

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

their families, but also realizing that a lot of lives were saved because of the preparations that Federal and State and local officials had carried out beforehand; with Governor Fallin at a firehouse in Moore, thanking first responders who risked their lives to save others after a devastating tornado, but once again seeing the kind of State-Federal cooperation that's so vital in these kinds of circumstances; spending time with Governor O'Malley at the Naval Academy graduation last spring and looking out over some of our newest sailors and marines as they join the greatest military in the world; and reminding ourselves that on national security issues, the contributions of the National Guard obviously are extraordinary, and all of you work so closely with them.

So if there's one thing in common in the moments like these, it's that our cooperation is vital to make sure that we're doing right by the American people. And what's common also is the incredible resilience and the goodness and the strength of the American people that we're so privileged to serve. And that resilience has carried us from the depths of the worst economic crisis in our lifetimes to what I am convinced can be a breakthrough year for America and the American people.

That, of course, will require that we collectively take action on what matters to them: jobs

and opportunity. And when we've got a Congress that sometimes seems to have a difficult time acting, I want to make sure that I have the opportunity to partner with each of you in any way that I can to help more Americans work and study and strive and make sure that they see their efforts and their faith in this country rewarded.

I know we'll talk more about areas where we can work together tomorrow. So tonight I simply would like to propose a toast: To the families that support us, to the citizens that inspire us, and to this exceptional country that has given us so much. Cheers.

[At this point, the President offered a toast.]

And with that, I would like to invite your chair, Governor Mary Fallin, to say a few words. Mary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:11 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mary Fallin of Oklahoma, in her capacity as chair, and Gov. John W. Hickenlooper of Colorado, in his capacity as vice chair, of the National Governors Association; Gov. Deval L. Patrick of Massachusetts; and Gov. Martin J. O'Malley of Maryland.

Remarks to the National Governors Association February 24, 2014

Thank you so much. Everybody, please have a seat.

Welcome to the White House. I know that you've already been doing a lot of work, and I'm glad to be able to come here and engage in a dialogue with all of you. I want to thank Mary and John for their leadership at the NGA. I want to thank my outstanding Vice President, Joe Biden, who is very excited, I think, about the jobs initiative and is going to be—the job training initiative and, I think, is going to be doing a great job on that.

Michelle and I had a wonderful time hosting you guys last night, and I hope all the spouses enjoyed it. And I know Alex enjoyed it.

[Laughter] One good thing about living here is that you can make all the noise you want and nobody is going to complain. [Laughter] And I enjoyed watching some of you with your eyes on higher office size up the drapes—[laughter]—and each other.

We don't have a lot of time today, so I want to be very brief, go straight to Q&A and discussion. We're at a moment when our economy is growing; our businesses have now created over 8.5 million new jobs over the past 4 years. But as I've said several times, the trends that have battered the middle class for a couple of decades now are still there and still have to be addressed. Those at the top are doing very well.