



THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE
WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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This week, President Obama expressed his condolences and pledged support to the people of Japan after Friday's devastating earthquake. Also this week, President Obama commemorated the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day. In addition, President Obama welcomed Prime Minister Julia Gillard of Australia to the White House, where they discussed our two countries' strong relationship. On Tuesday, the President visited TechBoston Academy in Massachusetts, where he continued to promote innovative education strategies that will help win the future. On Thursday, the President and First Lady hosted the first annual Conference on Bullying Prevention at the White House. On Friday, the President spoke at a press conference about the recent spike in energy prices and the steps his administration has taken to address our nation's energy demands by increasing our domestic production of oil, gas and other sources of energy. The Vice President this week visited Finland, Russia and Moldova where he commemorated International Women's Day, gave a speech to build on the "reset" in U.S.-Russian relations, and praised Moldova's ongoing democratic progress.

The President's Statement on Japan: In response to the devastating earthquake and ensuing tsunamis that struck Japan on Friday, President Obama said:

"Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the people of Japan, particularly those who have lost loved ones in the earthquake and tsunamis. The United States stands ready to help the Japanese people in this time of great trial. The friendship and alliance between our two nations is unshakeable, and only strengthens our resolve to stand with the people of Japan as they overcome this tragedy."

International Women's Day: Tuesday marked the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day. In commemoration of that event, the President said:

"On this 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day, we celebrate the extraordinary gains made by women over the past century—and the women pioneers who made them possible—and we reaffirm our unwavering support for the rights, security, dignity and opportunity of all women around the world. Today reminds us that across countries and cultures, people everywhere, women and men, share rights and aspirations that are universal, among them the freedom to chart their own destiny, to raise their children free from violence and to live in societies that value their voice and respect their will.

"In the United States and around the world, we will not rest until our mothers, sisters and daughters assume their rightful place as full and equal members of a secure, prosperous and just world."

Also honoring this historic day was DNC Secretary Alice Germond. In a statement on Tuesday, she said:

"During the past century, women throughout the world have made enormous gains – from winning the right to vote and holding elected office to earning greater equality in the workplace and society. Still, there is a great deal of progress to be made. Too many women still bear the heavy burdens of poverty and are treated as spoils in countries at war. It must be our goal to alleviate those burdens and advance women's rights everywhere.

"So on this 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, let us celebrate our gains by joining together with women and men everywhere to rededicate ourselves to true equality -- for all of our daughters and grand-daughters forever after."

Meeting with Australian Prime Minister Gillard: On Monday, the President welcomed Prime Minister Julia Gillard of Australia to the White House. The President and Prime Minister Gillard discussed the strong ties between the United States and Australia, our countries' shared political and economic interests in the Asia-Pacific region, and our cooperation around the world, including in Afghanistan and as members of APEC and the G20. In addition the President and Prime Minister visited an AP History class at Wakefield High School in Arlington, Virginia, where

students had the chance to ask questions about Australia. In a joint press conference following their meeting, the President said:

"We have no stronger ally than Australia. And as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of our alliance I think it's especially appropriate to have Prime Minister Gillard here.

"Not only do we share a language, a commitment to democracy, [and] a set of shared values, but I think there's also a shared sense of open spaces and a pioneer spirit. And as Prime Minister Gillard said the first time we met, it's what makes us 'great mates.'

"So, because of these shared values, because of the deep and longstanding relationship between our two countries, it is an extraordinary pleasure to have Prime Minister Gillard here."



President Obama Talks Education in Boston: On Tuesday, the President traveled with Melinda Gates, co-chairwoman of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Education Secretary Arne Duncan to the TechBoston Academy in Boston, Massachusetts. The President visited a TechBoston classroom and spoke to students, faculty, and local education leaders about the shared responsibility that government, businesses, philanthropists, and communities have to promote innovative education strategies that will prepare American students to compete in a 21st century economy and win the future. In remarks at TechBoston Academy, the President said:



"Every day, TechBoston is proving that no matter who you are, or what you look like, or where you come from, every child can learn. Every child can succeed. And every child deserves that chance.

"What's happening here is working. We know what works. What's required...to get results from any school is no longer a mystery. And that means there can't be any more excuses -- from anybody. As a nation, we have a moral and economic imperative to give every child the chance

to succeed. And that's why I set a goal when I took office, that by the end of the decade, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. We will be number one again."

