

has advised that the proposed recommendation would violate the Appointments Clause of the Constitution. I do, however, support portions of the recommendation that would establish a term appointment for the Under Secretary for Health, to ensure that position is removed from the turmoil and turnover of the political cycle.

For those recommendations I agree with and whose objectives are not yet achieved, I am directing the VA to develop plans to complete their implementation. Additionally, in recognition of the role of the MyVA initiative in transforming the VA as military service evolves, I have directed the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to incorporate the principles of the MyVA initiative into VA strategic planning, leadership training, and performance monitoring. In those areas where legislation is re-

quired, my Administration will work closely with the Secretary to transmit to the Congress the relevant legislative proposals, which I recommend be enacted without delay.

Improving veterans' health care remains a critical issue of national importance, and my Administration will work with veterans and military families, the Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure all our veterans are getting the care and benefits they need when they need them.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

## Statement on the Death of President Islom Karimov of Uzbekistan *September 2, 2016*

At this challenging time of President Islom Karimov's passing, the United States reaffirms its support for the people of Uzbekistan. This week, I congratulated President Karimov and the people of Uzbekistan on their country's 25

years of independence. As Uzbekistan begins a new chapter in its history, the United States remains committed to partnership with Uzbekistan, to its sovereignty, security, and to a future based on the rights of all its citizens.

## The President's Weekly Address *September 3, 2016*

Hi, everybody. Before you fire up the barbecue for the long weekend, I want to talk a little bit about the reason we get to celebrate Labor Day, and that's the labor movement that helped to build this country and our middle class.

For generations, every time the economy has changed, hard-working Americans marched and organized and joined unions to demand not simply a bigger paycheck for themselves, but better conditions and more security for the folks working next to them too. Their efforts are why we can enjoy things like the 40-hour workweek, overtime pay, and a minimum wage. Their efforts are why we can depend on health insur-

ance, Social Security, Medicare, and retirement plans.

All of that progress is stamped with the union label. All of that progress was fueled with a simple belief: that our economy works better when it works for everybody.

That's the spirit that's made the progress of these past 7½ years possible. We've rescued our economy from another depression, cut our unemployment rate in half, and unleashed the longest string total job growth on record. And we've focused on making sure that the gains of a growing economy don't just flow to a few at the top, but to everybody.

That's why we took action to help millions of workers finally collect the overtime pay they've

earned. It's why I issued a call to raise the minimum wage, and when Congress ignored that call, 18 States and the District of Columbia, plus another 51 cities and counties went ahead and gave their workers a raise. It's why the very first bill I signed was the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act why we gave paid sick days to Federal contractors, why we've fought for worker safety and the right to organize.

And we've made good progress. For a few years after the recession, the top 1 percent did capture almost all income gains. But that share has been cut by almost half. Last year, income for everybody else grew at the fastest pace since the 1990s. And another 20 million Americans know the financial security of health insurance.

I'm the first to say we've got more work to do in the years ahead. I know we're in the heat of a more raucous political season than usual, but we can't get so distracted by the latest bluster that we lose sight of the policies that will actually help working families get ahead. The truth is, that's what's caused some of the frustration that's roiling our politics right now: Too many working folks still feel left behind by an economy that's constantly changing.

So, as a country, we've got some choices to make. Do we want to be a country where the typical woman working full time earns 79 cents for every dollar a man makes or one where they earn equal pay for equal work? Do we want a future where inequality rises as union membership keeps falling or one where wages

are rising for everybody and workers have a say in their prospects? Are we a people who just talk about family values while remaining the only developed nation that doesn't offer its workers paid maternity leave, or are we a people who actually value families, and make paid family leave an economic priority for working parents?

These are the kinds of choices in front of us. And if we're going to restore the sense that hard work is rewarded with a fair shot to get ahead, we're going to have to follow the lead of all those who came before us. That means standing up not just for ourselves, but for the father clocking into the plant, the sales clerk working long and unpredictable hours, or the mother riding the bus to work across town—even on Labor Day—folks who work as hard as we do. And it means exercising our rights to speak up in the workplace, to join a union, and above all, to vote.

That's the legacy we celebrate on Labor Day. And I'm confident that's the legacy that we'll build upon in the years ahead.

So thanks, everybody. Happy Labor Day, and enjoy the long weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:10 a.m. on August 26 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on September 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 2, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 3.

## Remarks Announcing the Formal Entry of the United States Into the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement in Hangzhou, China September 3, 2016

*[President Obama made his remarks during a meeting with President Xi Jinping of China and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations. His remarks were joined in progress.]*

We are here together because we believe that for all the challenges that we face, the growing threat of climate change could define

the contours of this century more dramatically than any other challenge.

One of the reasons I ran for this office was to make sure that America does its part to protect this planet for future generations. Over the past 7½ years, we've transformed the United States into a global leader in the fight against climate change. But this is not a fight