

Scripture tells us that before his death, Moses said, “I call upon heaven and earth to bear witness this day that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live.”

Uvacharta Bachayim. Choose life. For Shimon, let us choose life, as he always did. Let us make his work our own. May God bless his memory. And may God bless this

country, and this world, that he loved so dearly.

Shimon, *todah rabah chaver yakar.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. at Mount Herzl. In his remarks, he referred to Tzvia Walden and Yoni and Nehemia “Chemi” Peres, children of President Peres; President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority; and Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom.

The President’s Weekly Address October 1, 2016

There are a couple different stories you can tell about our economy. One goes like this. Eight years after the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, our economy has created jobs for 71 straight months. That’s a new record. Unemployment has fallen below 5 percent. Last year, the typical household saw its income grow by about \$2,800, the biggest 1-year increase ever. And the uninsured rate is at an all-time low.

All that is true. What’s also true is that too much of our wealth is still taken by the top, and that leaves too many families still working paycheck to paycheck, without a lot of breathing room.

There are two things we can do about this. We can prey on people’s worries for political gain, or we can actually do something to help working families feel more secure in today’s economy.

Count me in the latter camp. And here’s one thing that will help right away: making sure more of our families have access to paid leave. Today, having both parents in the workforce is an economic necessity for many families. But right now millions of Americans don’t have access to even a single day of paid sick leave. So, if you get sick, that sticks you with a lousy choice. Do you go to work and get everyone else sick too, or do you take care of yourself at the risk of a paycheck? If your kid gets sick, do you send her to school anyway, or do you stay home to take care of her, lose a day’s pay, and maybe even put your own job at risk?

We shouldn’t have to make choices like that in America. That’s why I’ve repeatedly called on the Republican Congress to pass a law guaranteeing most workers in America the chance to earn 7 days of paid sick leave each year. Of course, Congress hasn’t acted. But we’ve also worked with States, cities, and businesses to try to get the job done, and many have, pointing to research showing that paid leave actually helps their bottom line. In fact, since I took office, another 10 million private sector workers have gained paid sick leave, making up a record share of our workforce.

Unfortunately, there are still about 40 million private sector workers who don’t get a single day. That’s why I’m doing what I can on my own. Effective on January 1, Federal contractors will be required to give their employees working on new Federal contracts up to 7 paid sick days each year. That’s happening. It will help about a million workers when they or a loved one gets sick. It will cover time you need for preventive care. It will cover absences resulting from domestic violence or sexual assault. And it means everyone else is less likely to catch what someone else has got, whether it’s a coworker or the person preparing or serving your food.

Paid sick leave isn’t a side issue or a women’s issue or something that’s just nice to have. It’s a must-have. By the way, so are economic priorities like childcare, paid family leave, equal pay, and a higher minimum wage. We need a Congress that will act on all these issues too, because they’d make a meaningful difference in the lives

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of millions of Americans who are working hard every day. It's more than talk, it's action. And that's what you should demand of every politician who wants the privilege to serve you.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 1:10 p.m. on September 29 in the

Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on October 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 30, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 1. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the White House South by South Lawn Festival *October 3, 2016*

Whenever I hear people make gloomy claims about how America is on the downswing, they're either out to promote themselves, or talking about some alternate reality. Think about it—if you had to choose any time in the course of human history to be alive, you'd choose this one. Right here, right now, right in America.

New technologies and new innovations are transforming the way we live, opening up incredible opportunities to create, to discover, and to do what we never thought possible.

At the same time, we have to navigate these changes in a smart way. They also can be disruptive, even scary—and sometimes, they leave folks behind.

Our task is to come together and build a future that's more inclusive, tolerant, and full of opportunity for everybody. And I've never been more optimistic that we will.

As President, I've spent the last eight years finding the best people to help us meet that challenge. People who reject cynicism. People who turn change into a force for good. People who believe that, no matter who we are, where we come from, who we love, or what God we pray to, we—the people—can create a world that's worthy of our brightest hopes.

So today, I'm inviting a bunch of these folks to my backyard for South by South Lawn.

Much like the festival I dropped by in Austin earlier this year, SXSL is, at its heart, a call to action. The folks out on the lawn today are artists, creators, entrepreneurs, and innovators who will share how they've used their unique skills to engage their communities in making

the change they want to see—whether it's curing cancer, fighting poverty, empowering women, and so much more.

We'll welcome people like Jukay Hsu, an Iraq War veteran with a Bronze Star for his service to our country who uses technology to build a path out of poverty for people in Queens. Or Oscar Menjivar, who is pushing schools in Los Angeles to bring technology into the classroom so kids can get a head start on coding. Or Dr. Nina Tandon, the founder of the world's first company growing living human bones to help with reconstruction and recovery.

Those are just a few of the incredible people you'll see out at South by South Lawn all day today. And believe me—it's a sight to see.

We've got an art installation made entirely of sticky notes where people share how they will make a positive impact where they live. We've got a virtual reality exhibit where people can experience what it's like to live in solitary confinement and learn firsthand why it should be banned from our prisons.

We'll discuss questions that will define the coming decades: How do we harness technology to solve our most stubborn problems? How will we sustainably feed ourselves in the near future? How do we foster innovation in the heart of our cities? How do we, as citizens, engage to bring about lasting change?

And I'll join a conversation with Dr. Katherine Hayhoe, a climate scientist, and Leonardo DiCaprio, a longtime ally in the fight against climate change, to explore how we can move forward in our efforts to protect the one planet