

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

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WEEKLY ADDRESS: "We Have to Increase the Pace"

WASHINGTON—In this week's address, Vice President Biden noted that this month's jobs numbers demonstrated that Congress should pass the American Jobs Act to strengthen our economy and create jobs right away. Republicans in Congress have voted against components of the bill to put teachers and firefighters back to work and they have unanimously opposed a bill to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and create jobs for 400,000 construction workers, even though these are the kinds of programs they have supported in the past. The President is acting without Congress through executive actions to help our veterans find jobs, save families thousands of dollars by refinancing their mortgages, and reducing the cost of student loans, but that is not enough. Democrats and Republicans must come together to pass the American Jobs Act to strengthen the economy, because the American people can't wait any longer for Congress to act.

**Remarks of Vice President Joe Biden
Weekly Address
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Saturday, November 5, 2011**

Hi, this is Joe Biden. I'm speaking to you from the University of Pittsburgh, where I just spoke to students here about what we've done to help ease the burden on them when it comes to the rising cost of tuition and the accumulating student debt and what we're going to do to help create jobs when they graduate.

Today we found out we've had the 20th month in a row where we've increased private sector jobs -- 104,000 this month, 104,000 private sector jobs. And as all you know, that's not nearly enough. We have to increase the pace. We have to act now to do everything in our power to keep this economy moving and to grow jobs.

President Obama is on his way back from France where he just met with the leaders of the 20 largest economies in the world, where he urged our European friends to step up and stabilize their own economies because if they fail, it will affect the whole world.

Too many Americans are still struggling. Too many college students here at the University of Pittsburgh and elsewhere are worrying about the rising cost of their tuition, and the increasing accumulation of debt. And too many of their parents are in stagnant jobs or out of work, wondering if they're going to be able to send their child back to college next semester.

My dad used to have a saying. He said, a job is about a lot more than a paycheck. It's about dignity. It's about respect.

And too many Americans have been stripped of their dignity through no fault of their own. So we can't wait to help them. The President and I believe we have to act now. That's why we've introduced the jobs bill which independent validators said would create 2 million new jobs.

Although 51 senators voted for that jobs bill, our Republican colleagues in the Senate used a procedural requirement that requires it to have 60 votes, so it failed.

And since then we've taken every important piece of the jobs bill and demanded that we have a separate vote. But our Republican colleagues in the Senate have voted unanimously to vote down each and every part so far: to restore 400,000 jobs for teachers, police officers, firefighters, putting them back in classrooms, on the streets and in the fire houses.

And then on Thursday, they unanimously voted down the second part of our program: to rebuild our crumbling roads and bridges, which would have created more than 400,000 good-paying jobs.

These are all programs that the Republicans in the past have supported, but once again, every Republican voted no -- blocking the majority will to put these folks back to work.

I think the assumption is that they're voting no because of the way we would pay for these jobs, and we do pay for them. We think everybody should pay their fair share, so that's why we put a small surtax on the first dollar after a person has already made \$1 million. That seems fair to us, and it pays for the bill. It's a small price to pay to put hundreds of thousands of people back to work.

So, look, we can't wait. We can't wait for the Congress to start acting responsibly, and that's why the President has used his executive power to announce that hundreds of thousands of people will be able to refinance their homes from 6 percent interest rates to 4 percent, saving them an average of \$2,000 a year. That's why the President announced that beginning next year, no student will have to pay back more than 10 percent of their discretionary income toward their student debt. He also announced new regulations regarding prescription drugs to prevent price gouging. And there's more to come.

going to take more steps to come.

If the Republican Congress won't join us, we're going to continue to act on our own to make the changes that we can to bring relief to middle-class families and those aspiring to get in the middle class.

Look, it's simple: We refuse to take no for an answer. We know these steps taken alone are not going to solve all of our problems, but they will make a difference in the lives of millions of American families struggling to hold on. And you know and I know if the Republicans would just let the Congress do its job, let it step up and meet its responsibilities, we could do so much more, and we could do it immediately.

That's why the President and I need your help to tell your Republican congressmen and senators to step up. Tell them to stop worrying about their jobs and start worrying about yours because we're all in this together, and together is the way we're going to bring America back even stronger than it was before.

Thank you.