

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2014*

## **The President's Weekly Address**

*March 22, 2014*

Hi, everybody. This week, I visited a community college in Florida, where I spoke with students about what we need to do to make sure our economy rewards the hard work of every American. More specifically, I spoke about making sure our economy rewards the hard work of women.

Today, women make up about half of our workforce and more than half of our college graduates. More women are now their family's main breadwinner than ever before.

But in a lot of ways, our economy hasn't caught up to this new reality yet. On average, a woman still earns just 77 cents for every dollar a man does. And too many women face outdated workplace policies that hold them back, which in turn holds back our families and our entire economy.

A woman deserves to earn equal pay for equal work and paid leave that lets you take a day off to care for a sick child or parent. Congress needs to act on these priorities.

And when women hold most lower wage jobs in America, Congress needs to raise the minimum wage. Because no woman who works full time should ever have to raise her children in poverty.

Now, the good news is that in the year since I first called on Congress to raise the minimum wage, six States have passed laws to raise theirs. More States, counties, and cities are working to raise their minimum wages as we speak. Small businesses like St. Louis-based Pi Pizzeria are raising their wages too, not out of charity, but because it's good for business. And Pi, by the way, makes a really good pizza. In this year of action, I've signed an Executive order requiring Federal contractors to pay their employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour.

But if we're truly going to reward the hard work of every American, Congress needs to join the rest of the country and pass a bill that would lift the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. This wouldn't just raise wages for minimum wage workers, its effects would lift wages for nearly 28 million Americans across this country. It will give businesses more customers with more money to spend and grow the economy for everybody. So call up your Member of Congress and let them know it's time for "10-10." It's time to give America a raise.

A true opportunity agenda is one that works for working women. Because when women succeed, America succeeds. We do better when everyone participates and when everyone who works hard has the chance to get ahead. That's what opportunity means, and it's why I'll keep fighting to restore it.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2 p.m. on March 21 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on March 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 21, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on March 22.

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