

going to be an election, and we're going to have a convention right here in North Carolina. But that convention is 11 months away. The election is 13 months away. And folks can't afford to wait that long.

They can't sit around just listening to a bunch of political arguments. They need action, and they need it now. Because folks are living paycheck to paycheck. There are folks who are living week to week. And I don't accept the idea that in the face of that kind of hardship that we're going to stand by and do nothing. That's not who we are. We are Americans. And you know what, we keep working at things until we get them fixed.

Yes, we had a problem with the financial crisis, and the economy is not where it needs to be, but we can fix it. We just got to stay on it. We got to be persistent. We got to keep on trying things until folks are back to work and the economy is growing again. And we've got to muster that spirit right now: a "can do" spirit. Not a "no, we can't" spirit, but a "yes, we can"

spirit. We don't need a "why we can't" attitude, we need a "why we can" attitude.

I know that sometimes everybody watches television, and you see what's going on in Washington, and you get discouraged. But I just want you to remember that we've been through tougher times before. This is a country that's been through a Revolutionary War, a Civil War. We got through slavery. We got through a depression. We got through World War I. We got through World War II. We have been through tougher times before. We are going to get through this, and we're going to get through it together. Because Americans don't quit.

So let's meet this moment. Let's get to work. And let's show the world once again why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you. God bless North Carolina. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:08 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Stephen C. Laws, superintendent, Wilkes County Schools; and Gov. Beverly E. Perdue of North Carolina.

## Statement on the Death of Elouise P. Cobell *October 17, 2011*

Michelle and I were saddened to hear about the passing of Elouise Cobell yesterday. Elouise spoke out when she saw that the Interior Department had failed to account for billions of dollars that they were supposed to collect on behalf of more than 300,000 of her fellow Native Americans. Because she did, I was able to sign into law a piece of legislation that finally provided a measure of justice to those who were affected. That law also creates a scholarship fund to give more Native Americans ac-

cess to higher education and give tribes more control over their own lands. Elouise helped to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with Indian Country, and our thoughts and prayers are with her family and all those who mourn her passing.

NOTE: The statement referred to Public Law No. 111-291, the Claims Resolution Act of 2010, which was approved on December 8, 2010.

## Remarks Prior to a Roundtable Discussion With Educators in Jamestown, North Carolina *October 18, 2011*

Hope you're enjoying the beautiful North Carolina day. We are here to talk to both teachers and soon-to-be teachers and folks who are training teachers and talking about

the importance of education to the economy.

I think all of us are aware at this point that, in this 21st-century global economy, how well

we do as a country is going to depend on how well we train our young people. And it starts early. So we're at a terrific early childhood education program here at the community college, where people who are interested in training very young children are getting the skills that they need. But we've also got a couple of teachers: one in fourth grade, one in ninth grade.

And so one of the concerns that I've had over the course of the last several months—in fact, the last couple of years—are the layoffs that we've seen in education and the cutbacks we've seen in education all across the country. States and local governments are under a big crunch. And at precisely the time when we need to be emphasizing education and putting our resources into education, we're seeing cutbacks all across the board. Teachers are losing their jobs. Schools are having to cut back on vital programs that are helping young people.

And the “American Jobs Act,” the bill that I put before Congress, would help to curb some of those trends. What we do is to provide \$30 billion to make sure that we've got teachers back in the classrooms, to make sure that we're not seeing additional teacher layoffs, that wonderful programs such as the ones that are taking place here are properly and adequately funded, and to make sure that, at the same time, we're also rebuilding some of the schools

around the country that are in a bad state of repair and where young people aren't getting the kind of support that they need in order to achieve.

So I'm going to spend a little time having a conversation here with the teachers and soon-to-be teachers. They're going to talk about their experiences, what's working, what they're excited about, but also the concerns that they've seen in terms of cutbacks in education.

And I hope that Members of Congress are going to be doing a little bit of listening to teachers and educators. We have a tendency to say great things about how important education is in the abstract, but we don't always put our money where our mouth is. And it's absolutely critical right now to make sure that we don't see the kinds of cutbacks that we've been seeing. If that becomes a long-term trend, we're going to fall behind countries like China, Korea, Germany, that are continually making significant investments in teachers.

So I want to thank all of you guys for taking the time to join me. I very much appreciate what you're doing.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 a.m. in the Children's Center at Guilford Technical Community College. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at Guilford Technical Community College in Jamestown October 18, 2011

*The President.* Thank you very much. Everybody, please have a seat. Have a seat. Hello, Jamestown! It is great to be here in North Carolina. Great to be here at the Ragsdale YMCA.

I want to first of all thank Linda for the outstanding introduction. Give her a big round of applause. I want to also acknowledge your Congressman, Mel Watt, in the house. Mel is doing an outstanding job each and every day. I also want to acknowledge your mayor, Keith Volz, for the fine work that he's doing. He invited me back down here. He said there are some pretty good golf courses down here and

some fine restaurants, so I'm going to have to sample both the next time I'm here.

I had a chance to talk to Linda and a group of other teachers before I came out here. And I just want to say thank you to her, not only for the introduction, but also for teaching. I got a chance to learn about the extraordinary work that Guilford Technical Community College is doing to train new teachers and place them in schools where kids need them the most. And one of the best ways to make a difference in the life of our Nation is to make a difference in the life of every child. So I want to thank all the teachers who are in the audience for answering