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The President's Weekly Address
February 1, 2014

Hi, everybody. This week, I delivered my State of the Union Address. Today here's the three-minute version.

After 4 years of economic growth with 8 million new private sector jobs, our unemployment rate is the lowest it's been in more than 5 years. And with the economy speeding up, companies say they intend to hire more people this year.

But while those at the top are doing better than ever, average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Too many Americans are working harder and harder just to get by. And too many still aren't working at all.

Our job is to reverse those trends. It's time to restore opportunity for all people: the idea that no matter who you are, if you work hard and live up to your responsibilities, you can make it if you try.

The opportunity agenda I laid out on Tuesday has four parts. This week, I took them on the road. Job one is more new jobs: jobs in construction and manufacturing, jobs in innovation and energy. In Wisconsin, I talked with plant workers at GE about part two: training more Americans with the skills to fill those new jobs. In Tennessee, I talked with students about part three: guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education, from early childhood, through college, and right into a career. And with steelworkers in Pittsburgh and retail workers in Maryland, I laid out part four: making sure hard work pays off for men and women, with wages you can live on, savings you can retire on, and health insurance that's there for you when you need it.

These ideas will strengthen the middle class and help more people work their way into the middle class. Some of them will require Congress. But wherever I can take steps to expand opportunity for more families on my own, I will. I'm going to ask business leaders, education leaders, and philanthropic leaders to partner with us to advance these goals.

And every single day, I'm going to fight for these priorities: to shift the odds back in favor of more working and middle class and to keep America a place where you can always make it if you try.

Thanks. Have a great weekend. And enjoy the Super Bowl.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:05 p.m. on January 31 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on February 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 31, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 1.

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