

sense of urgency, what I called in 2008 the “fierce urgency of now,” if we still possess that, then not only are we going to be able to succeed in the election, but more importantly, we’re going to be able to give the American Dream back to the American people.

The President’s Weekly Address *October 1, 2011*

Hello, everyone. It’s been almost 3 weeks since I sent the “American Jobs Act” to Congress, 3 weeks since I sent them a bill that would put people back to work and put money in people’s pockets. This jobs bill is fully paid for. This jobs bill contains the kinds of proposals that Democrats and Republicans have supported in the past. And now I want it back. It’s time for Congress to get its act together and to pass this jobs bill so I can sign it into law.

Some Republicans in Congress have said that they agree with certain parts of this jobs bill. If so, it’s time for them to tell me what those proposals are. And if they’re opposed to this jobs bill, I’d like to know what exactly they’re against. Are they against putting teachers and police officers and firefighters back on the job? Are they against hiring construction workers to rebuild our roads and bridges and schools? Are they against giving tax cuts to virtually every worker and small business in America?

Economists from across the political spectrum have said that this jobs bill would boost the economy and spur hiring. Why would you be against that, especially at a time when so many Americans are struggling and out of work?

This isn’t just about what I think is right. It’s not just about what a group of economists think is right. This is about what the American people want. Everywhere I go, they tell me they want action on jobs. Every day, I get letters from Americans who expect Washington to do something about the problems we face.

Destiny Wheeler is a 16-year-old from Georgia who wants to go to college. She wrote to me saying: “Nowadays it is hard to see my-

Thank you so much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 p.m. at the residence of James D’Orta. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

self pushing forward and putting my family in a better position, especially since the economy is rough and my starting situation is so poor. Yet the ‘American Jobs Act’ gives me hope that I might start to receive a better education, that one day job opportunities will open for me to grasp, and that one day my personal American Dream will be reached.” Destiny needs us to pass this jobs bill.

Alice Johnson is an Oregon native who, along with her husband, has been looking for a job for about 2 years. She writes: “I have faithfully applied for work every week. . . . Of the hundreds of applications I have put in, I received interview requests for about 10. . . . I too am sick of all the fighting in Washington, DC. Please tell the Republicans that people are hurting and are hungry and need help. Pass the jobs bill.” Alice Johnson needs our help.

Cathleen Dixon sent me pictures of the aging bridge she drives under when she takes her kids to school in Chicago every day. She worries about their safety and writes: “I am angry that in this country of vast resources, we claim that we cannot maintain basic infrastructure. How can we ever hope to preserve or regain our stature in this world, if we cannot find the will to protect our people and take care of our basic needs?”

I also heard from Kim Faber, who told me about the small carpet business her husband owns in New Jersey. “We hang on by a shoestring,” she writes. “My husband worries every day about if checks might bounce. He uses our home loan to put money in the business so they will be covered. Please pass this jobs bill! This is the job creating we need right now! It breaks my husband’s heart when he has to let people go! Pass the bill!”

Kim said it best: “Pass the bill!” I know one Republican was quoted as saying that their party shouldn’t pass this jobs bill because it would give me a win. This isn’t about giving me a win, and it’s not about them. This is about Destiny Wheeler and Alice Johnson. It’s about Cathleen Dixon’s children and the Fabers’ family business. These are the people who need a win, and I will be fighting for this jobs bill every day on their behalf. If anyone watching feels the same way, don’t be shy about letting

your Congressman know. It is time for the politics to end. Let’s pass this jobs bill.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:55 p.m. on September 30 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on October 1. In the address, the President referred to Steven G. Faber, former owner and current manager, Faber Brothers Broadloom. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 30, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 1.

Remarks at the Human Rights Campaign’s Annual National Dinner *October 1, 2011*

The President. Thank you so much. It is great to be back. I see a lot of friends in the house. I appreciate the chance to join you tonight. I also took a trip out to California last week, where I held some productive bilateral talks with your leader, Lady Gaga. [Laughter] She was wearing 16-inch heels. [Laughter] She was 8 feet tall. [Laughter] It was a little intimidating.

Now, I don’t want to give a long speech. Cyndi Lauper is in the house. I can’t compete with that. But I wanted to come here tonight, first of all, to personally thank Joe for his outstanding years of leadership at HRC. What he has accomplished at the helm of this organization has been remarkable, and I want to thank all of you for the support that you’ve shown this organization and for your commitment to a simple idea: Every single American—gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, transgender—every single American deserves to be treated equally in the eyes of the law and in the eyes of our society. It’s a pretty simple proposition.

Now, I don’t have to tell you that we have a ways to go in that struggle. I don’t have to tell you how many are still denied their basic rights, Americans who are still made to feel like second class citizens, who have to live a lie to keep their jobs or who are afraid to walk the street or down the hall at school. Many of you have devoted your lives to the cause of equality. So you know what we have to do. We’ve got more work ahead of us.

But we can also be proud of the progress we’ve made these past 2½ years. Think about it. Two years ago, I stood at this podium, in this room, before many of you, and I made a pledge. I said I would never counsel patience, that it wasn’t right to tell you to be patient any more than it was right for others to tell African Americans to be patient in the fight for equal rights a half century ago. But what I also said, that while it might take time, more time than anyone would like, we are going to make progress, we are going to succeed, we are going to build a more perfect Union.

And so let’s see what happened. I met with Judy Shepard. I promised her we would pass a hate crimes bill named for her son Matthew. And with the help of my dear friend Ted Kennedy we got it done. Because it should never be dangerous—[applause]—you should never have to look over your shoulder to be gay in the United States of America. That’s why we got it done.

I met with Janice Langbehn, who was barred from the bedside of the woman she loved as she lay dying. And I told her that we were going to put a stop to this discrimination. And you know what? We got it done. I issued an order so that any hospital in America that accepts Medicare or Medicaid—and that means just about every hospital—has to treat gay partners just as they do straight partners. Because nobody should have to produce a legal