

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

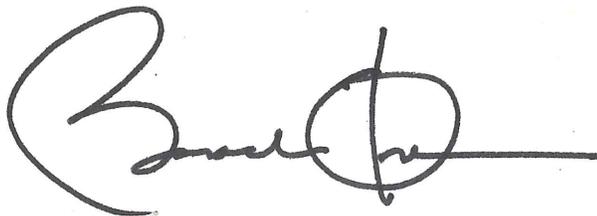
March 16, 2011

I send greetings to all those observing National Tsunami Awareness Week.

Tsunamis are uncommon but deadly natural phenomena that threaten shorelines across America and around the world. The heartbreaking loss of life from the recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan reflects the catastrophic damage these unexpected disasters can cause, and Americans continue to keep all those affected in our thoughts and prayers.

As we offer our assistance to those impacted by this tragedy, we also renew our commitment to ensuring preparedness along our shores. Efficient warning systems and awareness in coastal communities are vital to protecting Americans in at-risk areas of the country. To meet these needs, the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP), a partnership of State and local governments and Federal agencies, is working to reduce the impact of tsunamis through hazard assessment, evacuation planning, and educational outreach. While the danger posed by tsunamis cannot be eliminated, these efforts can help save lives by equipping citizens to effectively respond to emergency situations.

On behalf of all Americans, I thank those involved with the NTHMP for their contributions to the safety of Americans in coastal communities. I wish you all the best.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned at the bottom center of the page.