

Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Zahedan, Iran

July 16, 2010

I strongly condemn the outrageous terrorist attacks on a mosque in southeast Iran. The murder of innocent civilians in their place of worship is an intolerable offense, and those who carried it out must be held accountable. The United States stands with the families and loved

ones of those killed and injured, and with the Iranian people, in the face of this injustice. Together, the people of the world must condemn and oppose all forms of terrorism and support the universal right of human beings to live free from fear and senseless violence.

The President's Weekly Address

July 17, 2010

This week, many of our largest corporations reported robust earnings, a positive sign of growth. But too many of our small-business owners and those who aspire to start their own small businesses continue to struggle, in part because they can't get the credit they need to start up, grow, and hire. And too many Americans whose livelihoods have fallen prey to the worst recession in our lifetimes, a recession that cost our economy 8 million jobs, still wonder how they'll make ends meet. That's why we need to take new, commonsense steps to help small businesses, grow our economy, and create jobs. And we need to take them now.

For months, that's what we've been trying to do. But too often, the Republican leadership in the United States Senate chooses to filibuster our recovery and obstruct our progress. And that has very real consequences.

Consider what this obstruction means for our small businesses, the growth engines that create two of every three new jobs in this country. A lot of small businesses still have trouble getting the loans and capital they need to keep their doors open and hire new workers. So we proposed steps to get them that help: eliminating capital gains taxes on investments, establishing a fund for small lenders to help small businesses, enhancing successful SBA programs that help them access the capital they need. But again and again, a partisan minority in the Senate said no and used procedural tactics to block a simple up-or-down vote.

Think about what these stalling tactics mean for the millions of Americans who've lost their

jobs since the recession began. Over the past several weeks, more than 2 million of them have seen their unemployment insurance expire. For many, it was the only way to make ends meet while searching for work, the only way to cover rent, utilities, even food.

Three times, the Senate has tried to temporarily extend that emergency assistance. And three times, a minority of Senators—basically the same crowd who said no to small businesses—said no to folks looking for work and blocked a straight up-or-down vote.

Some Republican leaders actually treat this unemployment insurance as if it's a form of welfare. They say it discourages folks from looking for work. Well, I've met a lot of folks looking for work these past few years, and I can tell you, I haven't met any American who would rather have an unemployment check than a meaningful job that lets you provide for your family. And we all have friends or neighbors or family members who already know how hard it is to land a job when five workers are competing for every opening.

Now, in the past, Presidents and Congresses of both parties have treated unemployment insurance for what it is, an emergency expenditure. That's because an economic disaster can devastate families and communities just as surely as a flood or tornado.

But suddenly, Republican leaders want to change that. They say we shouldn't provide unemployment insurance because it costs money. So after years of championing policies that turned a record surplus into a massive deficit,