

Voting for the Treasury to pay America's bills is not a concession to me. That's not doing me a favor. That's simply carrying out the solemn responsibilities that come with holding office up there. I don't know how I can be more clear about this. Nobody gets to threaten the full faith and credit of the United States just to extract political concessions. No one gets to hurt our economy and millions of innocent people just because there are a couple of laws that you do not like.

It has not been done in the past; we're not going to start doing it now. I'm not going to start setting a precedent—not just for me, but for future Presidents—where one Chamber in Congress can basically say, each time there needs to be a vote to make sure Treasury pays its bills, we're not going to sign it unless our particular hobbyhorse gets advanced.

Imagine if you had a Republican President and a Democratic Speaker, and the Democratic Speaker said, well, we're not going to pass a debt ceiling unless we raise corporate taxes by 40 percent or unless we pass background checks on guns or whatever other list of agenda items Democrats were interested in. Does anybody actually think that we would be hearing from Republicans that that was acceptable behavior?

That's not how our constitutional system is designed. We are not going to do it. The American people have worked too hard to recover from a bunch of crises—several of them now over the last couple of years inflicted by some of the same folks in Congress that we're talking about now—to see extremists in Congress cause another crisis.

And keep in mind, by the way, this whole thing has to do with keeping the Government

open for a few months. The continuing resolution, the bill that's designed to avert a Government shutdown, basically just funds the Government for another couple months, so we could be doing this all over again. I'm sure the American people are thrilled about that.

And that's why we've got to break this cycle. My message to Congress is this. Do not shut down the Government. Do not shut down the economy. Pass a budget on time. Pay our bills on time. Refocus on the everyday concerns of the American people.

There will be differences between Democrats and Republicans. We can have all kinds of conversations about how to resolve those differences. There will be areas where we can work together. There will be areas where we disagree. But do not threaten to burn the house down simply because you haven't gotten a hundred percent of your way. That's not how our democracy is supposed to work.

Every day that this goes on is another day that we're not focused on doing what we need to be focused on, which is rebuilding this great country of ours so that our middle class is growing and everybody has got opportunity if they're willing to work hard. That's what I'm focused on. That's what Congress should be focused on as well. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:42 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif-Khonsari and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei of Iran; and President Bashar al-Asad of Syria.

The President's Weekly Address *September 28, 2013*

Hi, everybody. This Tuesday is an important day for families, businesses, and our economy. It's the day a big part of the Affordable Care Act kicks in and tens of millions of Americans will finally have the same chance to buy quality, affordable health care as everybody else.

It's also the day that a group of far-right Republicans in Congress might choose to shut down the Government and potentially damage the economy just because they don't like this law. I'll get to that in a second.

But first, here's what the Affordable Care Act means for you. If you're one of the vast majority of Americans who already have health care, you already have new benefits you didn't before, like free mammograms and contraceptive care with no copay and discounts on prescription medicine for seniors. You've already got new protections in place too, like no more lifetime limits on your care, no more discriminating against children with preexisting conditions like asthma, or being able to stay on your parent's plan until you turn 26. That's all in place and available to Americans with health insurance right now.

If you don't have health insurance, or if you buy it on the individual market, then starting this Tuesday, October 1, you can visit healthcare.gov to find what's called the health insurance marketplace in your State.

This is a website where you can compare insurance plans side by side, the same way you'd shop for a TV or a plane ticket. You'll see new choices and new competition. Many of you will see cheaper prices, and many of you will be eligible for tax credits that bring down your costs even more. Nearly 6 in 10 uninsured Americans will be able to get coverage for a hundred dollars or less.

If you're one of the up to half of Americans with a preexisting condition, these new plans mean your insurer can no longer charge you more than anybody else. They can't charge women more than men for the same coverage. And they take effect on January 1.

So get covered at healthcare.gov and spread the word. These marketplaces will be open for business on Tuesday, no matter what. The Affordable Care Act is one of the most important things we've done as a country in decades to strengthen economic security for the middle class and all who strive to join the middle class. And it is going to work.

That's also one of the reasons it's so disturbing that Republicans in Congress are threatening to shut down the Government—or worse—if I don't agree to gut this law.

