

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

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Working to Stop the #GOPSequester

In the coming week, the middle class will start to feel the pain imposed by the choice Republicans in Congress have made. Instead of coming to the table with a plan to eliminate tax loopholes for the wealthy to reduce the deficit along with smart spending cuts, Republicans in Congress chose to cut essential services for our nation's children, seniors, members of the armed forces and their families.

Americans deserve the two parties to come together and compromise. Republicans must meet the President in the middle to fix this--and not just for one or two months, but for many years in the future. We need to get this done. We have so much to do, and we can't just keep going from one crisis to the next.

Our nation can't just cut our way to prosperity. We're growing our economy, but not fast enough. We need to responsibly pay for smart investment that will create more jobs and grow the economy from the middle out. What does that mean?

- Making America a magnet for jobs;
- Making sure workers have the tools they need to find good jobs;
- Making sure that through this work folks can earn a decent living.

Following his meeting with Congressional leaders this morning, President Obama held a press conference to discuss his plans to continue to move the country forward amidst the severe budget cuts that will go into effect today.

In his remarks, the President reminded Americans that none of these looming impacts are necessary, but instead are happening because of a choice made by Republicans in Congress:

"They've allowed these cuts to happen because they refuse to budge on closing a single wasteful loophole to help reduce the deficit. As recently as yesterday, they decided to protect special interest tax breaks for the well-off and well-connected, and they think that that's apparently more important than protecting our military or middle-class families from the pain of these cuts.



"I do believe that we can and must replace these cuts with a more balanced approach that asks something from everybody: Smart spending cuts; entitlement reform; tax reform that makes the tax code more fair for families and businesses without raising tax rates – all so that we can responsibly lower the deficit without laying off workers, or forcing parents to scramble for childcare, or slashing financial aid for college students."

Watch the President's press conference [here](#).

On Tuesday, President Obama traveled to a shipyard in Newport News, Virginia where he spoke about the sequester's impact on America's middle class families. In his remarks, the President called on Congressional Republicans to act and continued to push his plan to take a balanced approach to deficit reduction.

Read President Obama's remarks [here](#).

House of Representatives Reauthorizes the Violence Against Women Act

On Thursday, the House finally voted to pass the Senate's version to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.



President Obama promised to sign the bill as soon as it reaches his desk and welcomed the news in a statement, saying:

"Over more than two decades, this law has saved countless lives and transformed the way we treat victims of abuse. Today's vote will go even further by continuing to reduce domestic violence, improving how we treat victims of rape, and extending protections to Native American women and members of the LGBT community. The bill also reauthorizes the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, providing critical support for both international and domestic victims of trafficking and helping ensure traffickers are brought to justice."

Vice President Biden, who drafted the original 1994 Violence Against Women Act, commended Congress for coming together to reauthorize a piece of legislation that has significantly improved the lives of women.

"Since VAWA first passed in 1994, we have seen a 64% reduction in domestic violence. I am pleased that this progress will continue, with new tools for cops and prosecutors to hold abusers and rapists accountable, and more support for all victims of these crimes."

Read the President's statement [here](#) and the Vice President's statement [here](#).

Rosa Parks Statue Unveiled in U.S. Capitol

On Wednesday, President Obama joined Members of Congress and the Parks family for the official unveiling of the newest statue in the halls of Congress. One hundred years after her birth and 58 years after she famously refused to give up her seat on a city bus in Alabama, Rosa Parks is now among the defining figures of our nation's history represented in the United States Capitol building.

President Obama paid tribute to the late Rosa Parks in remarks at the unveiling ceremony, saying:



"Rosa Parks's singular act of disobedience launched a movement. The tired feet of those who walked the dusty roads of Montgomery helped a nation see that to which it had once been blind. It is because of these men and women that I stand here today. It is because of them that our children grow up in a land more free and more fair; a land truer to its founding creed.

"And that is why this statue belongs in this hall -- to remind us, no matter how humble or lofty our positions, just what it is that leadership requires; just what it is that citizenship requires. Rosa Parks would have turned 100 years old this month. We do well by placing a statue of her here. But we can do no greater honor to her memory than to carry forward the power of her principle and a courage born of conviction."

First Lady Michelle Obama Kicks Off "Let's Move" Tour

On Wednesday, First Lady Michelle Obama kicked off a two day, three city tour to celebrate the third anniversary of her "Let's Move" campaign.

