

Remarks at the Quicken Loans Carrier Classic in San Diego, California November 11, 2011

Hello, everybody! How you feeling tonight? We are so fortunate to be able to witness two of the greatest basketball programs in history: Michigan State Spartans, North Carolina Tar Heels. Two of the best coaches of all time: Coach Izzo, Coach Williams. So we are proud to be here and see a great sporting event.

But the main reason we're here is, on Veterans Day, we have an opportunity to say thank you. One of the greatest privileges of this job, and one of the greatest responsibilities of this job, is to serve as your Commander in Chief. And I can tell you that every day when I interact with our military, every day when I interact with the men and women in uniform, I could not be prouder to be an American.

And that gratitude that we have for our men and women of the Armed Forces does not stop when they take off the uniform. When they come home, part of the long line of those who defended our freedom, we have a sacred trust to make sure that they understand how much we appreciate what they do. And that's not just on Veterans Day. That is every day of every year where we salute them and we say thank you for making the sacrifices and for their families' sacrifices on our behalf.

This week, throughout the week, we've been celebrating our veterans, but we have to turn our words into action. So what we've done is make sure that Congress passed legislation that makes it a little bit easier for businesses to hire our veterans. We've put in place a series of reforms to help veterans, make sure they get the counseling and the job placement that they need.

The First Lady, along with Dr. Jill Biden, have put together something called Joining

Forces that has now gotten commitments—100,000 jobs for veterans and military spouses all across the country. And we are grateful for them for that effort.

But every American citizen can make a solemn pledge today that they will find some opportunity to provide support to our troops, to those who are still Active Duty, to our National Guard, to our reservists, and to our veterans.

And it's especially appropriate that we do it here, because the USS *Carl Vinson* has been a messenger of diplomacy and a protector of our security for a long time. And the men and women who serve on this ship have done extraordinary service in the Pacific, in the Persian Gulf, in the Indian Ocean. It was from this aircraft carrier that some of the first assaults on Iraq were launched. This ship supports what's happening in Afghanistan.

I think some of you may know, because it's been reported, that the men and women on the *Carl Vinson* were part of that critical mission to bring Usama bin Laden to justice.

So to all our veterans, to all our men and women in uniform, we say thank you. And we want you to know that we are committed to making sure that we serve you as well as you have always served us.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. aboard the USS *Carl Vinson*. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas Izzo, head coach, Michigan State University men's basketball team; Roy A. Williams, head coach, University of North Carolina men's basketball team; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

The President's Weekly Address November 12, 2011

I'm speaking to you from the primary flight control of the aircraft carrier USS *Carl Vinson* in San Diego. This is one of the biggest ships in

the Navy, and on Friday it was home to one of the most unique college basketball games I have ever seen. It also gave members of our

military and our veterans a chance to unwind a little bit, and on this Veterans Day, I want to take this opportunity to thank all our men and women in uniform for their service and their sacrifice.

But this day isn't just about thanking our veterans. It's about rededicating ourselves to serving our veterans as well as they've served us. And right now that's never been more important.

Last month, I announced that, as promised, we will end the war in Iraq by the end of the year. Many of our military families will be welcoming loved ones home for the holidays. At the same time, we've begun to wind down the war in Afghanistan. And in the next 5 years, over a million servicemembers will transition back into civilian life, joining the 3 million who have already done so over the last decade.

These are men and women who have served with distinction in some of the most dangerous places on the planet. But for many of them, the challenges don't end when they take off the uniform. Today, more than 850,000 veterans remain unemployed, and too many are struggling to find a job worthy of their talents and their experience.

That's not right. We ask these men and women to leave their families and their jobs and risk their lives to fight for our country. The last thing they should have to do is fight for a job when they get home.

To give our veterans the opportunity they've earned, I've directed the Federal Government to lead by example, and already we've hired 120,000 veterans. We've also challenged private companies to hire or train 100,000 post-9/11 veterans or their spouses by the end of 2013. So far, many patriotic companies have answered the call, hiring more than 16,000 Americans. And yesterday, thanks to the hard work of Michelle and Dr. Jill Biden, companies

announced their commitment to train or hire 125,000 more over the next 2 years.

But we still need to do more. That's why, as part of the "American Jobs Act," I called on Congress to pass a returning heroes tax credit, which would give businesses a tax break for each unemployed veteran they hire and a wounded warriors tax credit, which would give businesses a tax break for hiring an unemployed veteran with a disability related to their service in uniform.

These proposals will go a long way towards putting our veterans back to work. And on Thursday, I was pleased to see the Senate put partisanship aside and came together to pass these tax credits. After all, standing up for our veterans isn't a Democratic responsibility or a Republican responsibility, it's an American responsibility. It's one that all of us have an obligation to meet. And the House should pass this bill as soon as possible so I can sign it into law.

As Commander in Chief, I want every veteran to know that America will always honor your service and your sacrifice, not just today, but every day. And just as you have fought for us, we're going to keep fighting for you, for more jobs, for more security, and for the opportunity to keep your families strong and America competitive in the 21st century.

So to all our veterans, thank you for your service. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5 p.m. on November 11 aboard the USS *Carl Vinson* in San Diego, CA, for broadcast on November 12. In the address, the President referred to Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 11, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 12.