

Members who are here together worked to bring this bill across the finish line.

And the final product proves when we can put aside the partisanship and the political games, when we can put aside what's good for some of us in favor of what's good for all of us, we can get a lot done. And if we can keep doing it, if we can keep that spirit, I'm hopeful that we won't just reinvigorate this economy and restore the American Dream for all who work for it. I'm also hopeful that we might refresh the American people's faith in the capability of their leaders to govern in challenging times, belief in the capacity of their institutions in this town to deliver in a rapidly changing world, and most of all, confidence that our best days as a nation are still ahead of us.

The President's Weekly Address *December 18, 2010*

This week, Congress passed—and I signed into law—an essential economic package that will help grow our economy, spur businesses, and jump-start job creation.

Instead of a New Year's Day tax hike on the vast majority of Americans, 2 million Americans who've lost their jobs through no fault of their own will now know with certainty that they won't lose their emergency unemployment insurance at the end of the month. Eight million college students who'd otherwise face a tuition hike next semester will continue having access to the American opportunity tax credit. Twelve million families with 24 million children will benefit from extensions of the earned-income tax credit and child tax credit. And millions of entrepreneurs who've been waiting to invest in their businesses will receive new tax incentives to help them expand, buy new equipment, or make upgrades, freeing up money to hire new workers.

This package, which is so important for our economy at this pivotal time, was the product of hard negotiations. And like any negotiations, there was give and take on both sides. But I'm heartened by our ability to come together to do what's best for middle class fam-

ilies across this country and for our economy as a whole.

So to all of you who worked so diligently on this issue, thank you very much. To those on my staff who were working night and day and on the Senate and House staffs in both parties who were working so hard, we're very grateful to you. And with that, let me sign this bill to make sure that people are seeing a bigger paycheck come January.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. H.R. 4853, approved December 17, was assigned Public Law No. 111-312. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden.

Before going away for the holiday break, I'm hopeful we can also come together on another urgent national priority, and that is the new START Treaty that will reduce the world's nuclear arsenals and make America more secure.

Twenty-five years ago, the Soviet Union and United States each had about 25,000 nuclear weapons. In the decades since, that number has been reduced by over 70 percent, and we've had onsite inspections of Russian nuclear facilities. That progress would not have been possible without strategic arms control treaties.

During the past year, however, our old treaty with Russia expired, and without a new one, we won't be able to verify Russia's nuclear arsenal, which would undercut President Reagan's call to trust, but verify, when it comes to nuclear weapons.

Without a new treaty, we'll risk turning back the progress we've made in our relationship with Russia, which is essential to enforce strong sanctions against Iran, secure vulnerable nuclear materials from terrorists, and resupply our troops in Afghanistan. And we'll risk undermining American leadership not only on nuclear

proliferation, but a host of other challenges around the world.

Ratifying a treaty like START isn't about winning a victory for an administration or a political party, it's about the safety and security of the United States of America. That's why this treaty is supported by both Presidents Bill Clinton and George H.W. Bush. That's why it's supported by every living Republican Secretary of State, by our NATO allies, and the leadership of the United States military. Indeed, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Hoss Cartwright, said this week that the military needs this treaty, and they need it badly. And that's why every President since Ronald Reagan has pursued a treaty like START, and every one that has been reviewed by the Senate has passed with strong bipartisan support.

We have taken the time to get this right. The START Treaty has now been under review by the Senate for over 7 months. It's gone through 18 hearings. Nearly 1,000 questions have been asked and answered. Several Republican Senators have come out in support of ratification. Meanwhile, further delay comes at a cost. Every

minute we drag our feet is a minute that we have no inspectors on the ground at those Russian nuclear sites.

It's time to get this done. It's time to show the same spirit of common purpose on our security that we showed this week on our economy. It's time to remember the old saying that politics stops at the water's edge. That saying was coined by a Republican Senator, Arthur Vandenberg, who partnered with a Democratic President, Harry Truman, to pass landmark national security measures at the dawn of the cold war. Today, over 60 years later, when we're threatened not only by nuclear weapons, but an array of other dangers, that's a principle we must continue to uphold.

Thanks, and have a nice weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:15 p.m. on December 17 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House for broadcast on December 18. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 17, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 18.

Statement on Senate Action on Legislation Providing Citizenship Opportunities for Alien Minors

December 18, 2010

In an incredibly disappointing vote today, a minority of Senators prevented the Senate from doing what most Americans understand is best for the country. As I said last week, when the House passed the "DREAM Act," it is not only the right thing to do for talented young people who seek to serve a country they know as their own, it is the right thing for the United States of America. Our Nation is enriched by their talents and would benefit from the success of their efforts. The "DREAM Act" is important to our economic competitiveness, military readiness, and law enforcement efforts. And as the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office reported, the "DREAM Act" would cut the deficit by \$2.2 billion over the next 10 years. There was simply no reason not to pass this important legislation.

It is disappointing that common sense did not prevail today. But my administration will not give up on the "DREAM Act" or on the important business of fixing our broken immigration system. The American people deserve a serious debate on immigration, and it's time to take the polarizing rhetoric off our national stage.

I thank Senators Durbin, Reid, and Menendez for their tireless efforts. Moving forward, my administration will continue to do everything we can to fix our Nation's broken immigration system so that we can provide lasting and dedicated resources for our border security, while at the same time, restoring responsibility and accountability to the system at every level.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.