

**The President's Weekly Address**

*February 2, 2013*

Hi, everybody.

In the coming weeks, we face some important decisions about how to pay down our debt in a way that grows our economy and creates good jobs, decisions that will make a real difference in the strength and pace of our recovery.

We began this year with economists and business leaders saying that we are poised to grow in 2013, and there are real signs of progress. Home prices are starting to climb again. Car sales are at a 5-year high. Manufacturing is roaring back. Our businesses created 2.2 million jobs last year. And we just learned that our economy created more jobs over the last few months than economists originally thought.

But this week, we also received the first estimate of America's economic growth over the last few months. And it reminded us that bad decisions in Washington can get in the way of our economic progress.

We all agree that it's critical to cut unnecessary spending. But we can't just cut our way to prosperity. It hasn't worked in the past, and it won't work today. It could slow down our recovery, it could weaken our economy, and it could cost us jobs, not just now, but in the future.

What we need instead is a balanced approach, an approach that says let's cut what we can't afford, but let's make the investments we can't afford to live without—investments in education, in infrastructure, research and development—the things that will help America compete for the best jobs and new industries.

Already, Republicans and Democrats have worked together to reduce our deficits by \$2.5 trillion. That's a good start, but to get the rest of the way, we need a balanced set of reforms.

For example, we need to lower the cost of health care in programs like Medicare that are the biggest drivers of our deficit, without just passing the burden off to seniors. And these reforms must go hand-in-hand with eliminating excess spending in our Tax Code so that the wealthiest individuals and biggest corporations can't take advantage of loopholes and deductions that aren't available to most Americans.

Two-thousand-thirteen can be a year of solid growth, more jobs, and higher wages. But that will only happen if we put a stop to self-inflicted wounds in Washington. Everyone in Washington needs to focus not on politics, but on what's right for the country, on what's right for you and your families. That's how we'll get our economy growing faster, that's how we'll strengthen our middle class, and that's how we'll build a country that rewards the effort and determination of every single American.

Thanks. And have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:50 p.m. on February 1 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on February 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 1, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on February 2.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Weekly addresses.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Subjects:* Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Budget, Federal : Entitlement spending, reform; Budget, Federal : Government programs, spending reductions; Business and industry : Global competitiveness; Congress : Bipartisanship; Economy, national : Economic concerns; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education : School improvement and renovation; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Health and medical care : Affordability and costs; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Science and technology : Research and development; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Taxation : Tax cuts, budgetary effects; Transportation : Infrastructure, national, improvement efforts.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD201300070.