

preliminary report next week on what went wrong and why it went wrong so badly, so that we can take the steps necessary to prevent such accidents in the future.

Because mining is a tradition that's often passed down through generations, it's not uncommon to see an entire family choose this line of work. And sadly, when a tragedy like this occurs, it's also not uncommon to lose almost an entire family all at once.

I spoke to some surviving members of one such family on Wednesday. This week, Tim Davis and two of his nephews, Josh, age 25, and Cory, age 20, were killed in the explosion in the Upper Big Branch mine. Rescuers have reported that Tim and his two nephews were all found together. Two other members of their families that worked in the mine were able to escape unharmed.

And before he left for the mine on Monday, Josh wrote a letter for his girlfriend and young daughter. And in it, he said, "If anything happens to me, I'll be looking down from heaven at you all. I love you. Take care of my baby.

Tell her that daddy loves her. She's beautiful. She's funny. Just take care of my baby girl."

Reflecting on that letter and the losses she endured in just one week, Josh's mother Pam simply said, "It is just West Virginia. When something bad happens, we come together." When something bad happens, we come together.

Through tragedy and heartache, that's the spirit that has sustained this community and this country for over 200 years. And as we pray for the souls of those that we've lost and the safe return of those who are missing, we are also sustained by the words of the Psalm that are particularly poignant right now. Those words read: "You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light."

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Assistant Secretary of Labor for Mine Safety and Health Joseph A. Main. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

The President's Weekly Address *April 10, 2010*

All across America are good, decent folks who meet their obligations each and every day. They work hard. They support their families. They try to make an honest living the best they can. And this weekend, many are sitting down to pay the taxes they owe, not because it's fun, but because it's a fundamental responsibility of our citizenship.

But in tough times, when many families are having trouble just making it all work, tax day can seem even more daunting. This year, however, many Americans are seeing some welcome relief.

So far, Americans who have filed their taxes have discovered that the average refund is up nearly 10 percent this year to an alltime high of about \$3,000. This is due in large part to the Recovery Act. In fact, one-third of the Recovery Act was made up of tax cuts—tax cuts that have already provided more than \$160 billion

in relief for families and businesses, and nearly 100 billion of that goes directly into the pockets of working Americans.

No one I've met is looking for a handout, and that's not what these tax cuts are. Instead, they're targeted relief to help middle class families weather the storm, to jump-start our economy, and to bring the fundamentals of the American Dream—making an honest living, earning an education, owning a home, and raising a family—back within reach for millions of Americans.

First, because folks who work hard should be able to make a decent living, I kept a promise I made when I campaigned for this office and cut taxes for 95 percent of working Americans. For most Americans, this Making Work Pay tax credit began showing up in your paychecks last April. And it continues this year,

for a total of \$400 per individual and \$800 per couple, per year.

Second, because a college education is critical to the success of our workers and our economy, we're helping to make it more affordable for millions of Americans. Millions of students and parents paying for college tuition are now eligible for up to \$2,500 under the American Opportunity Credit. Along with a host of other steps we've taken, this will help us reach our goal of once again having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020.

Third, we're restoring the home as a source of stability and an anchor of the American Dream. If you've bought a home for the first time, you're eligible for a credit of up to \$8,000. And if you bought a new car last year, you can deduct the State and local sales taxes you paid on that car.

Fourth, whether you bought a home for the first time or you've owned one for a long time, if you invested in making your home more energy efficient with certain improvements like new insulation or windows, or you plan to this year, you're eligible for up to \$1,500 in new tax credits. This does more than just put money back in your pocket, it's helping create new clean energy, manufacturing, and construction jobs at small businesses across the country.

Fifth, to help working families with children through difficult times, we increased the earned-income tax credit and allowed more families to qualify for the child tax credit.

Finally, for those who lost their jobs in the recession and need some help getting back on their feet, we provided a 65-percent tax credit to help cover the cost of health care, and we made sure the first \$2,400 in unemployment benefits is tax free.

