

Statement on Signing the Ultralight Aircraft Smuggling Prevention Act of 2012

February 10, 2012

This bill gives our Nation's law enforcement expanded authority to combat illicit drug trafficking on our northern and southern borders, and being able to sign it next to my friend Gabby Giffords gives me enormous pride. She has spent her career fighting for the safety of the people of Arizona and the fact that it passed unanimously shows just how much Gabby is respected by her colleagues in Congress in both parties. Her dedication to fairness and to this country has been an inspiration to so

many, including myself. I wished Gabby well in her recovery and told her that I expect to see more of her in the months and years to come. I'm confident that while this legislation may have been her last act as a Congresswoman, it will not be her last act of public service.

NOTE: The statement referred to former Rep. Gabrielle D. Giffords. H.R. 3801, approved February 10, was assigned Public Law No. 112-93.

The President's Weekly Address

February 11, 2012

Hello, everybody. In recent weeks, we've seen signs that our economy is growing stronger and creating jobs at a faster clip. While numbers and figures will go up and down in the coming months, what cannot waver is our resolve to do everything in our power to keep stoking the fires of the recovery.

And the last thing we should do is let Washington stand in the way. You see, at the end of the month, taxes are set to go up on 160 million working Americans. If you're one of them, then you know better than anyone that the last thing you need right now is a tax hike. But if Congress refuses to act, middle class taxes will go up. It's that simple.

Now, if this sounds familiar, it's because we've been here before. Back in December, Congress faced this exact same predicament. Ultimately, thanks to your voices, they did the right thing, but only after a great deal of bickering and political posturing that put the strength of our economy and the security of middle class families at risk. We can't go through that again.

Congress needs to stop this middle class tax hike from happening—period. No drama, no delay, and no ideological side issues that have nothing to do with this tax cut. Now is not the time for self-inflicted wounds to our recovery.

Now is the time for commonsense action, and this tax cut is common sense. If you're a family making about \$50,000 a year, this tax cut amounts to about \$1,000 a year. That's about \$40 in every paycheck. I know there are some folks in this town who think \$40 isn't a lot of money. But to a student or a senior who's trying to stretch the budget a little bit further, to a parent who's filling up the tank and looking at rising gas prices—to them, \$40 can make all the difference in the world.

And so can your voice. I hope you'll pick up the phone, send a tweet, write an e-mail, and tell your Representative that they should get this done before it's too late. Tell them not to play politics again by linking this debate to unrelated issues. Tell them not to manufacture another needless standoff or crisis. Tell them not to stand in the way of the recovery. Tell them to just do their job. That's what our middle class needs. That's what our country needs.

In the wake of the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, we're getting things going again. And we're going to keep at it until everyone shares in America's comeback.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:50 p.m. on February 10 in the

East Room at the White House for broadcast on February 11. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press

Secretary on February 10, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 11.

Remarks at the Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus in Annandale, Virginia February 13, 2012

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Virginia! Thank you, NOVA! Thank you so much. Thank you very much. Everybody who has a chair please have a seat. I know not everybody has a chair.

Audience member. Love you!

The President. I love you back. [Laughter] Great to be here.

First of all, I want to thank Mike for the wonderful introduction. Please give Mike a big round of applause.

It is great to be back here at NOVA. I've been here so many times I'm about three credits short of graduation. [Laughter] But there are a couple of reasons that I keep on coming back. First of all, I think that Dr. Templin and the whole administration here is doing a great job, so I want to give them a big round of applause. The other reason is because Jill Biden keeps talking up how great you are. And just as I do what Michelle tells me to do, I also do what Jill Biden tells me to do. [Laughter]

In addition, by the way, I just want to acknowledge that we also have our Secretary of Labor here, Hilda Solis, who's doing an outstanding job.

But the main reason I keep on coming back is I think this institution is an example of what's best about America. Some of you may have your eye on a 4-year college. Some of you may be trying to learn new skills that could lead to a new job, like Mike, or a job that pays more, gives you more opportunity. But all of you are here because you believe in yourselves, you believe in your ability, you believe in the future of this country. And that's something that inspires me, and you guys should take great pride in.

Now the truth is, the skills and training you get here will be the best tools you have to achieve the American promise, the promise

that if you work hard, you can do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college, and put a little away for retirement.

And the defining issue of our time is how to keep this promise alive today, for everybody. Because we've got a choice. We can settle for a country where a few people do really, really well and everybody else struggles to get by. Or we can restore an economy where everybody gets a fair shot, everybody does their fair share, everybody plays by the same set of rules, from Washington to Wall Street to Main Street. That's the America we believe in.

Now, we're still recovering from one of the worst economic crises in three generations. We've got a long way to go before everybody who wants a good job can find one, before middle class Americans regain that sense of security that's been slipping away for too long, long before the recession hit.

But over the last 23 months, we've added 3.7 million new jobs. American manufacturers are creating jobs for the first time since the 1990s. The economy is growing stronger. The recovery is speeding up. And the last thing we can afford to do right now is to go back to the very policies that got us into this mess in the first place. We can't afford it. The last thing we need is for Washington to stand in the way of America's comeback.

Now, what does that mean concretely? For starters, Congress needs to stop taxes from going up on 160 million Americans by the end of this month. And if they don't act, that's exactly what will happen. Congress needs to pass an extension of the payroll tax cut and unemployment insurance without drama and without delay and without linking it to some other ideological side issues.