

economies. Governors Abercrombie, Governor Inslee, Governor Malloy, Governor O'Malley, Governor Patrick, Governor Quinn all focused on this in their State of the State addresses.

And in my State of the Union Address, obviously, I promised that I would do what I could as the head of the executive branch of the Federal Government and have already signed an Executive order saying that if you want to do business with the Federal Government as a Federal contractor, then you need to be paying your employees \$10.10 an hour. We don't want somebody who is washing dishes for our troops or helping in some ways to care for them to be living in poverty when they're working full time.

And what we've discovered in looking at this issue is, is that increasingly, businesses recognize that raising wages for their employees is a smart business decision because they end up having lower turnover rates, higher productivity, higher morale, folks stay longer and are more focused on the job rather than having to worry about whether or not they can pay their bills at the end of the month.

And this is not just good policy, it also happens to be good politics. Because the truth of the matter is, the overwhelming majority of Americans think that raising the minimum wage is a good idea. That is true for Independents, that is true for Democrats, and it's true for Republicans. So in fact, where we've seen some of these issues going to referendum, for example, in New Jersey, even though the Republican Governor opposed it, it passed by 60 percent.

And the reason that this is important is not because everybody is going to be benefiting from a hike in the minimum wage. The truth is, is that most working Americans make more than the minimum wage already. But people, I think, instinctually understand that part of

what this country should be about is if you're working hard and taking responsibility, that you can get ahead and that you can look after your family. And raising the minimum wage will help up to 16 million Americans, and that's a big deal. And that could give a boost to our economy as a whole.

So I'm going to continue to press Congress to pass a Federal minimum wage bill that goes up to \$10.10 an hour, being sponsored currently by Senators Harkin and Representatives Miller. I'm going to be seeking Republicans who are game to work with us and prepared to work with us on this issue. As I said at the State of the Union, it's not something that requires a big bureaucracy, and it doesn't require a lot of Federal spending. All it requires is for us to stake out a claim on behalf of American workers that's consistent with our values as a nation.

And I'm going to be interested in hearing of the efforts of the Governors in this room to see what they can do to make sure that America gets a raise.

So I appreciate their presence. We've got a lot of other issues on the plate, but I wanted to highlight that one because I think it's something that is on a lot of people's minds: How can we boost people's incomes and wages if they're working hard so they can get ahead?

Thank you so much, everybody. Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Christopher J. Christie of New Jersey; and Rep. George Miller III. He also referred to Executive Order 13658, which is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Weekly Address *February 22, 2014*

Hi, everybody. Restoring the idea of opportunity for all requires a year of action from all of us. Wherever I can act on my own, I will. And whenever I can ask more Americans to help, I'll do that too.

In my State of the Union Address, for example, I asked more business leaders to take action to raise their employees' wages. Because even though our economy is growing and our businesses have created about 8½ million new

jobs over the past 4 years, average wages have barely budged.

So it's good news that, earlier this week, one of America's largest retailers, the Gap, decided to raise wages for its employees beginning this year. Their decision will benefit about 65,000 workers in the U.S. That means more families will be able to raise their kids, finish their studies, or keep up on their bills with a little less financial stress and strain.

And Gap's CEO explained their decision simply. He said, "[It's] right for our brands, good for our people, and beneficial to our customers." And he's right. Raising Americans' wages isn't just a good deed, it's good business and good for our economy. It helps reduce turnover, it boosts productivity, and it gives folks some more money to spend at local businesses.

And as a chief executive myself, that's why I took action last week to lift more workers' wages by requiring Federal contractors to pay their employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour.

In the year since I first asked Congress to raise the minimum wage, six States have passed laws to raise theirs, and more States are working on it as we speak. But only Congress

can finish the job and lift Americans' wages across the country.

Right now there's a bill before Congress that would boost America's minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. It's easy to remember: 10-10. That bill would lift wages for more than 16 million Americans without requiring a single dollar in new taxes or spending. But even though a majority of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans across the country support raising the minimum wage, Republicans in Congress don't want to give it a vote.

Hard-working Americans deserve better than "no." Let's tell Congress to say "yes." Pass that bill. Give America a raise. Because here in America, no one who works hard should have to live in poverty, and everyone who works hard should have a chance to get ahead.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:05 p.m. on February 21 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on February 22. In the address, the President referred to Glenn K. Murphy, chairman and chief executive officer, Gap Inc. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 21, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 22.

Remarks at the National Governors Association Dinner February 23, 2014

Good evening, everybody. Please have a seat. Have a seat. Well, welcome to the White House. Everybody looks fabulous. I am truly honored to be one of Michelle Obama's guests tonight here at dinner. [Laughter] I want to thank all the Governors and their better halves for being here tonight, especially your chair, Mary Fallin, and your vice chair, John Hickenlooper.

Tonight we want to make sure that all of you make yourselves at home, to which I'm sure some of you are thinking, that's been the plan all along. [Laughter] But keep in mind what a wise man once wrote: "I am more than contented to be Governor and shall not care if I never hold another office." Of course, that was

Teddy Roosevelt. [Laughter] So I guess plans change.

I look forward to working with each of you not just in our meetings tomorrow, but throughout this year, what I hope to be a year of action. Our partnership on behalf of the American people on issues ranging from education to health care to climate change run deep, deeper than what usually hits the front page.

Being here tonight, I'm thinking about moments that I've spent with so many of you during the course of the year: with Governor Patrick at a hospital in Boston, seeing the survivors of the Boston bombing, seeing them fight through their wounds, determined to return to