Conference on Bullying Prevention: On Thursday, the President and the First Lady welcomed students, parents, teachers, and others to the White House for a Conference on Bullying Prevention. The conference brought together students who have been affected by bullying as well as parents and educators who are taking action to prevent bullying. At the conference, the President said:

"If there's one goal of this conference, it's to dispel the myth that bullying is just a harmless rite of passage or an inevitable part of growing up. It's not.

"As adults, we all remember what it was like to see kids picked on in the hallways or in the schoolyard. And I have to say, with big ears and the name that I have, I wasn't immune. I didn't emerge unscathed. But because it's something that happens a lot, and it's something that's always been around, sometimes we've turned a blind eye to the problem. We've said, 'Kids will be kids.' And so sometimes we overlook the real damage that bullying can do, especially when young people face harassment day after day, week after week.

"No family should have to go through what these families have gone through. No child should feel that alone. We've got to make sure our young people know that if they're in trouble, there are caring adults who can help and young adults that can help; that even if they're having a tough time, they're going to get through it, and there's a whole world full of possibility waiting for them. We also have to make sure we're doing everything we can so that no child is in that position in the first place. And this is a responsibility we all share -- a responsibility we have to teach all children the Golden Rule: We should treat others the way we want to be treated."

In addition, the President and First Lady released a special video message on bullying prevention. You can view that video [HERE](#).

Oil Independence: On Friday, the President held a press conference during which he focused on the steps his administration has taken to help meet the nation's energy demands by boosting domestic energy production. The President discussed the use of undeveloped oil reserves held by the oil industry, and the granting of offshore drilling permits. At the press conference, the President said:

"[W]e need to continue to boost domestic production of oil and gas. Last year, American oil production reached its highest level since 2003...Oil production from federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico reached an all-time high. For the first time in more than a decade, imports accounted for less than half of what we consumed..."

"We are encouraging offshore exploration and production. We're just doing it responsibly...We've approved more than 35 new offshore drilling permits that meet these new safety and environmental standards. We're also taking steps that will enable us to gather data on potential gas and oil resources off the mid- and south Atlantic. ...And we're working with the industry to explore new frontiers of production, safety measures and containment technology. We're looking at potential new development in Alaska, both onshore and offshore... All these actions can increase domestic oil production in the short and medium term."

The Vice President Overseas: This week, Vice President Biden visited Finland, Russia, and Moldova. In Finland, the Vice President met with Finnish President Tarja Halonen and Prime Minister Mari Kiviniemi to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day. In his remarks with President Halonen, the Vice President said:

"Finland has been a leader in the world, a pioneer when it comes to women having the right to an equal place in society. And I believe that to be the single greatest moral imperative of our time."



"And if there's any nation in which I can stand with on the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day, this is the most appropriate place to stand."

After his visit to Finland, the Vice President headed to Russia to focus on ways to further the prosperity of our two countries. On Thursday, he delivered a speech on U.S.-Russia relations hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia at Moscow State University. In his remarks, Vice President Biden said:

"If two great nations that for 40 years stood on the opposite sides of the 20th century's deepest divide can stand side-by-side facing the 21st century challenges, it will benefit not just the American people and the Russian people, but all people."

In Moldova, Vice President Biden delivered a speech in Chisinau's Opera Square, expressing support for the people and government of Moldova, as well as applauding their ongoing democratic progress and aspirations for European integration 20 years after independence. In his remarks, the Vice President said:

"You know achieving democracy is not easy, but you also know it is worth the struggle. As you continue on this journey, I promise you America will be your partner."

"You're a small country, but you're tackling large, consequential problems head on. ... A better future is within your reach."

Taking Action

Unacceptable: In an email to Democrats across the country, DNC Executive Director Patrick Gaspard on Wednesday condemned Republicans' unacceptable approach to the budget process and asked supporters to add their name to a letter calling on Republican leaders to work with President Obama and Democrats in Congress to pass a commonsense budget that works for the American people. In his email, Gaspard said:

"Right now, President Obama is calling on both sides to come to the table and reach a reasonable solution - a plan that builds for the future while eliminating wasteful spending in the present. A plan where cutting

spending is done judiciously -- not recklessly. A plan with investments that create jobs -- not cuts that eliminate them.

