

Obama: Government, business help shape US future

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President Barack Obama and Canada's Prime Minister Stephen Harper take part in a joint news conference, Friday, Feb. 4, 2011, in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House complex in Washington. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

(AP) -- President Barack Obama says the American government has a responsibility to make the U.S. the best place in the world to do business, but companies have a responsibility to invest in the nation's future by keeping jobs here, hiring workers and paying decent wages.

Obama devoted his weekly radio and Internet message Saturday to ideas from his State of the Union address, specifically a plan to put the U.S. on a more competitive footing globally by spending on innovation, education and public works.

"In today's global, competitive economy, the best jobs and newest

industries will take root in countries with the most skilled workers, the strongest commitment to research and technology and the fastest ways to move people, goods and information," the president said, previewing his speech Monday to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Obama mentioned his visit this past week to Penn State University, where researchers are designing more energy-efficient buildings. He also spoke about next Thursday's trip to Marquette, Mich., a place the [White House](#) says illustrates how increased Internet access can help businesses grow. Obama has called for expanding high-speed, [wireless Internet access](#) to 98 percent of Americans within five years.

He talked about federal tax credits and financing programs that are helping companies boost their bottom lines and hire workers.

Obama said that government has a responsibility to support businesses but that businesses have responsibilities, too.

"They should set up shop here and hire our workers and pay decent wages and invest in the future of this nation," he said. "That's their obligation."

Obama, who has been working overtime to overcome perceptions that he is anti-business, said his message to the [Chamber of Commerce](#) will be that everyone will benefit if government and businesses work together.

"Our workers will succeed. Our nation will prosper. And America will win the future in this century just like we did in the last," he said.

Republicans spoke about the economy and jobs, too, but Rep. Jeb Hensarling of Texas used his party's weekly address to chide Obama for proposing to extend Washington's "spending binge" at a time of growing budget deficits.

Congressional budget experts recently projected that the difference between federal spending and revenues will surge to a record \$1.5 trillion for the budget year that ends Sept. 30.

Hensarling called for spending cuts and spending reform.

"You know, my questions for the president are these: Mr. President, how does [spending](#) us down the road to national bankruptcy help us 'win the future'? And Mr. President, how does borrowing even more money from the Chinese make us more competitive?" he said.

"After two years, it's pretty clear we can't borrow, spend and bail out our way to economic prosperity. No nation can," Hensarling added. "So while I appreciate the president's can-do rhetoric, his job-destroying policies won't do, and that's what matters most to American families."

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