

from a \$2,500 tuition tax credit to make college more affordable.

And millions of entrepreneurs in big cities and small towns across the country will benefit not only from the business expensing plan I mentioned, but from additional tax cuts that will spur research and development.

Independent experts have concluded that taken together, this package of tax cuts will significantly accelerate the pace of our economic recovery, spurring additional jobs and additional growth.

And that's our mission. That should be the focus, day in and day out, of our work in Washington in the coming months, as we wrestle with a challenging budget and long-term deficits. And I'm determined to work with everyone, Republicans and Democrats, to achieve that goal. What we can't do is refight the battles of the past 2 years that distract us from the hard work of moving our economy forward.

What we can't do is engage in the kinds of symbolic battles that so often consume Washington while the rest of America waits for us to solve problems.

The tax cuts and other progress we made in December were a much-needed departure from that pattern. Let's build on that admirable example and do our part, here in Washington, so that the doers, the builders, and the innovators in America can do their best in 2011 and beyond.

Thanks everybody, and have a nice weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on January 7 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on January 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 7, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 8.

Remarks on the Shootings in Tucson, Arizona *January 8, 2011*

As many of you are aware, earlier today a number of people were shot in Tucson, Arizona, including several who were meeting at a supermarket with their Congresswoman, Gabrielle Giffords. We are still assembling all the facts, but we know that Representative Giffords was one of the victims. She is currently at a hospital in the area, and she is battling for her life.

We also know that at least five people lost their lives in this tragedy. Among them were a Federal judge, John Roll, who has served America's legal system for almost 40 years, and a young girl who was barely 9 years old.

I've spoken to Arizona Governor Jan Brewer and offered the full resources of the Federal Government. A suspect is currently in custody, but we don't yet know what provoked this unspeakable act. A comprehensive investigation is currently underway, and at my direction, Director Bob Mueller is en route to Arizona to help coordinate these efforts. I've also spoken to the Democratic and Republican leaders in the House.

Gabby Giffords was a friend of mine. She is not only an extraordinary public servant, but she is also somebody who is warm and caring. She is well liked by her colleagues and well liked by her constituents. Her husband Mark Kelly is a Navy captain and one of America's valiant astronauts.

It's not surprising that today Gabby was doing what she always does: listening to the hopes and concerns of her neighbors. That is the essence of what our democracy is all about. That is why this is more than a tragedy for those involved. It is a tragedy for Arizona and a tragedy for our entire country.

What Americans do at times of tragedy is to come together and support each other. So at this time I ask all Americans to join me and Michelle in keeping all the victims and their families, including Gabby, in our thoughts and prayers. Those who have been injured, we are rooting for them. And I know Gabby is as tough as they come, and I am hopeful that she's going to pull through.

Obviously, our hearts go out to the family members of those who have been slain. We are going to get to the bottom of this, and we're going to get through this. But in the meantime, I think all of us need to make sure that we're offering our thoughts and prayers to those concerned.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:46 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Christina-Taylor Green, who was killed in the shootings.

Statement on the Shootings in Tucson *January 8, 2011*

This morning, in an unspeakable tragedy, a number of Americans were shot in Tucson, Arizona, at a constituent meeting with Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. And while we are continuing to receive information, we know that some have passed away and that Representative Giffords is gravely wounded.

We do not yet have all the answers. What we do know is that such a senseless and terrible act of violence has no place in a free society. I ask all Americans to join me and Michelle in keeping Representative Giffords, the victims of this tragedy, and their families in our prayers.

Statement on the Southern Sudan Independence Referendum *January 9, 2011*

I am extremely pleased that polling has started for the Southern Sudan referendum and congratulate the people of Southern Sudan who are determining their own destiny. This is an historic step in the years-long process to fully implement the comprehensive peace agreement that ended the civil war between north and south. The international community is united and determined to ensure that all parties in Sudan live up to their obligations. We know that there are those who may try to disrupt the voting. Voters must be allowed access to polling stations and must be able to cast their ballots free from intimidation and coer-

cion. All sides should refrain from inflammatory rhetoric or provocative actions that could raise tensions or prevent voters from expressing their will. Violence in the Abyei region should cease. And while a successful vote will be cause for celebration, an enormous amount of work remains to ensure the people of Sudan can live with security and dignity. The world will be watching in the coming days, and the United States will remain fully committed to helping the parties solve critical postreferendum issues regardless of the outcome of the vote.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Nicolas Sarkozy of France and an Exchange With Reporters *January 10, 2011*

President Obama. We'll, I'm very grateful to have my dear friend Nicolas Sarkozy here. And I think Nicolas has agreed that at the top, I want to just make a few comments about the situation in Tucson, Arizona.

Obviously, all of us are still grieving and in shock from the tragedy that took place. Gabby Giffords and others are still fighting to recover. Families are still absorbing the enormity of their losses. We have a criminal investigation