

Congress is sitting on dozens of bills that would help protect our precious land and wildlife. And by one count, there's a set of 10 land conservation bills that have been introduced a combined 52 times over the past 30 years, and they are still stuck. So I'm here to pick up a little bit of the slack. [Laughter] Because there is no time to waste to preserve our precious resources and give a shot in the arm to local economies like Las Cruces.

So I want to thank everybody again, not just here on stage, but all of those at the Department of the Interior who worked so hard on this project. And I want to thank all the public servants around the country for everything that you do to guide Americans through God-given wonders and keep our national landscapes

pristine, not just today, for—but for many years to come.

Thanks, everybody. And now I'm going to sign this proclamation. All right? Good.

Gather up, everybody. [Laughter]. Got to get all the pens in.

[At this point, the President signed the proclamation.]

There we go. Done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. at the Department of the Interior. The proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Deployment of United States Armed Forces Personnel to Chad

May 21, 2014

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Approximately 80 U.S. Armed Forces personnel have deployed to Chad as part of the U.S. efforts to locate and support the safe return of over 200 schoolgirls who are reported to have been kidnapped in Nigeria. These personnel will support the operation of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance aircraft for missions over northern Nigeria and the surrounding area. The force will remain in Chad until its support in resolving the kidnapping situation is no longer required.

This action has been directed in furtherance of U.S. national security and foreign policy interests, pursuant to my constitutional authority

to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in these actions.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

## Remarks at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York

May 22, 2014

*The President.* Thank you. There must be some White Sox fans here somewhere. [Laughter] It is great to be here in Cooperstown. And I have to say that in addition to just wonderful people, those of you all across

America and around the world who have not been here, this is a gorgeous place. We came in by helicopter and had a chance to see the landscape, and it looks like a spectacular place to spend a few days, a week, however long you

want to stay. I'll bet people will be happy to have you.

And I'm—although he is not here yet, I want to acknowledge the Governor of New York. He had a conflict, and he's on his way up. But he is really focused on jobs in Upstate New York: your Governor, Andrew Cuomo. I want to thank your mayor, Jeff Katz, for having me, and his great hospitality, and everybody who was involved in arranging the visit. We've also got, by the way, our Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security, Ali Mayorkas, who is here. And he's important because he's helping bring travelers to America.

Now, it is a great honor to be the first sitting President ever to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame. The timing could not be better. First off, summer marks the 70th—75th anniversary of the Hall of Fame. I also promised Frank Thomas I'd check the place out before he's inducted in July. [Laughter]

And I'm so glad I did. Obviously, I didn't have a chance to roam around as long as I wanted, but thanks to the wonderful hospitality here, I saw the ball that William Howard Taft threw in the first-ever Presidential opening day pitch. I saw the White House—"White Sox locker" of memorabilia and got to bask in the glory of the 2005 World Series win.

*Audience member.* Woo!

*The President.* Yes!

At the Hall's request, I contributed something of my own, which was the jacket I wore when I threw out the first pitch at the 2009 All-Star Game. I hear that with all the media attention about it, there was also some interest in the jeans I wore that night. [Laughter] But Michelle retired those jeans quite a while back. [Laughter]

So I love baseball; America loves baseball. It continues to be our national pastime. And for any baseball fan out there, you've got to make a trip here. But as much as I'd love to talk baseball all day—and with a Chicago legend, Andre Dawson, the "Hawk," here today, it's hard not to want to talk baseball all day long—I'm actually here to talk about jobs: good, middle class jobs. And believe it or not, places like this institution, the Hall of Fame, have something to do with jobs and economic growth.

It's been about 5½ years since the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes hit. And thanks to the grit and determination of the American people, we've been steadily fighting our way back. Over the last 4 years, our businesses have created 9.2 million new jobs. We had an auto industry that was flatlining; it's come roaring back. A manufacturing sector that had lost about one-third of its jobs in the last decade is now adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. And rather than create jobs in other countries, more and more companies are recognizing that it makes sense to invest right here in America. We've got great workers. We've got the largest market in the world. We've got a whole bunch of stuff going for us, and we're starting to see insourcing rather than outsourcing of jobs.

So we've made progress, but here's the thing: Too many Americans out there are still working harder than ever and can't seem to get ahead. And so we have to do more to spur growth and economic development and create more jobs that pay a good wage.

We should be making it easier, not harder, for businesses to invest and create jobs here in the United States. We should be making sure that people are rewarded for hard work and responsibility, rather than see their wages and salaries stagnate. And we should be making it easier, not harder, for striving young students to afford the higher education that's going to be the key to a lot of 21st-century jobs and make sure that they can repay all that loan debt that too often they're taking on when they go to college.