These are among the tax breaks and savings that are available to over 100 million Americans right now. It's also important to note that the new health reform law includes the largest middle class tax cut for health care in history. And once it's implemented, millions of Americans will finally be able to purchase quality, affordable care and the security and peace of mind that comes with it.

And one thing we have not done is raise income taxes on families making less than

\$250,000 a year. That's another promise that we've kept.

We've also made it easy to find out what's owed to you and your family. After all, the big guys know how to find their tax breaks; it's time you did too. Just visit whitehouse.gov and click on the tax savings tool. It's already been accessed more than 100,000 times by folks who want to see what savings they're owed and how to collect them. If you've already filed your taxes and missed some of the savings available to you, don't worry, you can still amend your returns after April 15 to save hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

And just as each of us meet our responsibilities as citizens, we expect our businesses and our Government to meet theirs in return. That's why I've asked Congress to close some of the biggest tax loopholes exploited by some of our most profitable corporations to avoid paying their fair share or, in some cases, paying taxes at all. That's why we're tightening Washington's belt by cutting programs that don't work and contracts that aren't fair and spending we don't need. And that's why I've proposed a freeze on discretionary spending, signed a law that restores the pay-as-you-go principle that helped produce the surpluses of the 1990s, and created a bipartisan, independent commission to help solve our fiscal crisis and close the deficits that have been growing for a decade. Because I refuse to leave our problems to the next generation.

It's been a tough couple years for America. But the economy is growing again. Companies are beginning to hire again. We are rewarding work and helping more of our people reach for the American Dream again. And while there's no doubt we still face a long journey together, with more steps to take, more obstacles to overcome, and more challenges to face along the way, if there is one thing on which the people of this great country have convinced me, it's that the United States of America will recover, stronger than before.

Thanks for listening, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:50 p.m. on April 7 in the Diplomatic

Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on April 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 9, but was embargoed for re-

lease until 6 a.m. on April 10. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of President Lech Kaczynski of Poland and His Delegation

April 10, 2010

Today I called Polish Prime Minister Tusk to express Michelle's and my deepest condolences to the people of Poland on the tragic deaths this morning of President Lech Kaczynski, First Lady Maria Kaczynski, and all who were traveling with them to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Kaczynski family, the loved ones of those killed in this tragic plane crash, and the Polish nation.

Today's loss is devastating to Poland, to the United States, and to the world. President Kaczynski was a distinguished statesman who played a key role in the Solidarity movement, and he was widely admired in the United States as a leader dedicated to advancing freedom and human dignity. With him were many of Poland's most distinguished civilian and military leaders who have helped to shape Poland's inspiring democratic transformation.

We join all the people of Poland in mourning their passing.

Today there are heavy hearts across America. The United States cherishes its deep and abiding bonds with the people of Poland. Those bonds are represented in the strength of our alliance, the friendships among our people, and the extraordinary contributions of Polish Americans who have helped to shape our Nation.

It is a testament to the strength of the Polish people that those who were lost were traveling to commemorate a devastating massacre of World War II as the leaders of a strong, vibrant, and free Poland. That strength will ensure that Poland emerges from the depths of this unthinkable tragedy and that the legacy of the leaders who died today will be a light that continues to guide Poland and the world in the direction of human progress.

Statement on the Accident at the Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia

April 10, 2010

It is with a heavy heart that we learn the news that the last four missing miners did not survive the explosion in the Upper Big Branch mine. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of all those who were lost in this tragic accident, and my gratitude goes out to the rescue teams who worked so tirelessly and heroically to search for the missing. This has been America's worst mining disaster in 40 years,

and the toll on all West Virginians has been immeasurable. We cannot bring back the men we lost. What we can do, in their memory, is thoroughly investigate this tragedy and demand accountability. All Americans deserve to work in a place that is safe, and we must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that all our miners are as safe as possible so that a disaster like this doesn't happen again.