"But the current Republican proposal is packed with extreme cuts that are clearly serving a political agenda -- cutting billions from Head Start, slashing Pell Grants and other programs that help students pay for college, and completely eliminating funding for Title X family-planning services.

"Now, President Obama knows that this must be a shared sacrifice, and that some cuts must be made -- and he stands ready to work together to find a commonsense solution. But the current Republican plan would knock this country down just as we've begun to stand back up. The American people deserve better - and it's up to us to demand it."

You can add your name to the letter by visiting this [LINK](#).

Key Issues in the News and Background

Talking Points: Finding Common Ground & Recognizing Shared Responsibility in Education

- President Obama is serious about making the cuts that will allow us to invest in things that will boost growth, support job creation and help America to out-compete the world and win the future.
- But it isn't responsible to face the possibility of a government shutdown every two weeks – and doing so is not a solution. American families make compromises every day to enable them to live within their means. It's time our leaders did the same.
- That's why President Obama has urged Democratic and Republican leaders in Congress to come to the table and find a budget compromise that makes sense for the American people and forces the federal government to live within its means without hurting economic growth.
- As our leaders work to get America's fiscal house in order, it's important that they do so in a way that doesn't sacrifice our future. A budget that sacrifices our commitment to education is one that sacrifices our children's opportunities for success and America's opportunities to win the future.
- At TechBoston Academy, President Obama talked about the responsibility that everyone – from parents and teachers to businesses and philanthropists – shares to improve America's education system and support innovative education strategies that will prepare our children for cutting edge jobs and keep America competitive in the global 21st century economy.

Talking Points: Shared Responsibility to Keep America's Children Safe & Help Them Thrive

- The White House Conference on Bullying Prevention was a chance for the President, the First Lady, and Administration officials to come together with parents, teachers, and students from all across America to talk about the effects of bullying and the responsibility we all share to keep America's kids safe.
- Bullying doesn't always make the headlines, but it affects kids across America every day. For too long, bullying has been seen as a rite of passage, as "kids just being kids."
- But at the Conference on Bullying Prevention, President Obama talked about some shocking statistics on bullying and the effects it has on our kids every year:
 - One-third of middle and high school students have reported being bullied during the school year.
 - Almost three million students have reported being pushed, shoved, tripped, or even spat on.
 - Bullying has been shown to lead to absences and poor classroom performance.
- On Wednesday, President Obama and the First Lady released a special video message on [Facebook](#), talking about bullying and the growing movement led by young people to help kids to thrive and succeed in the communities where they live.

- As parents, President Obama and the First Lady care greatly about this issue, and the Conference on Bullying Prevention will facilitate discussion about preventing bullying and shaping an environment in which America's kids can thrive and ultimately succeed in helping America out-build, out-educate, and out-innovate the world to win the future.

Talking Points: Securing our Future with Clean Energy Investments While Helping to Bring Relief to the American People in the Short Term

- Every American feels the pain at the pump when oil prices rise, whether they are driving their kids to soccer practice, commuting to work or running a small business. And with folks already hurting, the rising prices at the pump are just another unwelcome burden on the American people.
- President Obama is committed to securing our energy future and helping American consumers deal with rising oil prices.
- One of the ways to ease the pain at the pump is to increase domestic oil and gas production in a safe and responsible way. Last year, domestic production of oil and gas was at its highest level since 2003. In that vein, the President today directed the Department of the Interior to report back within two weeks new ways to encourage oil companies to produce on their leases.
- The President is committed to making our economy more energy efficient and independent. This will help ameliorate the effects of rising oil prices on consumers.
- And the President has backed up his words with bold actions to move us toward a more energy efficient nation: he has established a national fuel efficiency standard for cars and trucks, made historic investments in technologies to produce clean energy, and set the goal of by 2035 meeting 80% of our electricity needs with clean energy.
- It doesn't stop there – in the months ahead the President will speak about further action to protect consumers from rising prices and how we can better secure our energy future.
- Only by taking the bold actions the President has and will continue to push for will we finally address our oil dependency – and by doing so it will also help increase growth, create jobs and win the future.