THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 17, 2013

To the dedicated and hard-working employees of the United States Government:

Two and a half weeks ago, on the day that much of our Government shut down, I wrote you to express my appreciation for the work you do on behalf of the American people every day, and to convey my commitment to getting you back on the job as quickly as possible.

Today, I am writing to simply say: Welcome back. Thank you for your service.

Whether you have been working without pay, or you were forced to stay home without pay, I know it has been a frustrating and stressful few weeks for you and your families. It should never have happened. You should never have been treated this way. So I hope it comes as some solace that you will be paid in full for what you should have earned since the shutdown began.

I want to remind you, again, that the public service you perform—the role you play in the life of our country—it is important. It matters. You defend our country overseas and deliver the benefits our troops have earned when they come home. You help folks after a storm. You guard our borders and protect our civil rights. You keep our food and our workplaces safe, and protect the air we breathe and the water we drink. You help businesses expand and enter new markets. You push the very boundaries of science and space, and guide hundreds of thousands of people each day through the glory of America's natural wonders.

I know that some of your efforts and hard work have been halted or harmed by the shutdown. But now that the Government is open for business again, let us throw ourselves back into it. We have work to do, and the American people are counting on us to get it right.

Those of us who have the privilege of serving this country may come from different parties, but we are Americans first. Each of us has specific responsibilities we are charged with carrying out on behalf of the American people, and we have an obligation to do it the best we can. I look forward to working with all of you to make sure we meet the high expectations of the citizens we serve.

Sincerely,