There's a new bill, by the way, being introduced in Congress in the coming weeks that's going to really do more to make sure that college students are getting a fair shot. Of course, unfortunately, we've got a Congress that all too often spends a few days a week blocking initiatives to create jobs and raise wages and help young people go to college. They seem to be more interested in politics right now than performance. And that's a challenge.

I'll work with anybody who's focused on what we need to be focused on and what all the people who sent us to Washington are focused

on, and that is: How do we improve the economy and create more jobs? But if Congress isn't going to act, then I'm going to do whatever and any steps I can take to create jobs and opportunity for more working families.

So far, we've seen, for example, the House Republicans blocked legislation that would raise America's minimum wage. So I've been working with States and cities and businesses to go ahead and raise their minimum wage anyway. And I issued an Executive order making sure that if you are contracting with the Federal Government, you've got to pay your workers a higher minimum wage—at least \$10.10 an hour—because I believe that if you work full time, you shouldn't be in poverty.

We saw Senate Republicans block an up-or-down vote on ensuring equal pay for women. I went ahead and took action on my own to make it easier for women to find out whether they're being treated fairly on the workplace—at the workplace and to be able to take action.

And when it comes to creating jobs, last week I was down in Tarrytown, where workers were able to break ground on the replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge ahead of schedule because my administration fast-tracked that project and a lot of major projects across the country. On Tuesday, I met with CEOs from around the world who are investing and hiring in America because we've made our country more competitive.

And today I'm here in Cooperstown to talk about some new steps that will lead to more tourism not just within America, but getting more folks to come and visit the treasures, the national treasures that we have all across this country, including the Baseball Hall of Fame right here in Cooperstown. Because tourism translates into jobs, and it translates into economic growth. When visitors come here, they don't just check out the Hall. They rent cars. They stay in hotels. They eat at restaurants. And that means, for Upstate New York, the Baseball Hall of Fame is a powerful economic engine.

Last year alone, travel and tourism were responsible for \$1.5 trillion in economic activity across the country. Think about that: \$1.5 tril-

lion supporting nearly 8 million jobs in communities like this one. And when tourists come from other countries and spend money here, that's actually considered a type of export. We don't always think about it that way, but we should. Nothing says "Made in America" better than the Empire State Building or the Hoover Dam. Folks who work at restaurants and hotels that serve fans in Cooperstown have the kinds of jobs that can't be offshored. And obviously, it's tough to ship the Rocky Mountains or the Grand Canyon overseas. You can't do it. *[Laughter]*

When it comes to tourism, the good news is, we've got a great product to sell. People want to come here. I was reminded of that yesterday. I took a walk from the White House to the Department of Interior building. Keep in mind, I don't get a chance to take walks very often. *[Laughter]* Secret Service gets a little stressed. But every once in a while, I'm able to sneak off. The—I'm sort of like the circus bear that kind of breaks the chain, and I start taking off, and everybody starts whispering, the bear is loose! *[Laughter]*

So I got out, take a walk. It was a beautiful day. And even though I went for several blocks—it was probably about a 10-minute walk—in that little span of time, I met tourists from Germany and Israel and Brazil and China and Ukraine on the National Mall. The fact that people come from all over the world to see our parks, to see our monuments, is something we should take great pride in as Americans. And it's good for our economy.

So just like we're helping our businesses to sell more goods made in America in markets all across the world, we're spending a lot of time and focus trying to make it easier for folks from around the world to come see America and spend money here. Four years ago, I signed a law that set up a nonprofit organization with one mission, and that is to pitch America as a travel destination. And 2 years ago, I went down to Disney World to announce new action to make it simpler for travelers to visit America, without compromising security at our borders.

And those efforts are paying off. Since its low point after the recession, our travel and

tourism industry has added nearly 580,000 new jobs. Last year, a record 70 million tourists visited America from other countries, more than the populations of Texas, Florida, and New York combined. And they spent their money here. No country on Earth earns more money from international tourism than we do. And the growth of international tourism created about 175,000 new jobs over the last 5 years and helped drive America's exports to an all-time high.

So we're making great strides in welcoming more visitors to America in places like Cooperstown, but we can do even better. I want to turn the 70 million tourists that came last year into a hundred million each year by the beginning of the next decade. And meeting that goal is going to help create jobs here in New York.

And that's why, earlier today, I took new actions to meet that goal. I met with several CEOs of travel and tourism companies, and building on the progress that we've made, I've directed my administration to work with airports, airlines, hotel groups, States, and cities to do more to improve the traveler experience, and reduce wait times for folks entering into the United States, all without compromising our security.

