

Daily Kos member

Mon Jun 13, 2011 at 04:45 PM PDT

## [The Undeniable Progress That Can't Be Buried!](#)

by [ThisIsMyTime](#)

This is a summation of the first two years of the Obama Administration's accomplishments (a redux from a couple of my past diaries) to remind us all about what it means to have the majority in Congress that can actually pass legislation and effect the kind of change that guided the State of our country's affair in the right path. Whether we like what the Obama Administration accomplished or not is beside the point but it takes a majority to push for something as we had witnessed during the first two years of the Obama Administration.

This is also a reminder about why we need to reverse the power structure in 2011 by electing more and better Democrats to achieve more of what we had started in the first two years of this Administration. I understand some folks will try to undermine the progress we have made but we must highlight them so that the false narrative of some does not feel like the reality.

Share it to all that you think will help inform and to those who appreciate what we have accomplished in the first two years of the Obama Administration. And, tell 'em that these were all possible because we had Democratic Majority and why it is important not to be complaisant come election 2012.

The accomplishments of the first two years of the Obama Administration:

## **On reducing and assisting people that have become victims of the increased poverty made worse by economic crisis**

- 1) A [\\$20 billion increase for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#), formerly known as Food Stamps.
- 2) A [\\$1 billion in funding for the Community Services Block Grant \(CSBG\)](#) that is intended to revitalize low-income communities via "Job training and placement assistance", "Financial literacy programs", et al, to helping families become self-sufficient.
- 3) A [\\$2 billion in new Neighborhood Stabilization Funds](#) that will allow ailing neighborhoods be kept maintained.
- 4) A [\\$1.5 billion in Homelessness Prevention Funds](#) to keep people in their homes and prevent homelessness.
- 5) A [\\$5 billion increase for the Weatherization Assistance Program](#) to help low income families save on their residential energy expenditures by making their homes more energy efficient.
- 6) A [\\$4 Billion program, The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010](#), "authorizes funding for federal school meal and child nutrition programs and increases access to healthy food for low-income children."
- 7) As part of the HCR bill, [subsidies will be available to the uninsured and families with income between the 133 percent and 400 percent](#) of poverty level(\$14,404 for individuals and \$29,326 for a family of four).
- 8) Established Open Doors [to end the 640,000 men, women and children who are homeless in America by 2020](#).
- 9) [Increased the amount of federal Pell Grant awards](#) so that funds are available to those with less access to have opportunity.

- 10) Provided [\\$510 Million](#) for the rehabilitation of Native American housing.
- 11) [Expanded eligibility for Medicaid](#) to all individuals under age 65 with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level (\$14,400 per year for an individual).
- 12) [Providing assistance to low-income workers through the Earned Income Tax Credit](#) giving millions of working families the break they need.
- 13) Education being the way out of Poverty, [kicked off the "Race to the Top", a \\$4.3 billion program](#), that rewards via grants to States that meet a few key benchmarks for reform, and states that outperform the rest.

## On Health Care Reform:

- 1) Coverage [can't be denied to children](#) with pre-existing conditions.
- 2) Adults up to age 26 [can stay on their parents' health plans](#).
- 3) [Free](#) preventive care.
- 4) [Rescinding coverage](#) is now illegal.
- 5) Eliminating [lifetime limits](#) on insurance coverage.
- 6) Restricting [annual limits](#) on insurance coverage.
- 7) More [options to appeal coverage decisions](#).
- 8) [\\$5 billion in immediate federal support](#) to affordable Coverage for the Uninsured with Pre-existing Conditions.
- 9) [\\$10 billion investment](#) in Community Health Centers.
- 10) Create [immediate access to re-insurance](#) for employer health plans providing coverage for early retirees.
- 11) [Made an \\$80 billion deal](#) with the pharmaceutical industry to contribute to cut prescription drug costs for the nation's seniors reduce the size of the "donut hole" in the Medicare (Part D) Drug Benefit.
- 12) [Provides a \\$250 rebate to 750,000 Medicare Beneficiaries](#) who reach the Part D coverage gap in 2010. As of March 22, 2011, [3.8 million beneficiaries had received a \\$250 check](#) to close the coverage gap, according to an HHS report.
- 13) Businesses with fewer than 50 employees will get tax credits covering up to [35% of employee premiums effective 2011 and a 50% tax credit effective 2013](#).
- 14) Creates [a state option to provide Medicaid coverage to childless adults](#) with incomes up to 133% of the federal poverty level. By 2014, States are required to provide this coverage.
- 15) Provides a [10% Medicare bonus payment for primary care services and also a 10% Medicare bonus payment to general surgeons](#) practicing in health professional shortage areas.
- 16) Medical Loss Ratio (MLR) requires that [insurance companies spend at least 80 to 85 percent of the proportion of the premium dollars on clinical services](#). As an example, [WellPoint's Anthem Blue Cross unit in California](#) has reduced its proposed rate increase.

