

serious discussion about what the real problems on deficit and deficit reduction are.

And the good thing about America is that sometimes we get to these bottlenecks and we get stuck, and you have these sharp, partisan fights, but the American people pretty steadily are commonsense and practical, and eventually, that commonsense, practical approach wins out. And I think that's what will happen here as well.

And in the meantime, just to make the final point about the sequester, we will get through this. This is not going to be a apocalypse, I think, as some people have said. It's just dumb. And it's going to hurt. It's going to hurt individual people, and it's going to hurt the economy overall.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Situation in Zimbabwe March 1, 2013

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2013.

The President's Weekly Address March 2, 2013

Hi, everybody. On Friday, I met with leaders of both parties in Congress to try and find a

way forward in light of the severe budget cuts, known in Washington as the sequester, that

But if Congress comes to its senses a week from now, a month from now, 3 months from now, then there's a lot of open running room there for us to grow our economy much more quickly and to advance the agenda of the American people dramatically. And so I—this is a temporary stop on what I believe is the long-term, outstanding prospect for American growth and greatness.

Thank you very much. All right?

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:39 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City. He also referred to S. 47.

The crisis constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
March 1, 2013.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

have already started to inflict pain on communities across the country. These cuts are not smart. They'll hurt our economy and cost us jobs. And Congress can turn them off at any time, as soon as both sides are willing to compromise.

As a nation, we've already fought back from the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, and we'll get through this too. But at a time when our businesses are finally gaining some traction, hiring new workers, bringing jobs back to America, the last thing Washington should do is to get in their way. That's what these cuts to education and research and defense will do. It's unnecessary. And at a time when too many of our friends and neighbors are still looking for work, it's inexcusable.

Now, it's important to understand that, while not everyone will feel the pain of these cuts right away, the pain will be real. Many middle class families will have their lives disrupted in a significant way. Beginning this week, businesses that work with the military will have to lay folks off. Communities near military bases will take a serious blow. Hundreds of thousands of Americans who serve their country—Border Patrol agents, FBI agents, civilians who work for the Defense Department—will see their wages cut and their hours reduced.

This will cause a ripple effect across the economy. Businesses will suffer because customers will have less money to spend. The longer these cuts remain in place, the greater the damage. Economists estimate they could eventually cost us more than 750,000 jobs and slow our economy by over one-half of 1 percent.

Here's the thing: None of this is necessary. It's happening because Republicans in Congress chose this outcome over closing a single wasteful tax loophole that helps reduce the deficit. Just this week, they decided that protecting special interest tax breaks for the well off and well connected is more important than protecting our military and middle class families from these cuts.

I still believe we can and must replace these cuts with a balanced approach, one that combines smart spending cuts with entitlement reform and changes to our Tax Code that make it more fair for families and businesses without raising anyone's tax rates. That's how we can reduce our deficit without laying off workers or forcing parents and students to pay the price. I don't think that's too much to ask. It's the kind of approach I've proposed for 2 years now. A majority of the American people agree with me on this approach, including a majority of Republicans. We just need Republicans in Congress to catch up with their own party and the rest of the country.

Now, I know there are Republicans in Congress who would actually rather see tax loopholes closed than let these cuts go through. And I know there are Democrats who'd rather do smart entitlement reform than let these cuts go through. There's a caucus of common sense out there, and I'm going to keep reaching out to them to fix this for good.

Because the American people are weary of perpetual partisanship and brinkmanship. This is America, and in America, we don't just bounce from one manufactured crisis to another. We make smart choices. We plan. We prioritize. So I'm going to push through this paralysis and keep fighting for the real challenges facing middle class families. I'm going to keep pushing for high-quality preschool for every family that wants it and make sure the minimum wage becomes a wage you can live on. I'm going to keep pushing to fix our immigration system, repair our transportation system, and keep our children safe from gun violence.

That's the work you elected me to do. That's what I'm focused on every single day. Thanks so much.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:30 p.m. on March 1 in the Grand Foyer at the White House for broadcast on March 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 1, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 2.