Republicans won the election, well, we've seen just how far they roll back rights in the past.

SB: As Hillary Clinton just announced her candidacy for 2016, there has been much discussion on feminism and national presidential politics. How do you think feminism will fit into the 2016 election and will it be different than years past?

DWS: For me, I'm in the sandwich generation of women whose moms were in the midst of the 70s advent of feminism and during my formative years, feminism fell out of favor and it was viewed negatively. A lot of women didn't want to call themselves feminists. I have two daughters — a 15-year-old and an eleven-year-old — and while they aren't quite at the stage where they know how to define themselves in that way, if you were to ask young women today and put that same question to my girls about the elements of feminism, they would fully embrace those concepts. They would fully embrace the idea that when they grow up, they should have the same opportunities that their men counterparts have. Of course they would want equal pay for equal work. Of course they should have the right to make decisions about their own bodies. Of course when they decide who they want to marry, it should be equal. Of course treatment in the workplace should be equal. The building blocks and definition and underpinnings of feminism are fully embraced by millennials and younger generations. I think that we have started to come full circle and that those young women have embraced the term.

But honestly — and I have always called myself a feminist and I have never run from that word — I think the label doesn't matter too much. What's going to matter in this presidential campaign is that we have a president who is going to embrace policies that ensure everyone can realize every bit of their potential.

View the full interview [here](#).

Gov. Walker, welcome to a state that works (just sayin')
MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE // R.T. RYBAK

The presidential hopeful, visiting his neighbor to the west for a GOP fundraiser, might want to take note of what we did differently.

Today, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker visits Minneapolis to speak at a local GOP fundraising dinner. But while his visit may be just political in nature, I sure hope the governor takes a few pointers on how a state's economy can and should be run.

In 2010, both Wisconsin and Minnesota faced similar budget woes and a worrisome economic future amid a national recession. Both are also Midwest states, deeply invested in manufacturing and agricultural economic drivers. The only difference was that Minnesotans elected DFL Gov. Mark Dayton to turn Minnesota around, while Wisconsinites chose Scott Walker to lead their state's recovery.

Only one governor was successful.

In Minnesota, Dayton turned a \$5 billion budget deficit into a more than \$1 billion budget surplus in just one term. By raising taxes on the wealthiest earners, Minnesota is now in a position to invest more resources into the state's schools and infrastructure.

In Wisconsin, Walker was unable to take his state out of the red and is still facing a \$2 billion budget deficit. Walker made the decision to cut taxes for millionaires and billionaires, while slashing programs and refusing investments at the expense of middle-class families and Wisconsin's financial well-being.

In Minnesota, Dayton has moved forward Democratic policies like increasing the minimum wage, expanding Medicaid and investing in the middle class, and now we are seeing one of the most business-friendly states in the country. Just this year, Forbes ranked Minnesota as the ninth best state for business, seventh in economic climate and second in quality of life.

In Wisconsin, Walker opposed a minimum-wage increase and equal-pay legislation, rejected federal funds to expand Medicaid, and attacked Wisconsin workers with right-to-work and anti-collective-bargaining policies. As a result, the cost of doing business in Wisconsin is higher than the national average, and median household income is thousands less than in Minnesota.

The facts are clear: Walker and the Republican trickle-down economic policies have made it practically impossible for Wisconsin to recover from the recession, and the state consistently sits at the bottom of the region in private-sector job growth.

But I don't fault Wisconsinites for electing Walker, who in turn destroyed their state's economy.

Instead, I fault Walker for deceiving his constituents, deeply polarizing the state and using previous elections just to catapult himself into a presidential run.

The reality is, Walker can travel around Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina, but his failed tenure as governor will forever be his shadow.

So please, Gov. Walker, while you are in Minnesota today, take note of a thriving economy. Our neighbors to the east could use the help.

R.T. Rybak is a vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee and a former mayor of Minneapolis.

Another week in review for the GOP 2016 field

Another week on the campaign and “those considering a campaign” trail and our GOP 2016ers just keep making things harder for themselves.

Let’s take a look:

Jeb Bush

This week, Jeb [made his clearest statement yet](#) on DACA and DAPA, saying he would undo President Obama’s executive actions that protect millions of hardworking individuals living in this country from the constant threat of deportation. Jeb Bush’s policies would leave millions of families in the dark, without real options or solutions.