## On Jobs and the Economy:

- 1) The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) [has worked](#). The Economy Has Been Growing - take a look at [the graph of GDP growth](#) between 2007 thru 2010.
- 2) The \$787 billion economic stimulus package has created or saved nearly [2 million jobs](#) slowing the [bleeding](#)
- 3) Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009 that extended Unemployment benefits up to 20 weeks and [more](#).
- 4) [Provided \\$14.7 billion](#) in small business loans increasing minority access to capital.
- 5) [The \\$26 billion aid to states package](#) preventing large-scale layoffs of teachers and public employees.
- 6) As of March 31, 2011, created [1.8 million Private sector jobs](#) since Jan 2010.
- 7) US auto industry rescue plan [saved at least 1 million jobs](#)
- 8) Helped [make the Auto Industry start making huge profits](#) again with [Ford sales up 19% over last year. GM up 11%. Chrysler up a whopping 31%](#).
- 9) Jobs for Main Street Act (2010) injected \$27.5 Billion for Highways, \$8.4 Billion for Transit into the

country's transportation system to create jobs and spur economic activity.

10) A [\\$33 Billion Jobs Package](#) that will allow Small businesses to get \$5,000 tax credit for new hires.

11) A \$26 billion State Aid Package Jobs Bill saving [300,000 teachers and public workers jobs](#) from unemployment.

12) As part of the 2010 tax extension, [Unemployment Insurance was extended to 7 million Americans](#) who would have been without income.

## On Banking and Financial Reform

1) Signed [a sweeping bank-reform bill](#) (the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act) into law

2) Managed the [\\$700 Billion Troubled Asset Relief Program \(TARP\)](#) that Banks have [repaid more than 100% of TARP funds \(\\$251 of the \\$245 banks owed\)](#) as of March 2011 exceeding the original investment by \$6 billion.

3) Cuts Salaries of [65 Bailout Executives](#)

4) [Closed offshore tax safe havens](#), tax credit loopholes on companies that use the tax laws to ship American Jobs overseas. [HR 4213](#).

5) Signed into law [the Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act](#) to fight fraud in the use of TARP and recovery funds, and to increase accountability for corporate and mortgage frauds.

6) Signed the [Credit Card Accountability, Responsibility and Disclosure Act](#)

## On Education

1) Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010 that [increased the amount of federal Pell Grant awards](#) and [enabled the stripping of banks privileges as intermediaries](#) for student loan servicing saving the US government about [\\$68 billion dollars over 11 years](#).

2) Created [the Race to the Top Fund](#), a [\\$4.35 billion program](#) to reward States that submit the best proposals for change.

3) As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, [funded over \\$100 Billion](#) for reforms to strengthen Elementary and Secondary education, early learning programs, college affordability and improve access to higher education, and to close the achievement gap.

## On Energy

1) Implemented renewable fuels mandate of [36 billion gallons by 2022](#), four times what we currently consume.

2) Automakers will be required to meet a fleet-wide average of [New Gas Mileage Standards at 35.5 MPH](#) by 2016.

3) A [\\$60 billion investment](#) in renewable and clean energy.

