

## The President's Weekly Address

March 8, 2014

Hi, everybody. This week, I traveled to New England, where I was joined by four Governors who are working to raise the minimum wage in each of their States. And they've also joined me in calling on Congress to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour. Because it would give nearly 800,000 Americans in their States a raise and lift wages for about 28 million people across the country.

So these Governors aren't waiting for Congress to make up its mind. And in my State of the Union Address, I asked America's business leaders to go ahead and do what they could to raise their employees' wages too. And increasingly, it's not just large companies like Costco or the Gap that choose to pay their employees higher starting wages.

It's smaller businesses like Jaxson's, a family-owned ice cream parlor in South Florida. They answered the call and raised their wages so that more than 70 employees would earn at least \$10.10 an hour, without cutting back on hiring.

And 2 weeks ago, an Atlanta small-business owner named Darien Southerland wrote me to share a lesson his grandmother taught him: that if you treat your employees right, they'll treat you right. And Vice President Biden paid him a visit this week.

I agree with these business owners, which is why I issued an Executive order requiring Federal contractors to pay their employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour. It's good for our bottom line. And working Americans have struggled through stagnant wages for far too long.

A clear majority of Americans support raising the minimum wage because we believe that nobody who works full time should have to live in poverty. About half of all Republicans support raising the minimum wage too. It's just too bad they don't serve in Congress. Because the Republicans who do serve in Congress don't want to vote on the minimum wage at all. Some even want to get rid of it completely. Seriously.

That's why what business leaders and everyday Americans are doing to raise wages is so important. Because change doesn't come from Washington, change comes to Washington. I've always believed that, and it's true in this case too. Outside Washington, Americans are ready to put aside old political arguments and move this country forward. The American people are way ahead of Congress on this issue, and we've just got to let Congress know that. It's time for "10-10." It's time to give America a raise. And it's time to restore opportunity for all.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:44 p.m. on March 6 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on March 8. In the address, the President referred to Gov. Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut; Gov. Deval L. Patrick of Massachusetts; Gov. Peter E. Shumlin of Vermont; Gov. Lincoln D. Chafee of Rhode Island; and Darien J. Southerland, chief strategy officer, BG Ad Group. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 7, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 8.

## Remarks Honoring 2012–2013 NCAA Championship Teams

March 10, 2014

Hello, everybody. Hello! Hey! Everybody, have a seat. Look it: She's taking selfies. [Laughter] Sit down. [Laughter] Sit down. I caught you. [Laughter] Well, I've already said

hi to everybody, so I'm going to keep my remarks pretty short.

Welcome to the White House. It is nice to be outside for a change, and spring break is un-

der way for a lot of schools, and so we thought this was the perfect time to invite a bunch of college kids over to wreak havoc on the White House. What could go wrong?

This is an incredible group. I had a chance to meet many of you earlier. We've got golfers. We've got runners. We've got soccer players. We've got everything in between. We've even got some volleyball-playing Anteaters. [*Laughter*] And the West Virginia rifle team is here, although the Secret Service is not sure whether we checked them before they came in. We've got the Minnesota women's hockey team, which includes a few players who competed for Team U.S.A. in Sochi. Yay!

We've got three schools that sent a pair of teams here today. The Tar Heels, we've got women's lacrosse and women's soccer. For Princeton, we've got fencing and field hockey. For USC, we have men's and women's water polo.

We've got a lot of champs here today. I want to make sure everybody gets their due. So on the women's side, let's give it up for the Kansas track and field team, the Oklahoma softball team, the Stanford tennis team. And on the men's side, we've got the Alabama golf team, the UC-Irvine volleyball team, Colorado cross country, Duke lacrosse, Indiana soccer, Oklahoma cross country, Virginia tennis, and the Yale hockey squad.

Now, no matter what sport you play and no matter where you come from, for the rest of your lives, every single one of you is going to be able to call yourselves a national champion. And you know that a title like that means not just performing your best when the spotlight is on and the game is underway, but also pushing yourself even harder when nobody is watching: dragging yourself out of bed for early morning weight-lifting sessions and gutting out the pre-season two-a-days. It means cracking the books, I hope, on those late-night bus rides home and making sure to leave time to study when everybody else is out having fun. And it means that after practice, when other folks might turn off the lights and head home, you ask the janitor to keep the lights on so you can run another drill—or two or three.

