

technology to use less energy, we'll continue to be dependent on foreign countries for our energy needs. That's why we're pursuing an all-of-the-above strategy. As we develop more oil and gas, we're also developing wind and solar power, biofuels, and next-generation vehicles, and thousands of Americans have jobs right now because of it. We need to keep making those investments, because I don't want to see those jobs go to other countries. I want to create even more of them right here in America.

And after three decades of inaction, we raised fuel economy standards so that by the middle of the next decade, our cars will average nearly 55 miles per gallon. That's nearly double what they get today. That means you only have to fill up every 2 weeks instead of every week. And that will save the typical family more than \$8,000 over the life of the car, just by using less gas.

Combined, these steps have helped put us on a path to greater energy independence. Since I took office, America's dependence on foreign oil has gone down every single year. In 2010, for the first time in 13 years, less than half the oil we used came from foreign countries.

But we can do even better, and we will. What we can't do is keep depending on other countries for our energy needs. In America, we control our own destiny. And that's the choice we face: the past or the future. America is what it is today because we've always placed our bets on the future. Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 6 p.m. on March 15 in the Cross Hall foyer at the White House for broadcast on March 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 16, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 17.

Statement on the Death of Pope Shenouda III

March 17, 2012

Michelle and I are saddened to learn of the passing of Coptic Christian Pope Shenouda III, a beloved leader of Egypt's Coptic Christians and an advocate for tolerance and religious dialogue. We stand alongside Coptic Christians and Egyptians as they honor his contributions in support of peace and cooperation.

We will remember Pope Shenouda III as a man of deep faith, a leader of a great faith, and

an advocate for unity and reconciliation. His commitment to Egypt's national unity is also a testament to what can be accomplished when people of all religions and creeds work together. On behalf of the American people, we extend our thoughts and prayers to Coptic Christians, Egyptians, and all those who mourn Pope Shenouda III today.

Statement on Transportation Infrastructure Improvement Legislation

March 19, 2012

Last week, the Senate passed a bipartisan transportation bill that will keep construction workers on the job and keep our economy growing. Now the House of Representatives needs to take bipartisan action so I can sign this into law.

An economy built to last depends on a world-class infrastructure system that allows us to transport our people and goods as quickly and effectively as possible. That's

why we need to continue to make investments that will create jobs by rebuilding and modernizing our roads, bridges, and railways. And that's why my administration will continue to fight for the long-term investments needed to ensure that America continues to compete and succeed in a global economy.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 1813.