

LET'S PASS THIS ONE ON FOR THOSE WHO MAY NOT HAVE SEEN IT.



"Robert P. Watson, Ph.D. Coordinator of American Studies  
Lynn University"

Email: [rwatson@lynn.edu](mailto:rwatson@lynn.edu)

I am always being asked to grade Obama's presidency. In place of offering him a grade, I put together a list of his accomplishments thus far. I think you would agree that it is very impressive. His first six months have been even more active than FDRs or LBJs the two standards for such assessments. Yet, there is little media attention given to much of what he has done. Of late, the media is focusing almost exclusively on Obama's critics, without holding them responsible for the uncivil, unconstructive tone of their disagreements or without holding the previous administration responsible for getting us in such a deep hole. The misinformation and venom that now passes for political reporting and civic debate is beyond description.

As such, there is a need to set the record straight. What most impresses me is the fact that Obama has accomplished so much not from a heavy-handed or top-down approach but from a style that has institutionalized efforts to reach across the aisle, encourage vigorous debate, and utilize town halls and panels of experts in the policy-making process. Beyond the accomplishments, the process is good for democracy and our democratic processes have been battered and bruised in recent years.

Let me know if I missed anything in the list (surely I did).

- 1.. Ordered all federal agencies to undertake a study and make recommendations for ways to cut spending
2. Ordered a review of all federal operations to identify and cut wasteful spending and practices
3. Instituted enforcement for equal pay for women
4. Beginning the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq
5. Families of fallen soldiers have expenses covered to be on hand when the body arrives at Dover AFB
6. Ended media blackout on war casualties; reporting full information

7. Ended media blackout on covering the return of fallen soldiers to Dover AFB; the media is now permitted to do so pending adherence to respectful rules and approval of fallen soldier's family
8. The White House and federal government are respecting the Freedom of Information Act
9. Instructed all federal agencies to promote openness and transparency as much as possible
10. Limits on lobbyist's access to the White House
11. Limits on White House aides working for lobbyists after their tenure in the administration
12. Ended the previous stop-loss policy that kept soldiers in Iraq/Afghanistan longer than their enlistment date
13. Phasing out the expensive F-22 war plane and other outdated weapons systems, which weren't even used or needed in Iraq/Afghanistan
14. Removed restrictions on embryonic stem-cell research
15. Federal support for stem-cell and new biomedical research
16. New federal funding for science and research labs
17. States are permitted to enact federal fuel efficiency standards above federal standards
18. Increased infrastructure spending (roads, bridges, power plants) after years of neglect
19. Funds for high-speed, broadband Internet access to K-12 schools
20. New funds for school construction
21. The prison at Guantanamo Bay is being phased out
22. US Auto industry rescue plan
23. Housing rescue plan
24. \$789 billion economic stimulus plan
25. The public can meet with federal housing insurers to refinance (the new plan can be completed in one day) a mortgage if they are having trouble paying
26. US financial and banking rescue plan
27. The secret detention facilities in Eastern Europe and elsewhere are being closed
28. Ended the previous policy; the US now has a no torture policy and is in compliance with the Geneva Convention standards
29. Better body armor is now being provided to our troops
30. The missile defense program is being cut by \$1.4 billion in 2010
31. Restarted the nuclear nonproliferation talks and building back up the nuclear inspection infrastructure/protocols
32. Reengaged in the treaties/agreements to protect the Antarctic
33. Reengaged in the agreements/talks on global warming and greenhouse gas emissions
34. Visited more countries and met with more world leaders than any president in

his first six months in office

35. Successful release of US captain held by Somali pirates; authorized the SEALs to do their job
36. US Navy increasing patrols off Somali coast
37. Attractive tax write-offs for those who buy hybrid automobiles
38. Cash for clunkers program offers vouchers to trade in fuel inefficient, polluting old cars for new cars; stimulated auto sales
39. Announced plans to purchase fuel efficient American-made fleet for the federal government
40. Expanded the SCHIP program to cover health care for 4 million more children
41. Signed national service legislation; expanded national youth service program
42. Instituted a new policy on Cuba, allowing Cuban families to return home to visit loved ones
43. Ended the previous policy of not regulating and labeling carbon dioxide emissions
44. Expanding vaccination programs
45. Immediate and efficient response to the floods in North Dakota and other natural disasters
46. Closed offshore tax safe havens
47. Negotiated deal with Swiss banks to permit US government to gain access to records of tax evaders and criminals
48. Ended the previous policy of offering tax benefits to corporations who outsource American jobs; the new policy is to promote in-sourcing to bring jobs back
- 49.. Ended the previous practice of protecting credit card companies; in place of it are new consumer protections from credit card industry's predatory practices
50. Energy producing plants must begin preparing to produce 15% of their energy from renewable sources
51. Lower drug costs for seniors
52. Ended the previous practice of forbidding Medicare from negotiating with drug manufacturers for cheaper drugs; the federal government is now realizing hundreds of millions in savings
53. Increasing pay and benefits for military personnel
54. Improved housing for military personnel
55. Initiating a new policy to promote federal hiring of military spouses
56. Improved conditions at Walter Reed Military Hospital and other military hospitals
57. Increasing student loans
58. Increasing opportunities in AmeriCorps program
59. Sent envoys to Middle East and other parts of the world that had been neglected for years; reengaging in multilateral and bilateral talks and diplomacy
60. Established a new cyber security office
61. Beginning the process of reforming and restructuring the military 20 years after the Cold War to a more modern fighting force; this includes new procurement

policies, increasing size of military, new technology and cyber units and operations, etc.

62. Ended previous policy of awarding no-bid defense contracts
63. Ordered a review of hurricane and natural disaster preparedness
64. Established a National Performance Officer charged with saving the federal government money and making federal operations more efficient
65. Students struggling to make college loan payments can have their loans refinanced
66. Improving benefits for veterans
67. Many more press conferences and town halls and much more media access than previous administration
68. Instituted a new focus on mortgage fraud
69. The FDA is now regulating tobacco
70. Ended previous policy of cutting the FDA and circumventing FDA rules
71. Ended previous practice of having White House aides rewrite scientific and environmental rules, regulations, and reports
72. Authorized discussions with North Korea and private mission by Pres. Bill Clinton to secure the release of two Americans held in prisons
73. Authorized discussions with Myanmar and mission by Sen. Jim Web to secure the release of an American held captive
74. Making more loans available to small businesses
75. Established independent commission to make recommendations on slowing the costs of Medicare
76. Appointment of first Latina to the Supreme Court
77. Authorized construction/opening of additional health centers to care for veterans
78. Limited salaries of senior White House aides; cut to \$100,000
79. Renewed loan guarantees for Israel
80. Changed the failing/status quo military command in Afghanistan
81. Deployed additional troops to Afghanistan
82. New Afghan War policy that limits aerial bombing and prioritizes aid, development of infrastructure, diplomacy, and good government practices by Afghans
83. Announced the long-term development of a national energy grid with renewable sources and cleaner, efficient energy production
84. Returned money authorized for refurbishment of White House offices and private living quarters
85. Paid for redecoration of White House living quarters out of his own pocket
86. Held first Seder in White House
87. Attempting to reform the nation's healthcare system which is the most expensive in the world yet leaves almost 50 million without health insurance and millions more under insured

88. Has put the ball in play for comprehensive immigration reform

89. Has announced his intention to push for energy reform

90. Has announced his intention to push for education reform

Oh, and he built a swing set for the girls outside the Oval Office

I am blessed and highly favored.

The Lord BLESS you and KEEP you.