And that's the championship spirit that we're celebrating today, not just the trophies in the display case back home, but the drive and the toughness and the teamwork that put them there.

And at a time when legendary conferences are being reshuffled and too many schools have been forced to cut sports, athletes like all of you remind us that at their core, college athletics are supposed to be about a lot more than just network ratings. They're about the shy freshman who develops into a team captain, the underdog who learns how to play in the spotlight and learns how to slay the giant, the role player who fights through an injury to play on Senior Day. It's about playing a game that you love, even if you're not on a full scholarship or even if the only folks cheering you on are your mom and dad. And at their best, college sports teach us about giving back to our communities.

So athletes from these teams have spent time visiting local children's hospitals, volunteering with the Special Olympics, and speaking to young people about bullying. You've helped raise awareness for efforts like Habitat for Humanity and Read Across America and LGBT rights.

And that's the kind of ethic that shows, this is not just about winning, it's about learning how to lift other people up. That's what makes a true champion. And that's what will serve you well no matter what path you choose in the years ahead, whether as a coach or an athlete or a doctor or a teacher or an entrepreneur. Our country needs young people like you to keep giving your best and to keep bringing out the best in those around you. That's how we keep making progress and moving forward. And that's why we're all looking forward to seeing what all of you accomplish in the years ahead.

And I'm particularly proud of two things. One, it's traditional to bring football and basketball teams here. I think that for all these outstanding athletes and sports, it's important to acknowledge that your investment and time and effort and dedication is just as significant. And you may not always be on television all the

time, but what you guys do is remarkable, and you are truly great athletes.

The second thing is, I can't tell you how proud I am of the young women here. There was a time when college women's athletics was relegated to second status. And all of you here are showing the incredible strides that we've made over the last couple of decades. And it means that Malia and Sasha and my nieces, they all know how important athletics is in their lives. And you guys have really paved the way. So we're really proud of you for that.

I want to congratulate all of you on your championship season. I hope that you guys enjoyed your time at the White House. I want to

wish all of you the best of luck in the time ahead. For those of you who are returning, coming back, good luck next season. And for those of you who are graduating, Godspeed.

All right? I hope you guys had a good time. Take care of yourselves. Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Megan Bozek, Gisèle M. "Gigi" Marvin, Anne Schleper, and Lee Stecklein, defensemen, and Amanda Kessel, forward, 2014 U.S. women's hockey team. He also referred to his nieces Leslie Robinson and Savita and Suhaila Ng.

## Remarks on Signing a Proclamation Regarding Boundary Enlargement of the California Coastal National Monument

March 11, 2014

*The President.* As some of you know, in my State of the Union Address, I talked about taking any actions that I could to ensure that this incredible gift of American lands, the natural bounty that has been passed on to us from previous generations, is preserved for future generations. And I pledged to act wherever I could to make sure that our children, our grandchildren are going to be able to look upon this land of ours with the same wonder as we have.

Today I'm taking the important step by designating the Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands as a national monument. I want to thank the lawmakers who supported this proclamation, including Representatives Jared Huffman and Mike Thompson, as well as Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer.

And I also want to recognize Larry Stornetta, who is here—there is Larry right here—whose family helped care for this land and sold part of the ranch so the public could access it.

We are talking about over 1,600 acres of incredible coastline in California that reflects the incredible diversity of flora and fauna. It is a place where scientists do research, where people who just want to experience the great outdoors can take advantage of it. It is a huge economic boost for the region. California tourism

obviously is important, and the California coastline, I think, is as big of an attraction as there is.

And so for us to make sure that this is going to be properly preserved, that it is going to be cherished, that the Federal protections will be available, I think is going to make all the difference.

And one of the great things about the way we've done our national monument designations is that we've made sure that all the stakeholders are involved throughout this process. We talk to local communities. We talk to local business interests. We talk to Native American tribes. We make sure that anybody who may have some impact, their voice is heard. And unanimously, in this part of the country, people believe that this is the right thing to do, and I certainly do.

So it's a great pleasure for me to be able to sign this designation. I want to congratulate all the people behind me who worked so hard to make this happen. And I told them that I'm always looking for an excuse to get outside. [Laughter] So I hope I get a chance to roam around this amazing landmark sometime in the future. All right?