

The President's Weekly Address

August 2, 2014

Hi, everybody. My top priority as President is doing everything I can to create more jobs and more opportunities for hard-working families to get ahead.

On Friday, we learned that our economy created over 200,000 new jobs in July. That's on top of about 300,000 new jobs in June. We're now in a 6-month streak with at least 200,000 new jobs each month. That hasn't happened since 1997. All told, our businesses have created 9.9 million jobs over the past 53 months. And that's the longest streak of private sector job creation in our history.

Because of you—because of your hard work and determination—America has recovered faster and come farther than almost any other advanced country on Earth. The economy is clearly getting stronger. Things are clearly getting better. And the decisions we make now can keep things moving in that direction.

That's what's at stake right now: making sure our economy works for every working American, making sure that people who work hard can get ahead. That's why I've been pushing for commonsense ideas like rebuilding our infrastructure in a way that supports millions of good jobs and helps our businesses compete. That's why I've been pushing to raise the minimum wage; to make it easier for working folks to pay off their student loans. That's why I've been pushing for fair pay and paid leave.

These policies have two things in common. All of them would help working families feel more stable and secure. And unfortunately, all of them have been blocked or ignored by Republicans in Congress.

And that's why my administration keeps taking what actions we can on our own to help

working families, because Congress is doing so little for working families. House Republicans actually got together this week and voted to sue me for taking actions on my own. And then they left town for the month without settling a bunch of unfinished business that matters to working families across America.

The bottom line is this. We've come a long way these past 5½ years. Our challenges are nowhere near as daunting as they were back then. But imagine how much farther along our economy would be—how much stronger our country would be—if Congress would just do its job.

I'll never stop trying to work with both parties to get things moving faster for the middle class and everybody who's working to get into the middle class. And I could use your help. If you see your Member of Congress around home this month, tell him or her what's on your mind. Ask them why they haven't passed bills to raise the minimum wage or help with student loans or enact fair pay for women.

And when they return from vacation next month, instead of trying to pass partisan bills on party lines, hopefully, we can come together with the sense of common purpose that you expect. And in the meantime, I will not stop and will never stop doing whatever I can, whenever I can, not only to make sure that our economy succeeds, but that folks like you succeed.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:15 p.m. on August 1 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on August 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 1, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 2.

Statement on the Death of Former White House Press Secretary James S. Brady

August 4, 2014

Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the family of former White House Press

Secretary James Brady on his passing. Jim is a legend at the White House for his warmth and

professionalism as Press Secretary for President Reagan, for the strength he brought to bear in recovering from the shooting that nearly killed him 33 years ago, and for turning the events of that terrible afternoon into a remarkable legacy of service through the Brady Campaign To Prevent Gun Violence. Since 1993, the law that bears Jim's name has kept guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals. An untold number of people are alive today who otherwise wouldn't be, thanks to Jim.

Every day, reporters and White House staffers walk past a plaque marking the day in 2000 that the White House Briefing Room was renamed the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room. It reads, "May his courage and dedication continue to inspire all who work in this room and beyond." Those words will endure, as will his legacy. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jim's wife Sarah, who has been Jim's steadfast partner in advocacy, and their children Scott and Melissa.

Memorandum on Establishing a Comprehensive Approach to Expanding Sub-Saharan Africa's Capacity for Trade and Investment

August 4, 2014

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Establishing a Comprehensive Approach to Expanding Sub-Saharan Africa's Capacity for Trade and Investment

In June 2012, I released the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa (Strategy) outlining a comprehensive U.S. policy for the region. The Strategy builds on many of the initiatives launched during my Administration, and in particular highlights an effort critical to the future of Sub-Saharan Africa: boosting broad-based economic growth, including through trade and investment. The Strategy outlines a number of actions to help accelerate inclusive economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa, including: promoting an environment that enables trade and investment; improving economic governance; promoting regional integration; expanding Sub-Saharan African capacity to effectively access and benefit from global markets; and encouraging U.S. companies to trade with and invest in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is a cornerstone of the trade relationship between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa. Since AGOA went into effect 14 years ago, exports from Sub-Saharan Africa to the United States have more than doubled and non-oil and non-mineral exports in particular have increased nearly fourfold. The

growth of new export industries has supported the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, my Administration's recent review of AGOA has revealed that, while the tariff preferences provided under AGOA are important, they alone are not sufficient to promote transformational growth in trade and investment. For beneficiary countries to be able to utilize AGOA to its fullest, this program must be linked to a comprehensive, coordinated trade and investment capacity-building approach with clearly stated goals and benchmarks.

In July 2013, I announced the launch of Trade Africa, an initiative to encourage greater regional integration and to increase trade and investment between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa by aligning U.S. assistance with governmental and private sector engagements. Trade Africa initially focused on the East African Community, with the intention of expanding over time within Sub-Saharan Africa.

Targeted and strategic trade and investment capacity building is critical to achieving not only the goals of AGOA and Trade Africa, but also other U.S. trade and investment initiatives, such as the Doing Business in Africa Campaign and the National Export Initiative/NEXT.

Executive departments and agencies (agencies) have made major strides in advancing the trade and investment related goals of the Strategy. In order to achieve maximum effectiveness,