

# President Obama's State of the Union

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Today in America, a Noun spent extra time with a student who needed it, and did her part to lift Proper Noun graduation rate to its highest level in more than three decades.

An entrepreneur flipped on the lights in her tech startup, and did her part to add to the more than eight million new jobs our businesses have created over the past four years.

An autoworker fine-tuned some of the best, most fuel-efficient Determiner in the world, and did his part to help America wean itself off foreign oil.

A farmer prepared for the Season Preposition the strongest five-year stretch of farm exports in our history. A rural doctor gave a young child the first prescription to treat asthma that his mother could afford.

A man took the bus home from the graveyard shift, bone-tired but dreaming big dreams for his son. And in tight-knit communities across America, fathers and mothers will tuck in their kids, put an arm around their spouse, remember fallen comrades, and give thanks for being home from a war that, after twelve long years, is finally coming to an end.

Tonight, this chamber speaks with one voice to the Noun we represent: it is you, our citizens, who make the state of our union strong.

Here are the results of your efforts: The lowest unemployment rate in over five years. A rebounding housing market. A manufacturing sector that's adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. More oil produced at home than we buy from the rest of the world - the first time that's happened in nearly twenty years. Our deficits - cut by more than half. And for the first time in over a decade, business leaders around the world have declared that \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_ is no longer the world's number one place to invest; \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_ is.

That's why I believe this can be a breakthrough year for America. After \_\_\_\_\_ Number \_\_\_\_\_ years of grit and determined effort, the United States is better-positioned for the 21st century than any other nation on Earth.

The question for everyone in this \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_, running through every decision we make this year, is whether we are going to help or hinder this progress. For several years now, this town has been consumed by a rancorous argument over the proper size of the federal government. It's an important debate - one that dates back to our very founding. But when that debate prevents us from carrying out even the most basic functions of our \_\_\_\_\_ Noun \_\_\_\_\_ - when our differences shut down government or threaten the full faith and credit of the United States - then we are not doing right by the American people.

As President, I'm committed to making \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_ work better, and rebuilding the trust of the people who sent us here. I believe most of you are, too. Last month, thanks to the work of Democrats and Republicans, this Congress finally produced a budget that undoes some of last year's severe cuts to priorities like education.

Nobody

got everything they wanted, and we can still do more to invest in this country's future while bringing down our deficit in a balanced way. But the budget compromise should leave us freer to focus on creating new jobs, not creating new crises.

In the coming months, let's see where else we can make progress together. Let's make this a year of action.

That's what most \_\_\_\_\_ Noun - Plural want - for all of us in this chamber to focus on their lives, their hopes, their aspirations. And what I believe unites the people of this nation, regardless of race or region or party, young or old, rich or poor, is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all - the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead.

Let's face it: that belief has suffered some serious blows. Over more than three decades, even before the Great Recession hit, massive shifts in technology and global competition had eliminated a lot of good, middle-class jobs, and weakened the economic foundations that families depend on.

Today, after four years of economic growth, corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher, and those at the top have never done better. But average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility has stalled. The cold, hard fact is that even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by - let alone get ahead. And too many still aren't working at all.

Our

job is to reverse these trends. It won't happen right away, and we won't agree on everything. But what I offer tonight is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class. Some require Congressional action, and I'm eager to work with all of you. But America does not stand still - and neither will I. So wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, that's what I'm going to do.

As usual, our First Lady sets a good example. Michelle's Let's Move partnership with schools, businesses, and local leaders has helped bring down childhood obesity rates for the first time in thirty years - an achievement that will improve lives and reduce health care costs for decades to come. The Joining Forces alliance that Michelle and Jill Biden launched has already encouraged employers to hire or train nearly 400,000 veterans and military spouses. Taking a page from that playbook, the White House just organized a College Opportunity Summit where already, 150 universities, businesses, and nonprofits have made concrete commitments to reduce inequality in access to higher education - and help every hardworking kid go to college and succeed when they get to campus. Across the country, we're partnering with mayors, governors, and state legislatures on issues from homelessness to marriage equality.

The point is, there are millions of Americans outside Washington who are tired of stale political arguments, and are moving this country forward. They believe, and I believe, that here in America, our success should depend not on accident of birth, but the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams. That's what drew our forebears

here. It's how the daughter of a factory worker is CEO of America's largest automaker; how the son of a barkeeper is Speaker of the House; how the son of a single mom can be President of the greatest nation on Earth.

Opportunity is who we are. And the defining project of our generation is to restore that promise.

We know where to start: the best measure of opportunity is access to a good job. With the economy picking up speed, companies say they intend to hire more people this year. And over half of big manufacturers say they're thinking of insourcing jobs from abroad.

So let's make that decision easier for more companies. Both Democrats and Republicans have argued that our tax code is riddled with wasteful, complicated loopholes that punish businesses investing here, and reward companies that keep profits abroad. Let's flip that equation. Let's work together to close those loopholes, end those incentives to ship jobs overseas, and lower tax rates for businesses that create jobs here at home.

Moreover, we can take the money we save with this transition to tax reform to create jobs rebuilding our roads, upgrading our ports, unclogging our commutes - because in today's global economy, first-class jobs gravitate to first-class infrastructure. We'll need Congress to protect more than three million jobs by finishing transportation and waterways bills this summer. But I will act on my own to slash bureaucracy and streamline the permitting process for key projects, so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

We also have the chance, right now, to beat other countries in the race for the next wave of high-tech manufacturing jobs. My administration has launched two hubs for high-tech manufacturing in Raleigh and Youngstown, where we've connected businesses to research universities that can help America lead the world in advanced technologies. Tonight, I'm announcing we'll launch six more this year. Bipartisan bills in both houses could double the number of these hubs and the jobs th