

to raise U.S. concerns regarding commercial whaling by Icelandic companies and seek ways to halt such action; (2) Cabinet secretaries to evaluate the appropriateness of visits to Iceland depending on continuation of the current suspension of fin whaling; (3) the Department of State to examine Arctic cooperation projects, and where appropriate, link U.S. cooperation to the Icelandic government changing its whaling policy and abiding by the IWC moratorium on commercial whaling; (4) the Departments of Commerce and State to consult with other international actors on efforts to end Icelandic commercial whaling and have Iceland abide by the IWC moratorium on commercial whaling; (5) the Department of State to inform the Government of Iceland that the United States will continue to monitor the activities of Icelandic companies that engage in commercial whaling; and (6) relevant U.S. agencies to continue to examine other options for responding to continued whaling by Iceland.

I concur with the Secretary of Commerce's recommendation to pursue the use of non-trade measures and that the actions outlined

above are the appropriate course of action to address this issue. Accordingly, I am not directing the Secretary of the Treasury to impose trade measures on Icelandic products for the whaling activities that led to the certification by the Secretary of Commerce. However, to ensure that this issue continues to receive the highest level of attention, I am directing the Departments of State and Commerce to continue to keep the situation under review and continue to urge Iceland to cease its commercial whaling activities. Further, within 6 months, or immediately upon the resumption of fin whaling by Icelandic nationals, I have directed relevant departments and agencies to report to me through the Departments of State and Commerce on their actions. I believe these actions hold the most promise of effecting a reduction in Iceland's commercial whaling activities.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
September 15, 2011.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser *September 15, 2011*

Thank you, Sylvia. I'm going to be quick because I want to make this more of a dialogue than a monologue. And a lot of you guys are old friends, been supporting us for a long time. And we're going to be seeing each other a lot out on the campaign trail as you guys are bringing in folks from various cities, getting them involved.

So let me just say this. Last week, obviously, I presented to Congress the "American Jobs Act." And what I tried to underscore in that speech is the urgency for action in Washington. Now, over the last 2½ years, we've been busy trying to make sure that we did not spill into a depression, trying to make sure that we stabilized the financial system, trying to make sure that we saved the auto industry. And we were successful in stabilizing the economy, but what we have not been able to do is get the kind of recovery that puts people back to work the way we need to. And there are a number of

things that we can do administratively, but ultimately, we have to make sure that Washington is working on behalf of folks who are hurting out there, as opposed to working contrary to the interests of people all across the country.

And in the "American Jobs Act," what we've said was, look, if Congress is able to take some action now—not 14 months from now, not 6 months from now, but now—we can put teachers back in the classroom, we can put construction workers back to work, we can put our veterans back to work, we can make sure that young people have opportunities for summer jobs, we can start dealing with the unemployed, and we can pay for it in a way that's responsible and that involves everybody sharing in the burdens of what are a difficult time.

Now, right away, the commentary was, well, this Congress, they are accustomed to doing nothing, and they're comfortable with doing

nothing, and they keep on doing nothing. But I will tell you, we intend to keep the pressure on. And I, just this week, have traveled to North Carolina, and we've been to Ohio. Before that, right after I made the speech, we were in Virginia. In Virginia, we had probably about 12,000 people, in North Carolina, about 10,000. And folks are ready for action.

And for those of you who have been supporters for a long time, as you know, there's a time for governance, and there's a time for making a political case. My hope is, is that we're going to keep on seeing some governance out of Washington over the next several months, because the American people can't afford to wait for an election to actually see us start doing something serious about our jobs. But we are going to run this like a campaign, in the sense that we've got to take it to the American people and make the case as to why it is possible for Washington to make a difference right now.

And so far, people have been responding with extraordinary enthusiasm. But it's going to take hard work to get a Congress that, I think, their natural instinct is right now—the Republicans in the House, their natural instinct right now is not to engage in the kind of cooperation that we'd like to see. So ultimately, I think, if we are doing what the American people are looking for on jobs and on the economy, then we will be able to start seeing the recovery take off once again and get to the point where we're starting to bring down unemployment in a significant way.

It's estimated that the "American Jobs Act" would add 2 percentage points to the GDP and add as many as 1.9 million jobs and bring the unemployment rate down by a full percentage point. But even if we get that done, there's still going to be some long-term challenges that we have to deal with in the economy that precede a recession. The fact of the matter is, for a decade now, incomes and wages have flatlined for the American people: for ordinary Americans, for working families. They are working harder, making less, with higher expenses. And that's been going on for a long, long time.

And 2012 is going to be one of those elections that, in some ways, may be more impor-

tant than 2008, because, having worked our way through this recession, having still—having us still needing to make sure that we're taking action to drive the unemployment rate down, there is going to be a sharp divide in terms of where the Republican candidate is and my position in terms of where we need to take the country. We're going to have to make decisions about do we make investments in infrastructure? Do we actually have an energy policy? Do we have an education policy that makes sure that everybody has a chance at the American Dream? Are we going to make sure that we implement our health care plan so that 30 million people have health insurance and we start driving down costs? How are we going to approach foreign policy?

Those issues are still going to be looming, and I encourage all of you to watch—if you need some inspiration, watch the Republican Presidential debates. [Laughter] Because you will have a sense that there is going to be a clear choice presented. There's not going to be a lot of ambiguity in terms of alternative visions about where we want to take the country. I believe in a country that is big and generous and bold and is investing in the future and in which there's fairness and everybody shares in the success and shares in the burdens of moving our country forward. And they've got a different philosophy. And that's going to be tested before the American people like never before.

So bottom line is, I appreciate all of you guys being here. We're going to have a lot of hard work, but this group is no stranger to hard work, because, as many of you can attest, it's always hard at a time when our politics are divided and at a time when the economy is struggling. So it's going to require that everybody here bring every ounce of effort that they've got into making sure that the campaign is successful, but also that we're able to get a clear mandate for the kinds of changes that we want to make to ensure that America is—continues to be a land where everybody has opportunity.

All right. Thanks very much, everyone.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:44 p.m. at the residence of Frank White, Jr., and Sylvia D. Davis.