

The Budget also provides the resources we need to act on our commitment to and interests in global development, by promoting food security that reduces dependence and increases prosperity; by investing in the increasingly successful drive toward an AIDS-free generation; and by maintaining our leadership as a global provider of humanitarian assistance that saves lives and reflects American values.

We must also confront new dangers, like cyber attacks, that threaten our Nation's infrastructure, businesses, and people. The Budget supports the expansion of Government-wide efforts to counter the full scope of cyber threats, and strengthens our ability to collaborate with State and local governments, our partners overseas, and the private sector to improve our overall cybersecurity.

The Budget also focuses resources on the Asia-Pacific region, reasserting American leadership and promoting security, stability, democracy, and economic growth.

Importantly, the Budget upholds our solemn obligation to take care of our servicemembers and veterans, and to protect our diplomats and civilians in the field. It keeps faith with our veterans, investing in world-class care, including mental health care for our wounded warriors, supporting our military families, and giving our veterans the benefits, education, and job opportunities that they have earned.

The Budget does all of these things as part of a comprehensive plan that reduces the deficit. All of these initiatives and ideas are fully paid for, to ensure they do not increase the deficit by a single dime.

By making investments in our people that we pay for responsibly, we will strengthen the middle class, make America a magnet for jobs and innovation, and grow our economy, which will in turn help us to reduce deficits. But economic growth alone will not solve our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges.

As we continue to grow our economy, we must take further action to cut our deficits. We do not have to choose between these two important priorities—we have to do both.

Over the last 4 years, both parties have worked together to reduce the deficit in a balanced way by more than \$2.5 trillion. That is more than halfway toward the goal of \$4 trillion in deficit reduction that economists say we need to stabilize our finances. As we wind down two wars, we have protected our military families and veterans while cutting defense spending on outdated military weapons systems. Domestic discretionary spending is approaching its lowest levels as a share of the economy since President Eisenhower was in office; and we have moved aggressively to cut waste, fraud, and abuse. And together, we have begun to ask the wealthy to do their fair share while keeping income taxes low for middle class families. Overall, we have cut the

deficit in a balanced way that protects the investments in education, manufacturing, clean energy, and small businesses we need to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class. There is more work to do, and this Budget is designed to finish the job.

But we should not do it by making harsh and arbitrary cuts that jeopardize our military readiness, devastate priorities like education and energy, and cost jobs. That is not how to grow the economy. We should not ask middle class senior citizens and working families to pay down the rest of our deficit while the wealthiest are asked for nothing more. That does not grow our middle class.

The American people understand that we cannot just cut our way to prosperity. That is why I have repeatedly called for a balanced approach to deficit reduction. And that is why I have offered proposals on multiple occasions that cut wasteful spending, strengthen entitlements, and eliminate special tax breaks and loopholes so the wealthiest pay their fair share.

In my negotiations with House Speaker BOEHNER in December over the so-called "fiscal cliff," I again offered a compromise proposal that was balanced and comprehensive, and would achieve our \$4 trillion deficit reduction goal. That proposal is still on the table. I am including it in this Budget to demonstrate my commitment to making the kind of tough and balanced choices that are needed to put our Nation's finances in order.

To be clear, the package I am offering includes some difficult cuts that I do not particularly like. But these measures will only become law if congressional Republicans agree to meet me in the middle by eliminating special tax breaks and loopholes so millionaires and billionaires do their fair share to cut the deficit. I will not agree to any deal that seeks to cut the deficit on the backs of middle class families. I am willing to make tough choices that may not be popular within my own party, because there can be no sacred cows for either party. And I look forward to working with any member of Congress who takes a similar, balanced approach. This plan is built on the kind of common ground that Democrats and Republicans should be able to reach.

In total, the Budget will cut the deficit by another \$1.8 trillion over the next 10 years, bringing the deficit below 2 percent of GDP by 2023 and putting our debt on a declining path. This is not an end in and of itself—the best way to grow the economy and cut the deficit is by creating good middle class jobs. But this plan to reduce the deficit in a balanced way is a critical step toward ensuring that we have a solid foundation on which to build a strong economy and a thriving middle class for years to come.

Finally, this Budget continues my commitment to reforming and streamlining our Government for the 21st

Century. It builds on my Campaign to Cut Waste by further targeting and eliminating wasteful spending wherever we find it. It reorganizes and consolidates agencies and programs to make them leaner and more efficient. It increases the use of evidence and evaluation to ensure we are making smart investments with our scarce taxpayer dollars. And it harnesses new technologies to allow us to do more with less.

No single Budget can solve every challenge and every problem facing the country. But this Budget shows how we can live within our means while growing our economy, strengthening the middle class, and securing our Nation's future. It is not a Democratic plan or a Republican plan. It is an American plan. And it is a plan that I hope can serve as an outline for us to write the next great chapter of the American story . . . together.

BARACK OBAMA,
THE WHITE HOUSE, April 10, 2013.

ACCESSING NATURAL GAS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday it was reported that the United States has 2.4 quadrillion cubic feet of natural gas that can be recovered by current drilling techniques, according to a study by companies working in various shale basins across the country. That's 26 percent higher than the previous assessment, and at current consumption rates, a 90-year supply. The Marcellus shale has the largest share of resources, with an estimated 741,320 billion cubic feet.

What has caused such a jump in resources and production? Not the Federal Government, that's for sure. According to the Congressional Research Service, production of natural gas has decreased on Federal lands by 33 percent. It's the hard work and innovation of private industry, a combination of technological and drilling advances that have allowed us to access resources that were previously inaccessible, all in a responsible and environmentally friendly way. In fact, just last week, the Energy Information Administration stated that expanded use of natural gas has driven down energy-related U.S. carbon dioxide emissions to their lowest level since 1994.

America is just beginning to realize the opportunity of this growing and economically beneficial resource.

□ 1610

RECOGNIZING THE WORLD'S FOREMOST CLIMATOLOGIST, DR. JAMES HANSEN

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)