

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation To Provide Tax Credits To Aid Businesses Hiring Veterans

November 16, 2011

I want to congratulate Republicans and Democrats in Congress for coming together to pass these tax credits that will encourage businesses to hire America's veterans. No veteran who fought for our country should have to fight for a job when they come home. That's why I proposed these tax credits back in August, and

I look forward to signing them into law. This is a good first step, but it is only a step. Congress needs to pass the rest of my "American Jobs Act" so that we can create jobs and put money in the pockets of the middle class.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 674.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia in Canberra, Australia

November 16, 2011

Prime Minister Gillard. Good evening, one and all. I take this opportunity to very warmly welcome President Obama to Australia for his first visit as President. President Obama is no stranger to our shores, having visited Australia before, but it is a special delight to have him here for his first visit as President. And it comes at an important time in our nation's history and in the history of our region.

We will be looking back during this visit. We'll be looking back at 60 years of the AN-ZUS alliance. We'll be looking back 10 years to the dreadful day of 9/11, a day we all remember with great sorrow. And we will be reflecting on those events. But we will be looking forward.

We live in the growing region of the world whose global—contribution to global growth is a profound one. We live in a region which is changing, changing in important ways. And as a result of those changes, President Obama and I have been discussing the best way of our militaries cooperating for the future.

So I'm very pleased to be able to announce with President Obama that we've agreed joint initiatives to enhance our alliance, 60 years old and being kept robust for tomorrow. It is a new agreement to expand the existing collaboration between the Australian Defence Force and the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Air Force. What this means in very practical detail is from mid-2012, Australia will welcome deployments

of a company-sized rotation of 200 to 250 marines in the Northern Territory for around 6 months at a time.

Over a number of years, we intend to build on this relationship in a staged way to a full force of around 2,500 personnel. That is a full Marine Air Ground Task Force.

A second component of these initiatives, which we have agreed, is greater access by U.S. military aircraft to the Royal Australian Air Force facilities in our country's north. This will involve more frequent movements of U.S. military aircraft into and out of northern Australia. Now, taken together, these two initiatives make our alliance stronger, they strengthen our cooperation in our region.

We are a region that is growing economically. But stability is important for economic growth too. And our alliance has been a bedrock of stability in our region. So building on our alliance through this new initiative is about stability. It will be good for our Australian Defence Force to increase their capabilities by joint training, combined training, with the U.S. Marines and personnel. It will mean that we are postured to better respond together, along with other partners in the Asia-Pacific, to any regional contingency, including the provision of humanitarian assistance and dealing with natural disasters.

In addition to discussing this global force posture review by the United States and these