

The President's Weekly Address

April 27, 2013

Hi, everybody. Our top priority as a nation must be growing the economy, creating good jobs, and rebuilding opportunity for the middle class.

But 2 months ago, Congress allowed a series of automatic budget cuts to fall across the Federal Government that would do the opposite. In Washington-speak, these cuts were called the sequester. It was a bad idea then. And as the country saw this week, it's a bad idea now.

Because of these reckless cuts, there are parents whose kids just got kicked out of Head Start programs who right now are scrambling for a solution. There are seniors who depend on programs like Meals on Wheels to live independently looking for help. There are military communities—families that have obviously already sacrificed enough—coping under new strains. All because of these cuts.

This week, the sequester hurt travelers, who were stuck for hours in airports and on planes and rightly frustrated by it. And maybe because they fly home each weekend, the Members of Congress who insisted on these cuts finally realized that they actually apply to them too.

Republicans claimed victory when the sequester first took effect, and now they've decided it was a bad idea all along. Well, first, they should look at their own budget. If the cuts they proposed were applied across the board, the FAA would suffer cuts three times deeper.

So Congress passed a temporary fix, a bandaid. But these cuts are scheduled to keep falling across other parts of the Government that provide vital services for the American people. And we can't just keep putting bandaids on every cut. It's not a responsible way to govern.

There is only one way to truly fix the sequester: by replacing it before it causes further damage.

A couple of weeks ago, I put forward a budget that replaces the next several years of these dumb cuts with smarter cuts, reforms our Tax Code to close wasteful special interest loopholes, and invests in things like education, research, and manufacturing that will create new jobs right now.

So I hope Members of Congress will find the same sense of urgency and bipartisan cooperation to help the families still in the crosshairs of these cuts. Members of Congress may not feel the pain felt by kids kicked off Head Start or the 750,000 Americans projected to lose their jobs because of these cuts or the long-term unemployed who will be further hurt by them. But that pain is real.

The American people worked too hard, for too long, rebuilding from one economic crisis just to see your elected officials keep causing more. Our economy is growing. And our deficits are shrinking. We're creating jobs on a consistent basis. But we need to do more to help middle class families get ahead, and give more folks a chance to earn their way into the middle class. We can do that, if we work together. That's what you expect. And that's what I'm going to keep on working on every single day to help deliver. Thanks so much.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:40 p.m. on April 26 in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building for broadcast on April 27. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 26, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 27.

Remarks at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner

April 27, 2013

White House Correspondents' Association President Ed Henry. And without further ado,

I'd like to introduce the President of the United States.