

Statement on Senate Action on Tax Cut Legislation

December 1, 2011

Tonight Senate Republicans chose to raise taxes on nearly 160 million hard-working Americans because they refused to ask a few hundred thousand millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share. They voted against a bill that would have not only extended the \$1,000 tax cut for a typical family, but expanded that tax cut to put an extra \$1,500 in their pockets next year and given nearly 6 million small-business owners new incentives to expand and hire. That is unacceptable. It makes absolutely no sense to raise taxes on the middle class at a

time when so many are still trying to get back on their feet.

Now is not the time to put the economy and the security of the middle class at risk. Now is the time to rebuild an economy where hard work and responsibility pay off and everybody has a chance to succeed. Now is the time to put country before party and work together on behalf of the American people. And I will continue to urge Congress to stop playing politics with the security of millions of American families and small-business owners and get this done.

Remarks on the Better Buildings Initiative With Former President William J. Clinton and an Exchange With Reporters

December 2, 2011

Former President Clinton. Well, I never got to open for the Rolling Stones, so I'll try to do my best for the President.

Thank you all for being here, and I want to thank the—all the people involved in the tour that we just received for their commitment to energy efficiency and all the people they put to work.

[At this point, former President Clinton made brief remarks, concluding as follows.]

You know that I haven't been in that job for a long time, and I'm getting older, but I have some memory left. And a thousand people ask you to do a thousand things. And one of the tests of whether things work out or not, since you can't do all thousand, is whether you can actually set up a process to do things and follow up. And I am full of gratitude and praise, Mr. President, for you and your whole team, not just for your commitment to green energy, but for your commitment to energy efficiency, which gives you, on buildings like this, averages 7,000 jobs for every billion dollars invested, by far the greatest bang for the buck of any available investment I know.

So thank you, Tom. Thank you, Ricki—Randi. And, Mr. President, thanks for giving me a chance to work on this.

Thank you.

President Obama. Well, good morning, everybody. I want to first of all thank Randi and Tom for their participation. And I am thrilled that President Clinton has been willing to take this on. As he pointed out, partly thanks to me, he's home alone too often. And this has been a passion for him for quite some time. So I am very grateful for his involvement.

I thank everybody at Transwestern and all the folks who are participating here for giving us this remarkable tour.

There are the equivalent of 250 full-time workers as a consequence of the project that's taking place here. It is a win for the business owners. It is a win for the tenants of this building. It is a win for the construction workers who are participating and for the property manager that's doing such a great job. So this is a great example of what's possible.

As President, my most pressing challenge is doing everything I can every single day to get this economy growing faster and create more jobs. This morning we learned that our economy added another 140,000 private sector jobs in November. The unemployment rate went down. And despite some strong headwinds this year, the American economy has now created,