

the Budget ensures we maintain ready, modern, and capable defense forces to address any threats we might face, including threats from terrorism and cyber attacks. It funds humanitarian and diplomatic efforts in Syria, supports transition and reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and advances our strategic rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region. It enhances stability and creates new markets for U.S. businesses with investments in Power Africa and promotes peace and security by supporting global health care and addressing climate change. And it strengthens oversight of intelligence activities and enhances the protection of U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel overseas.

The Budget also ensures that we continue to meet our obligations to our troops and veterans who have given so much to our country. To deliver on this commitment, it provides significant resources to support veterans' medical care, help military families, assist soldiers transitioning to civilian life, reduce veterans' homelessness, and reduce the disability claims backlog so our veterans receive the benefits they have earned. It also introduces necessary reforms to our military compensation system, which our uniform military leadership called for, to ensure servicemembers and their families receive the benefits that they have earned while making sure that our military can invest in the training, equipment, and support that it needs.

In addition to making these critical investments, the Budget outlines the steps my Administration is taking to create a 21st Century Government that is more efficient, effective, and supportive of economic growth. Our citizens and businesses expect their Government to provide the same level of service experienced in the private sector and we intend to deliver. The Budget includes initiatives that will lead to better, faster, and smarter services, both online and in-person. It calls on Federal agencies to share services and leverage the buying power of the Government to bring greater value and efficiency for taxpayer dollars. It continues to open Government data and research for public and private sector use to spur innovation and job creation. And it invests in the Government's most important resource, its workers, ensuring that we can attract and retain the best talent in the Federal workforce and foster a culture of excellence.

The Budget does all of these things while further strengthening the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. Over the last 5 years, we have cut the deficit in half as a share of the economy, experiencing the fastest period of deficit reduction since the demobilization following World War II. The Budget continues this progress, bringing deficits down as a share of the economy to below 2 percent by 2023 and putting debt as a share of the economy on a declining path.

Although we have seen a notable and significant decline in health care spending growth over the last few years, in part due to the Affordable Care Act, we know that over the long run, the growth of health care costs continues to be our Nation's most pressing fiscal challenge. That is why the Budget builds on the savings and reforms in the health reform law with additional measures to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid and encourage high-quality and efficient health care.

We also know that revenue has to be part of the solution to our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges. Given the aging of our population and the declining ratio of workers to retirees, we will need additional revenue to maintain our commitments to seniors while also making the investments that are needed to grow our economy and expand opportunity. The Budget secures that revenue through tax reform that reduces inefficient and unfair tax breaks and ensures that everyone, from Main Street to Wall Street, is paying their fair share.

Finally, if we are serious about long-term, sustainable economic growth and deficit reduction, it is also time to heed the calls of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement—and fix our broken immigration system. Independent economists say immigration reform will grow our economy and shrink our deficits by almost \$1 trillion in the next two decades. And for good reason: when people come here to fulfill their dreams—to study, invent, and contribute to our culture—they make our country a more attractive place for businesses to locate and help create jobs for everyone. The Senate has acted to pass a bipartisan immigration reform bill that is worthy of support. It is time for the House of Representatives to finish the job.

We have made progress over the last 5 years. But our work is not done. This Budget provides a roadmap to ensuring middle class families and those working to be a part of the middle class can feel secure in their jobs, homes, and budgets. To build real, lasting economic security, we also need to expand opportunity for all so every American can get ahead and have a shot at creating a better life for their kids.

None of it is easy. America has never come easy. But if we work together, if we summon what is best in us, I know it is within our reach.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 4, 2014.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 899. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2804. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3193. An act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 899. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2804. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2077. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4779. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fluxaproxad; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9906-70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4780. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Enhancement of Contractor Employee Whistleblower Protections" ((RIN0750-AH97) (DFARS Case 2013-D010)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4781. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Disclosure to Litigation Support Contractors" ((RIN0750-AH54) (DFARS Case 2012-D029)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4782. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Acquisitions in Support of Operations in Afghanistan" ((RIN0750-AH98) (DFARS Case 2013-D009)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.