

role of all talented and skilled health care providers, including nurses.

I don't have to tell you that nurses all too often have been given short shrift. Even amidst a nursing shortage, when there are cutbacks, you feel the squeeze in salaries or the reduction in shifts, despite being overworked and underpaid. And, as you know, this disregard goes beyond numbers on a ledger. There have been a bunch of times, I'm sure, when the service you rendered is thought to be less consequential or valuable than that of other professions. That's what has to change.

It's important that we not only ensure that you have the support to do your jobs; we're seeking to elevate and value the work that you do, because throughout our history, nurses have done more than provide care and comfort to those in need. Often with little power or sway on their own, nurses—mostly women, historically—have been a force of will and a sense of common decency and paved the way towards better care and a more compassionate society, from Clara Barton's treatment of wounded soldiers at Antietam to the advocacy of Dorothea Dix on behalf of people with mental disabilities to the countless nurses whose names we'll never know.

One of America's greatest poets, Walt Whitman, also served as a nurse during the Civil War. And the experience changed him forever. And later, he would reflect on that time, on

both the heartbreak and the fulfillment he found during those years. And he wrote:

I thread my way through the hospitals,  
The hurt and wounded I pacify with soothing hand,  
I sit by the restless all the dark night, some  
are so young,  
Some suffer so much, I recall the experience  
sweet and sad.

Sweet and sad. Your jobs are tough. Your days can be stressful and exhausting and sometimes thankless. But through long shifts and late nights, in the hectic scrum of the emergency room or in those quiet acts of humanity, you are saving lives, you are offering solace, you're helping to make us a better nation. And my task as President—our task as a people—is to ensure that our health care system is worthy of your efforts. Our mission must be to live up to the values that you uphold each and every day.

So thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:27 p.m. at the Washington Hilton hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Rebecca M. Patton, president, American Nurses Association, who introduced the President, and her mother Mary Ellen Patton; and Anita Blanchard, associate professor of obstetrics/gynecology, University of Chicago Medical Center.

## Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year 2011

*June 16, 2010*

*Dear Madam Speaker:*

On May 21, 2010, I signed Executive Order 13543 establishing the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling to provide for a comprehensive look at how the oil and gas industry operates and how we regulate it. The purpose of this Commission is to examine both the relevant

facts and circumstances concerning the causes of the disaster and to develop options for safety and environmental precautions necessary to prevent a similar disaster from happening again.

This is why I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed amendment to Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 proposals in my FY 2011 Budget.

This request responds to urgent and essential needs. Therefore, I request this proposal be

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considered as an emergency requirement. The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

## Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Small-Business Legislation

*June 17, 2010*

I thank the House of Representatives for passing legislation that includes two of our key initiatives to help America's small businesses and entrepreneurs create jobs and promote recovery. Our Nation's small businesses are the backbone of the American economy and the main drivers of private job creation, and today's approval of our small-business lending fund and State small-business credit initiative marks a new and significant step toward getting small businesses the financing they need to start up, expand, and hire more workers.

The small-business lending fund would provide our Nation's community banks with capital and incentives to ensure that small businesses on Main Street can get the loans they have too often struggled to access since the onset of the financial crisis. The State small-business credit initiative would help ensure

that innovative State partnerships—today, constrained by budget cuts—can better meet the credit needs of small businesses and manufacturers. I am also pleased that this legislation is moving forward as part of a larger package of small-business jobs proposals that will include the elimination of capital gains taxes on key small-business investments.

I want to recognize Chairman Barney Frank for his management of this bill as well as Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, Chairman Sandy Levin, and Chairwoman Nydia Velazquez for their efforts on behalf of America's small businesses. And I want to urge the Senate to act quickly to pass these initiatives into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 5297.

## Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation Created by the Accumulation of Weapons-Usable Fissile Material in the Territory of the Russian Federation

*June 17, 2010*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000, with

respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2010.

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the