4) developed [a Biofuels Roadmap](#) to determine the next steps in growing an advanced biofuels economy to meet the goal to use at least 36 billion gallons of bio-based transportation fuels by 2022 helping create more green energy jobs.

5) established [EPA regulations](#) which require large U.S. ships to cut soot emissions by 85 percent.

6) pledged via the [Blueprint for a Secure Energy Future](#) that in a decade from now to cut our oil dependency by one-third, and put America's energy future by producing more oil at home and reducing our dependence on oil by leveraging cleaner, alternative fuels and greater efficiency.

## On Housing

- 1) [\\$275 billion dollar housing plan](#) - \$75 billion dollars to prevent at-risk mortgage debtors already fallen victim to foreclosures and \$200 billion to bring about confidence to offer affordable mortgages and to stabilize the housing market.
- 2) Established "[Opening Doors](#)" to end the homelessness of 640,000 men, women, and children in the United States in 10 years.
- 3) Provided [\\$510 Million](#) for the rehabilitation of Native American housing.
- 4) Provided [\\$2 billion for Neighborhood Stabilization Program](#) to rehab, resell, or demolish in order to stabilize neighborhoods.
- 5) Provided [\\$5 billion for Weatherization Assistance Program](#) for low income families to weatherize 1 million homes per year for the next decade.
- 6) [Provided grants](#) to encourage states and localities to take the first steps in implementing new building codes that prioritize energy efficiency.

## On Medicaid/Medicare/Social Security

- 1) giving [\\$250 economic stimulus check to 55 million Social Security and Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\) recipients](#) in 2009.
- 2) Cutting prescription drug costs for Medicare recipients by [50% and began eliminating the plan's gap](#) ("donut hole") in coverage.
- 3) Passing as part of [H.R.3962 \(Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010\)](#) a [\\$6.4 billion measure](#) reversing a 21 percent cut in physician payments that would have started a flood of rejections by some doctors of seniors covered by Medicare.
- 4) Expanded eligibility [for Medicaid](#) to all individuals under age 65 with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level (\$14,400 per year for an individual).
- 5) Committed to ensuring that [Social Security Budget Will Not Be Cut](#) nor would change [the retirement age](#).

## On Military Veterans and Families

- 1) [A \\$112.8 billion VA budget](#), an increase of 15.5 percent over 2009, the largest percentage increase for VA requested by a president in more than 30 years.
- 2) Implemented a [strategic plan](#) to increase the hiring of Veterans and [Military spouses](#) throughout the Federal civil service.
- 3) Provided for [the expenses of families](#) of to be at Dover AFB when fallen soldiers arrive.
- 4) Passed [the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009](#) increasing the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans.
- 5) Declared the end of the war in Iraqi [bringing back nearly 100,000 U.S. troops home to their families](#).
- 6) Donated [250K of Nobel prize money to Fisher House](#), a group that helps provide housing for families of patients receiving medical care at military and Veterans Affairs medical centers
- 7) Ended [media blackout on war casualties](#); giving access to the return home of a dead US soldier for the first time since an 18-year ban on coverage was lifted.
- 8) Create a '[Green Vet Initiative](#)' to promote environmental jobs for veterans
- 9) Signed into law [the 2009 Military Spouses Residency Relief Act](#), that will allow military spouses to claim residency in the same state as their sponsor and retain that residency as long as the service member is in the military, in the process avoiding the states where they currently reside from taxing their earned income.
- 10) Signed the Caregivers and Veterans [Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010](#)