And we have some folks here today who are already showing us what's possible. Scott Donohue is the CEO of the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport. Where's Scott? There he is, right here. We've got, from my own hometown, Rosie Andolino, the Aviation Commissioner from Chicago. They're—Rosie is right there. The two of them are responsible for two of the busiest airports in America. But the average wait times through customs and passport control at DFW and O'Hare has fallen to just 15 minutes. You get off your plane, it takes you 15 minutes to get through if you're an international traveler. And that is a big deal. If folks spend less time at the airport, they're more likely to come back for a return trip. And when they go back home, they tell their friends, you know what, America was there to greet us.

And I've made clear that national security remains our top priority; that's not going to change. But there's no reason we can't repli-

cate the success stories of places like Dallas and Chicago all around the country. We can automate passport controls. We can bring in top talent from the private sector to find best practices to help move lines faster. We can add new staff at customs. We want to bring in more visitors faster, more jobs faster. If they come into JFK faster, they come into La Guardia faster, then they can get to Cooperstown faster. And they can start seeing Joe DiMaggio's glove faster. And they can see Babe Ruth's bat faster.

So creating good jobs isn't always easy. But standing here and looking back on more than 150 years of our country's history—and baseball describes our history in so many ways—we're reminded of all the obstacles that we've overcome to get there. This Hall has memories of two world wars that we fought and won. It has memories of color barriers being broken: Jackie Robinson's uniform, the record of his first season as a Dodger. It shows us the history of communities that we built across a new continent and the ways that we connected with our country and our world and how women athletes started getting the recognition that they deserved.

So we've faced challenges before, but we don't respond with cynicism, and we can't respond with gridlock. Every generation faces tough times. But in the words of the great Yogi Berra, they're just "déjà vu all over again." [*Laughter*]

We know we are up to these challenges. And just as our parents and our grandparents faced challenges a lot tougher than the ones we face, and just as they went ahead and built an economy where hard work was rewarded and responsibility was rewarded and opportunity was open to all people, we can do the same. They passed those values on down through the generations. They passed them down to us. And when you come to the Baseball Hall of Fame, part of what you're learning is that there is some eternal, timeless values of grit and determination and hard work and community and not giving up and working hard. Those are American values, just like baseball.

And there's no reason we can't do the same. That's what I'm going to be working on as long as

I'm President of the United States. I'm going to be fighting to make sure that those values live out in better jobs, higher wages, stronger economy, stronger communities. And I hope you'll join me.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to National Baseball Hall of Fame inductees Frank E. Thomas (2014), Andre N. Dawson (2010), and Lawrence P. "Yogi" Berra (1972).

## Memorandum Establishing a National Goal and Developing Airport Specific Action Plans To Enhance the Entry Process for International Travelers to the United States

May 22, 2014

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies*

*Subject:* Establishing a National Goal and Developing Airport Specific Action Plans to Enhance the Entry Process for International Travelers to the United States

The U.S. travel and tourism sector is critical to the Nation's prosperity and drives economic growth. In 2013, international visitors alone supported more than 1.3 million U.S. jobs.

Executive Order 13597 of January 19, 2012 (Establishing Visa and Foreign Visitor Processing Goals and the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness), mobilized the Federal Government to increase visa processing capacity, expand the Visa Waiver Program, and expand expedited traveler programs, all without compromising national security requirements.

The National Travel and Tourism Strategy, published 2 years ago, set a target of attracting and welcoming 100 million visitors by 2021, which the United States is on track to meet. To ensure we properly welcome and process those visitors at our airports, I am directing the Secretaries of Commerce and Homeland Security (Secretaries) to develop a national goal for improving service levels for international arrivals, including the time passengers spend waiting for primary inspection, i.e. passport control, and other steps of the arrival process. The Secretaries shall also develop airport-specific action plans that include actions from both private and public sectors to measurably improve the entry experience and reduce the wait time

for international arrivals to those airports. The goal and action plans shall be consistent with efforts that have already demonstrated significant improvements through partnership between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and international airports, such as improvements at Dallas-Fort Worth and Chicago O'Hare over a 12-month period that have resulted in average wait times of just 15 minutes and reduced the percentage of travelers with more than 30-minute wait times from 29 percent to 14 percent.

The purpose of this goal and action plans is to maximize the economic contribution of travel and tourism for business, leisure, academic, medical, and other lawful purposes by improving the experience of international travelers coming to the United States, in particular their experience with passport control and customs processing at airports in the United States.

The experience of an international arrival at one of our airports is not limited to the interaction with the U.S. Government. Airports, airlines, and local governments figure heavily into the arrival's experience—and they have an essential role to play in creating a positive first impression. Therefore, as part of the action plans, the Secretaries will identify opportunities for private and nonfederal public sector actors to help achieve the goal, and ask for their public commitment to take specific actions to improve the entry experience for international guests.

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to remove