

# THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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## President Obama begins trip to Africa

On Wednesday, President Obama and the first family started their trip to Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania, as part of the President's commitment to invest in Africa's development and its people.



During the trip, President Obama will highlight three major themes:

- 1) **Increasing U.S. trade and investment.** The U.S. is redoubling its efforts to create an environment that enables increased trade and investment through encouraging regional integration, legal reforms that break down barriers to the free flow of goods and services, greater transparency, and anti-corruption measures.
- 2) **Underscoring America's longstanding investment in strong democratic institutions.** The United States supports the aspirations of Africans for more open and accountable governance, and we are strengthening our connection with Africa's young leaders who are promoting positive change in their communities.
- 3) **Supporting the next generation of African leaders.** In this day and age, nearly one in three Africans are between the age of 10 and 24. These young people are already shaping political, social and economic realities; and they are capable of being the driving force behind economic prosperity, good governance, peace and security.

In addition, First Lady Michelle Obama will participate in the African First Ladies' Summit to help promote women's education, health and economic empowerment.

Read more about President Obama's trip to Africa [here](#).

## **Statements by the President and DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz on the Supreme Court's Ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act**

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court struck down the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional. Below please see statements from President Obama and DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz applauding the Supreme Court's decision.

### **President Obama:**

"I applaud the Supreme Court's decision to strike down the Defense of Marriage Act. This was discrimination enshrined in law. It treated loving, committed gay and lesbian couples as a separate and lesser class of people. The Supreme Court has righted that wrong, and our country is better off for it. We are a people who declared that we are all created equal – and the love we commit to one another must be equal as well.

"This ruling is a victory for couples who have long fought for equal treatment under the law; for children whose parents' marriages will now be recognized, rightly, as legitimate; for families that, at long last, will get the respect and protection they deserve; and for friends and supporters who have wanted nothing more than to see their loved ones treated fairly and have worked hard to persuade their nation to change for the better.

"The laws of our land are catching up to the fundamental truth that millions of Americans hold in our hearts: when all Americans are treated as equal, no matter who they are or whom they love, we are all more free."

Read more from President Obama's statement [here](#).

### **DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz:**

"With this ruling, equality prevails. Today's Supreme Court decision striking down the Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional is a victory in the fight for equal rights for LGBT and all Americans. The Supreme Court's decision confirms the right of all Americans to be treated equally, and that our government should not and cannot codify discrimination toward any of its citizens. We have much to celebrate today. But we know that the work still continues, and that we will not cease our efforts until all Americans truly enjoy the freedoms our Constitution guarantees. Equality is not an aspiration, it's a destination we will reach together. Though there is more to do, today's decision is an historic victory in the march for progress, and we should all celebrate what it means for our nation and its citizens."

## [President Obama Announces Plan to Combat Climate Change](#)



On Tuesday, President Obama laid out a comprehensive plan to take action on climate change and cut carbon pollution.

The President's plan is an all-of-the-above approach to reducing the pollution that causes climate change and endangers public health. It will set our country on a path to make our communities healthier, safer and more stable for generations to come.

President Obama said:

"So the question is not whether we need to act. The overwhelming judgment of science -- of chemistry and physics and millions of measurements -- has put all that to rest. Ninety-seven percent of scientists, including, by the way, some who originally disputed the data, have now put that to rest. They've acknowledged the planet is warming and human activity is contributing to it.

"So the question now is whether we will have the courage to act before it's too late. And how we answer will have a profound impact on the world that we leave behind not just to you, but to your children and to your grandchildren.

"As a President, as a father, and as an American, I'm here to say we need to act.

"I refuse to condemn your generation and future generations to a planet that's beyond fixing. And that's why, today, I'm announcing a new national climate action plan, and I'm here to enlist your generation's help in keeping the United States of America a leader -- a global leader -- in the fight against climate change."

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

## [President Obama Discusses Immigration Reform with Business Leaders](#)

On Monday, President Obama met with business leaders to discuss the economic benefits of immigration reform.

President Obama said:

"All of these business leaders recognize the degree to which immigration is a contributor to growth, a contributor to expansion, a creator of jobs, but they also recognize that the immigration system that we currently have is broken."

"We have a system in which we bring outstanding young people from all across the world to educate them here, and

unfortunately, too often, we send them right back so that they can start companies or help to grow companies somewhere else instead of here. We have a situation in which millions of individuals are in the shadow economy, oftentimes exploited at lower wages, and that hurts those companies that are following the rules, because they end up being at a disadvantage to some of these less scrupulous companies. And so, all of us I think recognize that now is the time to get comprehensive immigration reform done," the President said.

