

The President's Weekly Address

April 5, 2014

Hi, everybody. Today, our economy is growing and our businesses are consistently generating new jobs. But decades-long trends still threaten the middle class. While those at the top are doing better than ever, too many Americans are working harder than ever, but feel like they can't get ahead.

That's why the budget I sent Congress earlier this year is built on the idea of opportunity for all. It will grow the middle class and shrink the deficits we've already cut in half since I took office.

It's an opportunity agenda with four goals. Number one is creating more good jobs that pay good wages. Number two is training more Americans with the skills to fill those jobs. Number three is guaranteeing every child access to a great education. And number four is making work pay, with wages you can live on, savings you can retire on, and health care that's there for you when you need it.

This week, the Republicans in Congress put forward a very different budget. And it does just the opposite: It shrinks opportunity and makes it harder for Americans who work hard to get ahead. The Republican budget begins by handing out massive tax cuts to households making more than \$1 million a year. Then, to keep from blowing a hole in the deficit, they'd have to raise taxes on middle class families with kids. Next, their budget forces deep cuts to investments that help our economy create jobs, like education and scientific research.

Now, they won't tell you where these cuts will fall exactly. But compared to my budget, if

they cut everything evenly, then within a few years, about 170,000 kids will be cut from early childhood education programs. About 200,000 new mothers and kids will be cut off from programs to help them get healthy food. Schools across the country will lose funding that supports 21,000 special education teachers. And if they want to make smaller cuts to one of these areas, that means larger cuts in others.

Not surprisingly, the Republican budget also tries to repeal the Affordable Care Act, even though that would take away health coverage from the more than 7 million Americans who have done the responsible thing and signed up to buy health insurance. And for good measure, the Republican budget guts the rules we put in place to protect the middle class from another financial crisis like the one we've had to fight so hard to recover from.

Policies that benefit a fortunate few while making it harder for working Americans to succeed, that's not what we need right now. Our economy doesn't grow best from the top down, it grows best from the middle out. That's what my opportunity agenda does, and that's what I'm going to keep on fighting for. Thanks. And have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on April 3 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on April 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 4, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on April 5.

Statement on the Presidential Election in Afghanistan

April 5, 2014

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate the millions of Afghans who enthusiastically participated in today's historic elections, which promise to usher in the first democratic transfer of power in Afghanistan's history and which represent another important

milestone in Afghans taking full responsibility for their country as the United States and our partners draw down our forces.

We commend the Afghan people, security forces, and elections officials on the turnout for today's vote, which is in keeping with the