Congress has two responsibilities right now: pass a budget on time, and pay our bills on time. If Congress doesn't pass a budget by

Monday, the end of the fiscal year, the Government shuts down, along with many vital services the American people depend on. On Friday, the Senate passed a bill to keep the Government open. But Republicans in the House have been more concerned with appeasing an extreme faction of their party than working to pass a budget that creates new jobs or strengthens the middle class. And in the next couple of days, these Republicans will have to decide whether to join the Senate and keep the Government open or create a crisis that will hurt people for the sole purpose of advancing their ideological agenda.

Past Government shutdowns have disrupted the economy. This shutdown would too. At a moment when our economy has steadily gained traction and our deficits have been falling faster than at any time in 60 years, a shutdown would be a purely self-inflicted wound. And that's why many Republican Senators and Republican Governors have urged Republicans in the House of Representatives to knock it off, pass a budget, and move on.

This brings me to a second responsibility that Congress has. Once they vote to keep the Government open, they also have to vote within the next couple weeks to allow the Treasury to pay the bills for the money that Congress has already spent. Failure to meet this responsibility would be far more dangerous than a Government shutdown, it would be an economic shutdown, with impacts not just here, but around the world.

Unfortunately, some Republicans have suggested that unless I agree to an even longer list of demands—not just gutting the health care law, but things like cutting taxes for millionaires or rolling back rules on big banks and polluters—they'll push the button, throwing America into default for the first time in history, and risk throwing all of us back into recession.

I will work with anyone who wants to have a serious conversation about our economic future. But I will not negotiate over Congress's responsibility to pay the bills it has already racked up. I don't know how to be more clear about this: no one gets to threaten the full faith

and credit of the United States of America just to extract ideological concessions. No one gets to hurt our economy and millions of innocent people just because there are a couple laws that you don't like. It hasn't been done in the past, and we're not going to start doing it now.

The American people have worked too hard to recover from crises to see extremists in their Congress cause another one. And every day this goes on is another day that we can't continue the work of rebuilding the American middle class. Congress needs to pass a budget in time, pay its bills on time, and refocus on the everyday concerns of the people who sent them there.

That's what I'm focused on. That's what I'll keep fighting for.

Thanks so much.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on September 27 in the State Dining Room at the White House for broadcast on September 28. In the address, the President referred to H.J. Res. 59. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 27, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 28. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters *September 30, 2013*

President Obama. Well, it's a pleasure to welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu back to the Oval Office. I think I've had the pleasure of hosting him more often than just about any other world leader, and hopefully, this will provide just some small measure of repayment for the wonderful visit that I had in Israel this spring. And I want to thank him and his family and his entire team for the tremendous hospitality that we had when we were there.

The Prime Minister and I were just talking about the fact, these are hectic times, and nowhere is that more true obviously than in the Middle East. And so we had an opportunity for a wide-ranging discussion about a range of issues.

I commended him for entering into good-faith negotiations with the Palestinian Authority in discussing how we can resolve what has been obviously one of the biggest challenges for a very long time in the region. And both Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas have assigned outstanding negotiators. They have been engaging in serious conversations. And our goal continues to be to help facilitate—not dictate, but facilitate—the kinds of genuine negotiations that will result in two states living side by side in peace and security.

And we have a limited amount of time to achieve that goal, and I appreciate the Prime Minister's courage in being willing to step forward on behalf of that goal.

We had an opportunity to discuss the situation in Syria. Obviously, we have a broad set of strategic concerns in Syria. We are both pleased that there is the possibility of finally getting chemical weapons stockpiles out of Syria. But I think we both share a deep concern that we have to be able to verify and enforce what has now been agreed to at the United Nations. Chemical weapons inside of Syria obviously have threatened Syrian civilians, but over the long term, also pose a threat to Israel. And we want to make sure that we get those indiscriminate, horrible weapons out of there.

And so we'll—we are consulting with the international community on these issues, and I shared with the Prime Minister our belief that we have to move with speed and dispatch in actually making sure that the agreement that was arrived at in the United Nations is followed through on.

In addition, we have the larger question of how to deal with the civil war that's taking place in Syria. And given Israel's significant interests in the spillover effects of activities