

And, Legionnaires, it was a reminder, not just to the family and friends of Corporal Frank Buckles, but to the veterans and families of every generation: No matter when you serve, no matter how many years ago that you took off the uniform, no matter how long you live as a proud veteran of this country we love, America will never leave your side. America will never forget. We will always be grateful to you.

God bless you, God bless all our veterans, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:52 a.m. at the Minneapolis Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Jimmie L. Foster, national commander, American Legion, and his wife Rehta; and Susannah Flanagan, daughter of Frank W. Buckles.

Statement on the Observance of Eid al-Fitr *August 30, 2011*

Michelle and I would like to send Eid greetings to Muslim communities in the United States and around the world. Ramadan has been a time for families and communities to share the happiness of coming together in intense devotion, reflection, and service. Millions all over the world have been inspired to honor their faith by reaching out to those less fortunate. This year, many have observed the month while courageously persevering in their

efforts to secure basic necessities and fundamental freedoms. The United States will continue to stand with them and for the dignity and rights of all people, whether a hungry child in the Horn of Africa or a young person demanding freedom in the Middle East and North Africa.

As Ramadan comes to an end, we send our best wishes for a blessed holiday to Muslim communities around the world. *Eid Mubarak.*

Statement on the Selection of Yoshihiko Noda as Prime Minister of Japan *August 30, 2011*

I offer my personal congratulations to Yoshihiko Noda on his election as Japan's next Prime Minister. The United States will work with him and the Japanese people on initiatives that benefit our two countries, the region, and the world. For the last half century the U.S.-Japan alliance has served as the linchpin of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region, and together,

we can ensure that the next half-century enjoys the same stability and prosperity. The relationship between the United States and Japan is based on common interests and common values, and I look forward to working with Prime Minister Noda to tackle the broad range of economic and security issues that require our attention.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Regarding the Minimization of Regulatory Burdens *August 30, 2011*

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Thank you for your letter of August 26, 2011. I agree that it is extremely important to minimize regulatory burdens and to avoid unjustified regulatory costs, particularly in this difficult economic period. I have taken a number of steps to achieve those goals.

Executive Order 13563, issued early this year, imposes a series of new requirements designed to reduce regulatory burdens and costs. As you are undoubtedly aware, this Executive Order also called for an ambitious Government-wide review of rules now on the books. The review was recently completed, producing

reform plans from 26 agencies. A mere fraction of the initiatives described in the plans will save more than \$10 billion over the next 5 years; as progress continues, we expect to be able to deliver savings far in excess of that figure.

I would add that the costs of final, economically significant rules reviewed by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs were actually higher in 2007 and 2008 than in the first 2 years of my Administration. And in 2009 and 2010, the benefits of such rules—including not only monetary savings but also lives saved and illnesses prevented—exceeded the costs by tens of billions of dollars.

Your letter draws attention to the rules listed on this year's regulatory agenda. Under both Republican and Democratic administrations, the agenda is merely a list of rules that are under general contemplation, provided to the public in order to promote transparency. Before any such rules can be issued, they must be subject to a long series of internal and external constraints, including the rulemaking requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act and the new burden-reducing, cost-saving requirements of Executive Order 13563. Many rules listed on an agenda, in any given year, are not issued.

Remarks on Surface Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Legislation

August 31, 2011

Good morning, everybody. Please have a seat. I want to say a few words about an issue that affects thousands of American workers, as well as millions of Americans who drive on our Nation's roads and bridges every single day.

At the end of September, if Congress doesn't act, the transportation bill will expire. This bill provides funding for highway construction, bridge repair, mass transit systems, and other essential projects that keep our people and our commerce moving quickly and safely. And for construction workers and their families across the coun-

You also ask for a list of pending rules that would cost over \$1 billion. As noted, the regulatory agenda includes a large number of rules that are in a highly preliminary state, with no reliable cost estimate. I can assure you that all rules that the Administration promulgates, including and especially the expensive rules, are very carefully scrutinized for conformity to the law and Executive Order 13563.

At the present time, seven rules have been proposed to the public with an estimated annual cost in excess of \$1 billion; they are listed as an appendix to this letter. Of course, these rules are merely proposed, and before finalizing any of them, we will take account of public comments and concerns and give careful consideration to cost-saving possibilities and alternatives.

I look forward to working closely with you to produce a regulatory system that will, in the words of Executive Order 13563, "protect public health, welfare, safety, and our environment while promoting economic growth, innovation, competitiveness, and job creation."

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released an annex to this letter.

try, it represents the difference between making ends meet or not making ends meet.

If we allow the transportation bill to expire, over 4,000 workers will be immediately furloughed without pay. If it's delayed for just 10 days, it will lose nearly \$1 billion in highway funding. That's money we can never get back. And if it's delayed even longer, almost 1 million workers could lose their jobs over the course of the next year.

That includes some of the folks behind me today. We've got Adam Vencill and Chris Negley, who are with the Federal Highway Admin-