

I want to commend all the Members of Congress, and their leadership is what made this bill possible. Many of them are here today. I'm also gratified that over a dozen Republicans agreed that the need for this jobs bill was urgent, and that they were willing to break out of the partisan morass to help us take this forward step for the American people. I hope this is a prelude to further cooperation in the days and months to come, as we continue to work on digging our way out of the recession and rebuilding our economy in a way that works for all Americans and not just some Americans.

After all, the jobs bill I'm signing today, and our broader efforts to achieve a recovery, aren't about politics. They're not about Democrat versus Republican. This isn't a game that we're playing here. They're about the people in this country who are out of work and looking for a job. They're about all the Americans of every race and region and age who've shared their stories with me over the last year.

The single mother who's told me she's filled out hundreds of job applications and been on dozens of interviews, but still hasn't found a job. The father whose son told me he started working when he was a teenager and recently found himself out of a job for the very first time in his life. The children who write to me, they're worried about their moms and their dads, worried about what the future holds for their families.

That's who I'm thinking about every morning when I enter into the Oval Office. That's who I'm signing this bill for. And that's who I'm going to continue to fight for so long as I am President of the United States.

So with that, let me sign this bill and let's get to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. H.R. 2847, approved March 18, was assigned Public Law No. 111-147.

## Statement on a Bipartisan Immigration Reform Framework *March 18, 2010*

In June, I met with members of both parties and assigned Secretary Napolitano to work with them and key constituencies around the country to craft a comprehensive approach that will finally fix our broken immigration system. I am pleased to see that Senators Schumer and Graham have produced a promising, bipartisan framework which can and should be the basis for moving forward. It thoughtfully addresses the need to shore up our borders and demands accountability from both workers who are here illegally and employers who game the system.

My administration will be consulting further with the Senators on the details of their proposal, but a critical next step will be to translate their framework into a legislative proposal and for Congress to act at the earliest possible opportunity.

I congratulate Senators Schumer and Graham for their leadership and pledge to do everything in my power to forge a bipartisan consensus this year on this important issue so we can continue to move forward on comprehensive immigration reform.

## Memorandum on Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians *March 18, 2010*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security*

*Subject:* Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians

Since 1991, the United States has provided safe haven for Liberians who were forced to flee their country as a result of armed conflict and widespread civil strife, in part through granting Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

The armed conflict ended in 2003 and conditions improved such that TPS ended effective October 1, 2007. President Bush then deferred the enforced departure of the Liberians originally granted TPS. I extended that grant of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to March 31, 2010. I have determined that there are compelling foreign policy reasons to again extend DED to those Liberians presently residing in the United States under the existing grant of DED.

Pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States, I have determined that it is in the foreign policy interest of the United States to defer for 18 months the removal of any Liberian national, or person without nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia, who is present in the United States and who is under a grant of DED as of March 31, 2010. The grant of DED only applies to an individual who has continuously resided in the United States since October 1, 2002, except for Liberian nationals, or persons without nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia:

- (1) who are ineligible for TPS for the reasons provided in section 244(c)(2)(B) of

the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1254a(c)(2)(B);

- (2) whose removal you determine is in the interest of the United States;

- (3) whose presence or activities in the United States the Secretary of State has reasonable grounds to believe would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States;

- (4) who have voluntarily returned to Liberia or his or her country of last habitual residence outside the United States;

- (5) who were deported, excluded, or removed prior to the date of this memorandum; or

- (6) who are subject to extradition.

Accordingly, I direct you to take the necessary steps to implement for eligible Liberians:

- (1) a deferral of enforced departure from the United States for 18 months from March 31, 2010; and

- (2) authorization for employment for 18 months from March 31, 2010.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 19.

## Remarks at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia March 19, 2010

*The President.* Hello, George Mason! How's everybody doing today? Thank you. Thank you.

*Audience members.* Yes we can! Yes we can! Yes we can!

*The President.* Thank you, everybody. It's good to be back with some real Patriots. I want to thank Dr. Alan Merten, the president of George Mason University, and his family; Dr. Shirley Travis, who's here—thank you; and Coach Larranaga—we were just talking a little bit about—[*applause*—looking forward to picking George Mason in my bracket next year.

*Audience member.* We love you!

*The President.* I love you. I don't know if some of you remember, but I visited this university about 3 years ago for the first time. This

was at just the dawn of my Presidential campaign. It was about 3 weeks old, I think. We didn't have a lot of money. We didn't have a lot of staff. Nobody could pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] Our poll numbers were quite low. And a lot of people in Washington, they didn't think it was even worth us trying.

They had counted us out before we had even started, because the Washington conventional wisdom was that change was too hard. But what we had even then was a group of students here at George Mason who believed that if we worked hard enough and if we fought long enough, if we organized enough supporters, then we could finally bring change to that city across the river. We believed that despite all the