# On LGBTQ issues no matter this [diary](#) thinks it is overselling of Obama's LGBT Accomplishments

- 1) [Extended benefits](#) to same-sex partners of federal employees
- 2) [Signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act](#)
- 3) Instructed HHS to require any hospital receiving Medicare or Medicaid funds (virtually all hospitals) to [allow LGBT visitation rights](#).
- 4) [Banned job discrimination based on gender identity](#) throughout the Federal government (the nation's largest employer)
- 5) [Signed the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Extension Act](#) and while more funding is needed per the 2012 proposed budget, [an increase of \\$80 million to domestic and global HIV/AIDS programs](#) committed
- 6) Extended the Family and Medical Leave Act [to cover Gay employees taking unpaid leave](#) to care for their children of same-sex partners
- 7) Lifted the [HIV Entry Ban](#).
- 8) Implemented [HUD Policies that Would Ban Discrimination](#) Based On Gender Identity
- 9) Appointed [the first ever transgender DNC member](#)
- 10) Named [open transgender appointees](#) (the first President ever to do so)
- 11) Eliminated the [discriminatory Census Bureau policy that kept LGBT relationships from being counted](#)
- 12) Extended [domestic violence protections to LGBT victims](#)
- 13) [Repealed](#) the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) Discriminatory law.
- 14) [Declared DOMA \(Defense of Marriage Act\) unconstitutional](#) and stopped Defending In Court
- 15) [Endorsed a U.N. declaration](#) calling for the worldwide decriminalization of gays and lesbians around the world in an efforts to make it a worldwide policy.

## Tax deal extending Bush's tax cut for two years which often gets criticized will do the following:

## Damn it, the TAX DEAL is not PERMANENT

- 1) Keep [\\$3,000 in tax savings](#) annually
- 2) [Unemployment Benefit for 7,000,000](#) Americans worth \$56 Billion.
- 3) [\\$2,500 in tax savings to help pay for college tuition](#) and other expenses
- 4) A \$2,000 payroll tax savings to someone making \$100,000 or a \$1,000 payroll tax savings at [a 2% employee-side payroll tax cut](#) for over 155 million workers
- 5) [Child tax credit of \\$1,000 per child](#) with the \$3,000 maximum credit threshold.

- 6) [Earned Income Tax Credit that will give on an average \\$600](#) in additional assistance to families with 3 or more children
- 7) [A 65 percent tax credit to help cover the cost of COBRA](#) for those who lost their jobs in the recession
- 8) [forecast to creating approximately 1.6 million jobs](#) increasing the GDP for 2011
- 9) extended the credit for adoption-related expenses that reduces families tax bill up to \$13,170 in 2011 through 2012 [with a maximum of \\$12,170 in credit.](#)

## Other Notables

- 1) signed [the Health Package For 9/11 Responders bill](#) that puts \$4.3 billion into a fund to assist folks that are suffering from problems caused by breathed-in dust and debris during the 9/11 clean up.
- 2) signed into law a sweeping [Food Safety Act bill](#) that contains [18 major changes](#) to food safety laws.
- 3) made an excellent choice selecting a new Chief of Staff, William Daley, who Eric London has made a super case for why it was [a smart choice.](#)
- 4) made a [\\$78 billion spending cut to the U.S. military and defense department budget](#), including reducing the size of the Army and Marine Corps.
- 5) signed in to law [the START Treaty](#) with Russia, a sweeping new arms reduction pact that will reduce the stockpile nuclear weapons in both countries adding new verification plan.
- 6) The passage of [the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act](#) enabling the rights of workers to sue employers over wage discrimination claims.
- 7) The expansion of [SCHIP health-care program](#) for children worth \$33 Billion.
- 8) The declaration of two million more acres of wilderness in one of the most omnibus [Public Lands bill.](#)
- 9) Government Transparency as noted by [Common Cause, Democracy 21, League of Women Voters and U.S. PIRG](#)-- "*The cumulative effect of the Administration's actions has been to adopt the strongest and most comprehensive lobbying, ethics and transparency rules and policies ever established by an Administration to govern its own activities*". You can read full report in all of the seven areas the report is graded.
- 10) signed [the Tribal Law and Order Act](#) -- an important step to help the Federal Government better address the unique public safety challenges that confront tribal communities.

Originally posted to [ThisIsMyTime](#) on Mon Jun 13, 2011 at 04:45 PM PDT.

Also republished by [The Yes We Can Pragmatists, Progressive Messaging, Class Warfare Newsletter: The Plutocracy VS the Working Class, and Pink Clubhouse.](#)