The First Lady's first stop was a school in Clinton, Mississippi where she was joined by Food Network Chef Rachael Ray. Together, Mrs. Obama and Rachael Ray highlighted Mississippi's progress in combatting childhood obesity and the successful efforts made by the Clinton Public School District to make impactful modifications to its school lunch programs.

In Chicago on Thursday, the First Lady was joined by Education Secretary Arne Duncan and several professional and Olympic athletes to announce a new partnership to boost physical activity in schools, entitled "Let's Move Schools."



At her final stop, Mrs. Obama toured a Walmart in Springfield, Missouri where she learned about changes the company has made to provide and promote healthier options.

Celebrating Women's History Month

Today, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz released the following statement in honor of Women's History Month, which is March:

"As a woman, a mother, a daughter, a wife, and a friend, I couldn't be more proud to celebrate Women's History Month, a time for us to reflect on all the progress we've made as a nation, and to commit ourselves to the work that still is left to do for all the girls and women of our country and our world. Women in our country have achieved so much in spite of the odds. Our stories are woven into the fabric of America—inspiring generations to look to the future, dream impossible dreams, and take our country to new heights.

"We've come so far, and in President Obama, women continue to have an ally in the White House. The first piece of legislation he signed was the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, taking us one step closer to equal pay for equal work. He fought tirelessly until the Affordable Care Act became the law of the land—a law that prevents insurance companies from unfairly discriminating against women. He nominated two women to the Supreme Court, including the first Latina. And he's done so much more. The President's record is one we can all be proud of.

"Just this week, we were reminded of how we must never lose focus of the important work left to do for women and all Americans. On Wednesday, we honored the Mother of the Civil Rights Movement Rosa Parks with one of the very few statues in our Capitol dedicated to a woman. And yesterday, the House came together and finally passed a bipartisan piece of legislation that will help protect more women and their families from violence. The reauthorized and strengthened Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) takes us forward in the fight against domestic violence and adds protections for LGBT Americans, Native American women, and immigrant women. The President made clear this was a priority for his Administration and that he will sign this legislation as soon as it hits his desk.

"But we can't stop now. Our work is not yet done. Women in our nation and our world still face so many challenges. This Women's History Month, we must recommit ourselves to the struggle for true equality and opportunity. We must remind ourselves how hard we've fought to get where we are today, that it is our responsibility to carry on the legacy of those before us, and that it is our great honor to pave the way for those still to come."

Issues in the News

Talking Points: Sequester

- Due to the choice Republicans in Congress have made, over the next few weeks the middle class will begin to feel the effects of the sequester. Rather than eliminate tax loopholes for the wealthiest Americans to reduce the deficit, Republicans have chosen cuts in vital services important to seniors, our men and women in uniform and their families, and children.
- These cuts threaten our national security, put hundreds of thousands of middle class jobs at risk, and they threaten our economy while too many Americans still need work. Here's how:
 - Seniors in need will receive fewer Meals on Wheels.
 - Two-thirds of active duty Army combat brigades outside of Afghanistan will see a reduction of their basic training, maintenance, and readiness.
 - Afterschool programs will be cut; thousands of teachers will be laid off.
 - Military families' health care could be cut.
 - We'll see reductions in treatment and support for mentally ill children.
- We need to shrink the deficit, but the fact remains that middle class families just can't afford these cuts. We can find a better way. President Obama has consistently proposed a balanced plan that will eliminate tax loopholes and ask the wealthy to do their fair share, cut wasteful spending, and strengthen entitlements. This compromise meets Republicans more than halfway.

- Americans deserve the two parties to come together and compromise. Republicans must meet the President in the middle to fix this--and not just for one or two months, but for many years in the future. We need to get this done. We have so much to do, and we can't just keep going from one crisis to the next.
- Our nation can't just cut our way to prosperity. We're growing our economy, but not fast enough. We need to responsibly pay for smart investment that will create more jobs and grow the economy from the middle out. What does that mean?
 - Making America a magnet for jobs;
 - Making sure workers have the tools they need to find good jobs;
 - Making sure that through this work folks can earn a decent living.
- President Obama has made it clear that he will continue to push to fix our broken immigration system. We need a system where everyone plays by the same set of rules and we have commonsense reforms that will reduce gun violence and help protect the nation's children.
- We're not going to be able to find solutions to every one of our nation's challenges—but there are things we can do right now to create jobs. The American people expect Congress to act now and get something done—there is a lot of common ground to start from. That's what the majority of the American people want. We need to do something, and the President is going to keep on calling to get this done.