

Issue by issue summary

By Sean Sullivan , Updated: February 12, 2013

President Obama's main focus was [on the economy](#) in the first State of the Union address of his second term Tuesday night. But the president also addressed a range of other issues, from gun control to immigration, climate change, education, and the role of government, among other things. Below, we've pulled the quotes that sum up his message on these topics and more:

On job creation: "I'm announcing the launch of three more of these manufacturing hubs, where businesses will partner with the Departments of Defense and Energy to turn regions left behind by globalization into global centers of high-tech jobs. And I ask this Congress to help create a network of 15 of these hubs and guarantee that the next revolution in manufacturing is made right here in America."

On Afghanistan: "Tonight, I can announce that, over the next year, another 34,000 American troops will come home from Afghanistan. This drawdown will continue. And by the end of next year, our war in Afghanistan will be over."

On the deficit: "Most of us agree that a plan to reduce the deficit must be part of our agenda. But let's be clear: Deficit reduction alone is not an economic plan."

"... Let me repeat: Nothing I'm proposing tonight should increase our deficit by a single dime. It is not a bigger government we need, but a smarter government that sets priorities and invests in broad-based growth."

On immigration: "As we speak, bipartisan groups in both chambers are working diligently to draft a bill, and I applaud their efforts. So let's get this done. Send me a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the next few months, and I will sign it right away. And America will be better for it."

On gun control: "Overwhelming majorities of Americans — Americans who believe in the Second Amendment — have come together around commonsense reform, like background checks that will make it harder for criminals to get their hands on a gun. ... Senators of both parties are working together on tough new laws to prevent anyone from buying guns for resale to criminals. Police chiefs are asking our help to get weapons of war and massive ammunition magazines off our streets, because these police chiefs, they're tired of seeing their guys and gals being outgunned. Each of these proposals deserves a vote in Congress."

On the role of government: "It is our unfinished task to make sure that this government works on behalf of the many, and not just the few, that it encourages free enterprise, rewards individual initiative, and opens the doors of opportunity to every child across this great nation."

On the minimum wage: "Tonight, let's declare that, in the wealthiest nation on Earth, no one who works full time should have to live in poverty — and raise the federal minimum wage to \$9 an hour."

On entitlements, generally: “We can’t ask senior citizens and working families to shoulder the entire burden of deficit reduction while asking nothing more from the wealthiest and the most powerful.”

On Medicare: “On Medicare, I’m prepared to enact reforms that will achieve the same amount of health care savings by the beginning of the next decade as the reforms proposed by the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles commission.”

On climate change: “I urge this Congress to get together, pursue a bipartisan, market-based solution to climate change, like the one John McCain and Joe Lieberman worked on together a few years ago. But if Congress won’t act soon to protect future generations, I will. I will direct my cabinet to come up with executive actions we can take, now and in the future, to reduce pollution, prepare our communities for the consequences of climate change, and speed the transition to more sustainable sources of energy.”

On energy: “Tonight, I propose we use some of our oil and gas revenues to fund an Energy Security Trust that will drive new research and technology to shift our cars and trucks off oil for good.”

On voting rights: “I’m announcing a nonpartisan commission to improve the voting experience in America. And it definitely needs improvement. I’m asking two long-time experts in the field — who, by the way, recently served as the top attorneys for my campaign and for Governor Romney’s campaign — to lead it. We can fix this. And we will. The American people demand it, and so does our democracy.”

On education: “Tonight, I’m announcing a new challenge, to redesign America’s high schools so they better equip graduates for the demands of a high-tech economy. And we’ll reward schools that develop new partnerships with colleges and employers, and create classes that focus on science, technology, engineering and math, the skills today’s employers are looking for to fill the jobs that are there right now and will be there in the future.”

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