

**The President's Weekly Address**

*September 5, 2015*

Hi, everybody. I hope most of you are gearing up for a long weekend with family and friends: maybe some barbecues, road trips, or fantasy drafts. But I wanted to take a moment to talk to you about the real meaning of Labor Day, a day we set aside every year to honor the hard-working men and women who fought for so many of the rights that we take for granted today.

The 8-hour workday, 40-hour workweek, weekends. Overtime and the minimum wage. Safer workplaces. Health insurance, Social Security, Medicare, and retirement plans. All of those gains were fought for and won by the labor movement, folks who were working not just for a bigger paycheck for themselves, but for more security and prosperity for the folks working next to them as well. That's how we built the great American middle class.

And that's the spirit we've been working to restore these past 6½ years. On Friday, we found out that the economy created another 173,000 jobs in August. Over the past 5½ years, our businesses have created 13.1 million new jobs in total, the longest streak of job creation on record. The unemployment rate dropped to 5.1 percent, the lowest it's been in 7 years. The American auto industry is on track to sell more cars and trucks this year than it has in more than a decade. Sixteen million Americans have gained the security of health insurance. Seventeen States and about 30 cities and counties have raised the minimum wage. And we've proposed extending overtime protections to as many as 5 million Americans. All of that is progress.

Now, this month, Congress has an opportunity to continue that progress. As always, the deadline for Congress to pass a budget is the end of September. Every year. This is not new. And if they don't, they'll shut down the Government for the second time in 2 years. At a time when the global economy faces headwinds and America's economy is a relative bright spot in the world, a shutdown of our Government would be wildly irresponsible. It would be an unforced error that saps the momentum we've worked so hard to build. Plain and simple, a shutdown would hurt working Americans.

It doesn't have to happen. If Congress wants to support working Americans and strengthen our middle class, they can pass a budget that invests in, not makes cuts to, the middle class. If they pass a budget with shortsighted sequester cuts that harm our military and our economy, I will veto it. If they make smart investments in our military readiness, our infrastructure, our schools, public health, and research, I'll sign that budget, and they know that.

So let's get it done. Our economy doesn't need another round of threats and brinkmanship. Nobody gets to play games with our economy or the middle class I grew up in and you grew up in. Tell Congress to pass a budget that reflects the values we honor on Labor Day: rewarding hard work, giving everybody a fair shot, and working together to give all of our kids a better life.

Thanks, everybody, and enjoy your weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:15 p.m. on September 4 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on September 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 4, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 5.

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