Here’s more on his comments:

TPM: [Jeb Bush Vows To Overturn Obama’s Actions On Immigration](#)

Sunshine State News: [Jeb Bush Vows to Repeal Obama’s Immigration Executive Actions](#)

Scott Walker

This week, Governor Walker told Glenn Beck that he now supports limiting legal immigration. Yes, you read that right: limiting *legal* immigration. And you know things are pretty bad when even GOP Senators and a former aide are calling out Walker for his latest comments.

Here’s how it went for him:

Politico: [Scott Walker camp denies ‘Olympics-quality flip-flop’ on immigration](#)

TPM: [GOP Senators Criticize Scott Walker For Casting Doubt On Legal Immigration](#)

Mother Jones: [Former Walker Aide Blasts Walker for Immigration Flip-Flop](#)

The Hill – [Scott Walker, the GOP’s new self-deportation champion](#)

Chris Christie

Christie brought out his naturally offensive and aggressive personality again this week [questioning](#) whether President Obama cares about America. This attack is pretty hypocritical, coming from a governor who has completely abandoned his state to pursue his political ambitions. While Chris Christie [has been campaigning](#), New Jersey got whacked with its 9th debt [downgrade](#), an epically [bad pollution settlement](#), underfunded pensions, and on top of all that, the state’s likely going to see a few Bridgegate indictments [any day now](#). No wonder he’s losing friends left [and right](#).

Here’s some coverage from around his state this week below:

Asbury Park Press: Poll – [Christie a strong leader? New Jerseyans unconvinced](#)

International Business Times: [Chris Christie Gave Millions More Pension Dollars To Donor’s Firm Than Disclosed, Documents Show](#)

The Record: [Three Christie transition team members backing Jeb Bush for president](#)

Princeton Packet: [Former Gov. Whitman would prefer that Gov. Christie not run for president](#)

NJ Spotlight: [Christie Budget Doesn’t Fund Permanent Fix for Social-Services Computers](#)

Rand Paul

On Wednesday, Rand Paul skipped his Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on funding for the State Department, including for protecting “safety and security of U.S. citizens, government employees and facilities overseas,” to go on a radio show criticizing Secretary Clinton on Benghazi. After over a dozen hearings, seven investigations, and millions of dollars spent on this investigation, you’d think Senator Paul would be more interested in finding a way to prevent another tragedy like this from happening than pursuing his 2016 presidential ambitions. Think again.

CNN: [Rand Paul skips hearing on State funding, hits Clinton on Benghazi](#)

Marco Rubio

This week, Marco Rubio got caught talking out of both sides of his mouth on immigration to try to hide how disastrous he would be for the Latino community. Rubio says one thing on immigration to raise money for his campaign when he’s [behind closed doors](#). But in public, he says and does another. He [has run away from his own immigration reform](#) package and supported an effort to shut down part of the government to reverse a commonsense policy that keeps families together. Voters can’t trust him to tell them where they stand, nor to do the right thing for them.

Here’s more on him talking out of both sides of his mouth:

Buzzfeed: [Marco Rubio Rakes In Donor Money By Touting Immigration Record — Behind Closed Doors](#)

DNC Statement on the Confirmation of Loretta Lynch

"It's about time Senate Republicans finally came to the table and allowed a vote to confirm Loretta Lynch as our next attorney general. Instead of working to ensure that our justice system serves its citizens to the best of its ability by swiftly confirming Lynch, Republicans chose to delay her confirmation for longer than any attorney general nominee in over three decades for purely political purposes. As the president noted, this was embarrassing and it is a clear demonstration of what Republican leadership looks like. Moving forward, Americans deserve leaders who will get

Congratulations,
LORETTA LYNCH
ATTORNEY GENERAL
of the UNITED STATES



things done for the American people, leaders like Loretta Lynch – not more of this obstructionist nonsense that we've seen from the likes of Marco Rubio, Rand Paul, and Ted Cruz; all of whom voted against her confirmation. And to be clear, it was bad enough that they held up her nomination and voted against this extraordinarily qualified first female African American attorney general, but to add insult to injury, the things that Republican presidential hopefuls said about her throughout this process were horrible, and completely uncalled for." – **Michael Tyler, DNC spokesperson**

