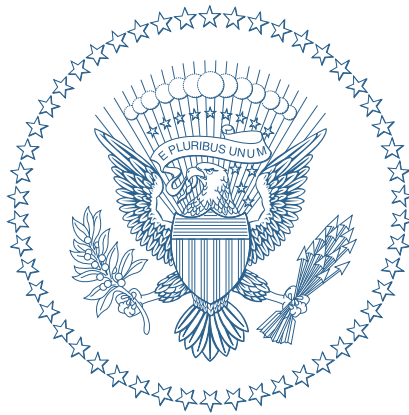


PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE
UNITED STATES

Barack Obama



2012

(IN TWO BOOKS)

BOOK II—JULY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2012

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Foreword

In the second half of 2012, I engaged the American people in a national discussion. I spent many days on the road, in factories and classrooms and town halls across the country, assessing the progress we had made since I took office and working with State and local leaders and citizens to keep that progress going. Our goal had always been to rebuild our economy on a new foundation for growth that's steady and prosperity that's shared—to revive American manufacturing, support the rise of a stronger and more innovative energy sector, get people back to work, and protect the middle class. We had made undeniable progress on all these fronts, but there was still more work to do. I asked the American people to let me continue that work for another 4 years, and in November, they honored me with a second term.

During these 6 months, I signed legislation to keep thousands of construction workers on the job rebuilding our Nation's infrastructure, prevented student loan rates from doubling for more than 7 million students, and improved aid for veterans and military families. In August, a key provision in the Affordable Care Act went into effect, giving 47 million women access to free preventive health care services. The Congress spent the final hours of the year fiercely debating legislation to avert a fiscal crisis, and I pushed for an end to the political brinksmanship that was creating unnecessary economic anxiety at home and abroad.

America was tested in the second half of 2012. Hurricane Isaac hit the Gulf Coast in late August, and 2 months later, Hurricane Sandy struck the northeast. These storms took a tragic toll in lives and caused billions of dollars in damage to homes, businesses, beaches, and infrastructure—but as we always do in times of adversity, Americans responded with resilience, compassion, and a national unity that transcended background and belief. Our Nation's conscience was challenged by mass shootings in Aurora, Colorado, Oak Creek, Wisconsin, and Newtown, Connecticut. It was long past time to take commonsense measures to make it harder for dangerous people to get their hands on a gun. Five days after the tragedy in Newtown, I announced a new task force, led by Vice President Biden, to draw up concrete, sensible actions to reduce gun violence.

Our country was tested abroad as well. In September, our diplomatic post in Benghazi, Libya, was attacked, and four Americans were killed, including our Ambassador to Libya, Chris Stevens. It was a terrible loss. But we refused to let it deter us from our work of supporting democracy and advancing human rights worldwide. That is the mission we carried forward in Burma. In November—encouraged by signs that the military junta was loosening its grip on power and allowing the people greater freedom—I visited that country, becoming the first American President to do so. I spoke to an auditorium of students at the University of Yangon—with Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi sitting in the front row—and expressed America's strong support for the reforms the government had begun. As the people of that country continue on the path to democracy and freedom, I promised that the United States would be a partner on that long journey.

Recognizing that women's rights are human rights and that women's contributions to global peace, security, and prosperity are vital, I signed an Executive Order directing the White House to create a strategy to prevent and respond to gender-based violence worldwide.

And as part of our relentless efforts to improve global security and protect the safety of the American people, we continued to pursue a tough, comprehensive approach to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, mobilizing an unprecedented international coalition to implement the toughest sanctions against Iran in history. To stop Iran from evading these sanctions through deceptive practices, I signed two Executive Orders authorizing additional restrictions.

Throughout the year, I was inspired again and again by the strength and talents of the American people. Whether they are working on behalf of our interests and values overseas, or living, working, and raising families here at home, Americans share a belief in the basic bargain at the heart of our Nation's history: that everyone should do their fair share, play by the same rules, and get a fair and equal shot at a life of dignity and happiness. I closed out my first term as President of the United States

inspired by their stories, focused on the challenges ahead, and more confident than ever that America's best days are yet to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Barack' followed by a stylized 'P' or 'O' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period July 1–December 31, 2012. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against an audio recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless otherwise indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed in full text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. On January 20, 2009, the printed Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents was superseded by the online Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents. The Daily Compilation provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary. In 2012, the Government Printing Office and the Office of the Federal Register released a mobile web application (<http://m.gpo.gov/dcpd>) that catalogues the daily public activities of the President of the United States and enhances features of the online Daily Compilation with user-friendly search capability, allowing users to access Presidential content by date, category, subject, or location.

Also included in the printed edition are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed in full text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford,

Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of John Hyrum Martinez, Director of the Publications and Services Division, Office of the Federal Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit, Laurice A. Clark, Supervisor. The Chief Editor of this book was Joseph K. Vetter; the Managing Editor was Joshua H. Liberatore, assisted by Amelia E. Otovo.

The frontispiece and photographs used in the portfolio were supplied by the White House Photo Office. The typography and design of the book were developed by the Government Publishing Office under the direction of Davita E. Vance-Cooks, Director.

Oliver A. Potts
Director of the Federal Register

David S. Ferriero
Archivist of the United States

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Secretary of Health and Human Services.....	Kathleen Sebelius
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Secretary of Energy.....	Steven Chu
Secretary of Education.....	Arne Duncan
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Homeland Security.....	Janet A. Napolitano
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United States Trade Representative	Ronald Kirk
Director of the Office of Management and Budget	Jeffrey D. Zients, Acting
Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers	Alan B. Krueger

United States Permanent Representative to
the United Nations..... Susan E. Rice

Administration of Barack Obama

2012