

Well, I could not imagine a more deserving group of honorees. We are thrilled to have them here.

Fear not, the party is not over. [Laughter] My understanding is the food here at the White House is not bad. [Laughter] And we may get some nice tunes from our Marine Band; they can play anything, so feel free to make requests. [Laughter]

But to all the honorees, thank you again for enriching our lives in so many different ways. We're going to have an opportunity to see you and your families and take some pictures with the honor-

ees. In the meantime, enjoy the reception. And thank you all. I hope you've enjoyed it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to author Marilynne Robinson, actor and playwright Anna Deavere Smith, and sportswriter Frank Deford, recipients of the National Humanities Medal; and musician and composer Allen Toussaint, and authors Ernest J. Gaines and Joan Didion, recipients of the National Medal of Arts. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the reading of the citations.

## Statement on the Resignation of Janet A. Napolitano as Secretary of Homeland Security

*July 12, 2013*

I want to thank Secretary Napolitano for her outstanding work on behalf of the American people over the last 4 years. At the Department of Homeland Security, Janet's portfolio has included some of the toughest challenges facing our country. She's worked around the clock to respond to natural disasters, from the Joplin tornado to Hurricane Sandy, helping Americans recover and rebuild. Since day one, Janet has led my administration's effort to secure our borders, de-

ploying a historic number of resources, while also taking steps to make our immigration system fairer and more consistent with our values. And the American people are safer and more secure thanks to Janet's leadership in protecting our homeland against terrorist attacks. I've come to rely on Janet's judgment and advice, but I've also come to value her friendship. And as she begins a new chapter in a remarkable career of public service, I wish her the best of luck.

## Statement on Signing Legislation Concerning the Participation of Taiwan in the International Civil Aviation Organization

*July 12, 2013*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1151, an Act concerning participation of Taiwan in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The United States fully supports Taiwan's membership in international organizations where statehood is not a requirement for membership and encourages Taiwan's meaningful participation, as appropriate, in organizations where its membership is not possible. My Administration has publicly supported Taiwan's participation at the ICAO and will continue to do so. Consistent with my

constitutional authority to conduct foreign affairs, my Administration shall construe the Act to be consistent with the "one China" policy of the United States, which remains unchanged, and shall determine the measures best suited to advance the overall goal of Taiwan's participation in the ICAO. I note that sections 1(b) and 1(c) of the Act contain impermissibly mandatory language purporting to direct the Secretary of State to undertake certain diplomatic initiatives and to report to the Congress on the progress of those

initiatives. Consistent with longstanding constitutional practice, my Administration will interpret and implement these sections in a manner that does not interfere with my constitutional authority to conduct diplomacy and to protect the confidentiality of diplomatic communications.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,  
July 12, 2013.

NOTE: H.R. 1151, approved July 12, was assigned Public Law No. 113–17.

## The President's Weekly Address *July 13, 2013*

Hi, everybody. Two weeks ago, a large bipartisan majority of Senators voted to pass commonsense, comprehensive immigration reform, taking an important step towards fixing a broken immigration system once and for all.

Now, this bill was a compromise, and neither side got everything they wanted. But it was largely consistent with the key principles of commonsense reform that most of us in both parties have repeatedly laid out. If passed, the Senate's plan would build on the historic gains we've made in border security over the past 4 years with the most aggressive border security plan in our history. It would offer a pathway to earned citizenship for the 11 million people who are in this country illegally, a pathway that includes paying penalties, learning English, and going to the end of the line behind everyone trying to come here legally. And it would modernize our legal immigration system to make it more consistent with our values.

The Senate's plan would also provide a big boost to our recovery. And on Wednesday, we released a report detailing exactly how big a boost that would be. The report is based on the findings of independent, nonpartisan economists and experts who concluded that, if the Senate's plan becomes law, our economy will be 5-percent larger in two decades compared to the status quo. That's \$1.4 trillion added to our economy just by fixing our immigration system.

Here in America, we've always been a nation of immigrants. That's what's kept our workforce dynamic, our businesses on the cutting edge, and our economy the strongest in the world. But under the current system, too

many smart, hard-working immigrants are prevented from contributing to that success.

Immigration reform would make it easier for highly skilled immigrants and those who study at our colleges and universities to start businesses and create jobs right here in America. Foreign companies would be more likely to invest here. The demand for goods and services would go up, creating more jobs for American workers. Every worker and business would be required to pay their fair share in taxes, reducing our deficit by nearly \$850 billion over the next two decades. And since a large portion of those taxes go towards retirement programs that millions of Americans depend on, Social Security would actually get stronger over the long term, adding 2 years to the life of the program's trust fund.

That's what immigration reform would mean for our economy, but only if we act. If we don't do anything to fix our broken system, our workforce will continue to shrink as baby boomers retire. We won't benefit from highly skilled immigrants starting businesses and creating jobs here. American workers will have to make due with lower wages and fewer protections. And without more immigrants and businesses paying their fair share in taxes, our deficit will be higher, and programs like Social Security will be under more strain.

And we've been debating this issue for more than a decade, ever since President Bush first proposed the broad outlines of immigration reform, and I think he gave a very good speech this past week expressing his hope that a bipartisan, comprehensive bill can become law.

If Democrats and Republicans, including President Bush and I, can agree on something,