Read more about the President's meeting [here](#).





### **President Obama's Statement on Senate Passage of Common Sense Immigration Reform**

On Thursday, President Obama released the following statement after the United States Senate passed common sense immigration reform by a broad margin:

"Today, with a strong bipartisan vote, the United States Senate delivered for the American people, bringing us a critical step closer to fixing our broken immigration system once and for all.

"I thank Majority Leader Reid, Senator Leahy, Senator Schumer, and every member of the 'Gang of Eight' for their leadership, and I commend all Senators who worked across party lines to get this done.

"The bipartisan bill that passed today was a compromise. By definition, nobody got everything they wanted. Not Democrats. Not Republicans. Not me. But the Senate bill is consistent with the key principles for commonsense reform that I – and many others – have repeatedly laid out.

"If enacted, the Senate bill would establish the most aggressive border security plan in our history. It would offer a pathway to earned citizenship for the 11 million individuals who are in this country illegally – a pathway that includes passing a background check, learning English, paying taxes and a penalty, and then going to the back of the line behind everyone who's playing by the rules and trying to come here legally. It would modernize the legal immigration system so that it once again reflects our values as a nation and addresses the urgent needs of our time. And it would provide a big boost to our recovery, by shrinking our deficits and growing our economy.

"Today, the Senate did its job. It's now up to the House to do the same.

"As this process moves forward, I urge everyone who cares about this issue to keep a watchful eye. Now is the time when opponents will try their hardest to pull this bipartisan effort apart so they can stop commonsense reform from becoming a reality. We cannot let that happen. If you're among the clear majority of Americans who support reform – from CEOs to labor leaders, law enforcement to clergy – reach out to your Member of Congress. Tell them to do the right thing. Tell them to pass commonsense reform so that our businesses and workers are all playing by the same rules and everyone who's in this country is paying their fair share in taxes.

"We have a unique opportunity to fix our broken system in a way that upholds our traditions as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We just need Congress to finish the job."

### **DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz Congratulates Ed Markey on Victory in Massachusetts**

On Tuesday, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz released the following statement congratulating Ed Markey on his victory in Massachusetts:

"Congratulations to my friend Ed Markey on his win tonight. Middle class families in Massachusetts know they have an advocate in Ed, and that's why they elected him to the U.S. Senate. I am proud to have served with Ed for the past eight years and wish him well as he continues his service to the people of Massachusetts in the Senate.

"Ed Markey's win is a vote for moving forward with President Obama's agenda on commonsense immigration reform, reducing gun violence, combating climate change, and implementing Obamacare. It's a vote to push our country forward and to fight for working families. It was also a sound rejection of the same old Republican Party. Though Gomez claimed he was a 'new kind of Republican,' he supports a tax system that allows the wealthiest and corporations to play by their own set of rules, would have supported Justices who want to overturn Roe v. Wade, and would have voted with the NRA against an assault weapons ban. The Republican Party has tried—and failed—to rebrand themselves. Their positions on the issues voters care the most about have been soundly rejected again.

"Tonight is a victory for middle class families in Massachusetts and all around the country, and I congratulate him as he readies for his next step in public service."

## [DNC Marks 100 Days Since GOP "Autopsy"](#)

On Tuesday, the DNC released a video about the GOP's failed attempts to change their party since the 2012 election. Approximately 100 days ago, the RNC released the findings of an Autopsy report on their party's failings in the 2012 Election. In the report, Republicans promised to change their ways and reach out to groups like women, young people, African Americans, Latinos and others who have been alienated as a result of the GOP's extreme policies and rhetoric. Republicans have refused to change their ways and their 'rebranding' effort has been a complete failure.



Since the Autopsy was released, the DNC and Democrats have highlighted the offensive rhetoric and policies that Republicans have continued to fight for, from restricting a women's right to choose to making it harder for Americans to vote. In a continuation of the DNC's effort to hold Republicans accountable and to mark the 100 days since the Autopsy, the DNC launched a new video and website, [SameOldParty.com](http://SameOldParty.com), to track and respond to the Same Old Party's rhetoric and legislation. As part of that effort, Democrats across the country highlighted Republicans' rebrand failings on Twitter using the hashtags #GOPrebrand and #SameOldParty.



See the full video [here](#).