A quick reminder of some of the lowlights:

- Rand Paul: When asked about Lynch's nomination, he responded, "[Oh, she's going down.](#)" Paul later called for 10,000 people to sign his petition to "[Stop Loretta Lynch.](#)"
- Marco Rubio argued that her support for President Obama's efforts to assist DREAMers "should disqualify her from being the next attorney general."
- Ted Cruz brazenly [declared](#) that "no senator who takes his or her oath of office seriously should vote to confirm such a nominee."
- Scott Walker believes that Loretta Lynch "[is not fit to serve as the nation's attorney general.](#)"

In the States

- On Tuesday, the Democratic Party of Oregon highlighted the policies supported by Jeb Bush that would make voting harder and add unfair hurdles to voting. Bush's support for restrictions on voting rights stand as a clear contrast to Oregon Governor Kate Brown's historic voting legislation creating automatic voter registration system. Chair of the Democratic Party of Oregon Frank Dixon released the following statement: "As Democrats, we believe that when more Americans participate in our democracy, it results in policies that work for everyone. Oregonians should be wary of Jeb Bush, who is lobbying to make voting harder, and who has pushed for restrictive photo identification laws that are designed to keep minorities, young people, and seniors from voting. Americans deserve a president who wants more – not less – participation in our democracy." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Wednesday, as a part of Earth Day, the Democratic Party of Georgia addressed the absurd denial of climate change by GOP presidential hopefuls. Democratic Party of Georgia Chairman Dubose Porter released the following statement: "Earth Day is an opportunity for us to look around and appreciate the natural beauty we've been blessed with. This day should remind us to do everything possible to protect our state's precious natural resources. Unfortunately, climate change really does present an imminent threat to our planet. Yet, most Republicans would rather bury their head in the sand than acknowledge facts. Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that warming trends are likely manmade—these are the experts on the subject. But Republicans would rather maintain denial on the matter that, in my opinion, is only motivated by political expediency." Read the full press release [here](#).
- This Earth Day, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker celebrated by laying off members of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources. 57 employees received notices this week that they could face layoff as a result of Walker's budget. Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Mike Tate released the following statement: "Given his horrible record on protecting Wisconsin's natural resources, it's fitting that Scott Walker's celebration of Earth Day involves laying off 57 employees at the Department of Natural Resources. Gutting environmental protections and denying climate change might make Walker more popular with far-right caucus voters as he runs for president, but Wisconsinites aren't beholden to radical extremists at the expense of our conservation heritage." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Thursday, the Florida Democratic Party criticized Republican state representatives for failing to support the policies that would benefit their constituents, choosing to rather insert partisan politics and obstructionism into the lives of Floridians. The Florida Democratic Party had the following to say about Florida Republicans' opposition to Medicaid expansion: "More than 136,000 uninsured Floridians who would benefit from the Senate's Medicaid expansion plan live in the districts of Representatives Crisafulli, Corcoran, Young, and Hudson — the House GOP leadership team... Floridians expect and deserve more than gridlock, grandstanding, and hypocrisy from their elected officials. If Richard Corcoran and his minions think the voters prefer dysfunctional infighting that punishes the uninsured and local hospitals over bipartisan, commonsense compromise, they will be in for a rude awakening when they go back home after session. It's time for Floridians to find out where House Republican member's loyalties lie. Are they more committed to blindly following Richard Corcoran and Americans for Prosperity or are they committed to doing what's right for their constituents? Floridians deserve an up or down vote in the House on Medicaid expansion." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Thursday, the Iowa Democratic Party highlighted the importance of education funding initiatives supported by Democratic legislators but opposed by Republicans in the state. House Republicans refuse to compromise with Senate Democrats even a week after school districts were required to certify their upcoming budget. Iowa Democratic Party Chair Andy McGuire released the following statement: "Study after study shows that states that properly fund their schools have higher academic achievement. The GOP is playing politics with our schools, and it's our students and their families who will face the consequences of Republican's inadequate funding, resulting in fewer teachers, bigger classroom sizes and higher property taxes. We're sending the Republicans one simple message: Enough is Enough." Read the full press release [here](#).