

The President's Weekly Address

November 9, 2013

Hello, everybody. Veterans Day weekend is a chance for all of us to say two simple words: "Thank you." Thank you to that greatest generation who fought island by island across the Pacific and freed millions from fascism in Europe. Thank you to the heroes who risked everything through the bitter cold of Korea and the stifling heat of Vietnam. And thank you to all the heroes who have served since, most recently our 9/11 generation of veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now that more of them are coming home, we need to serve them as well as they serve us, and that requires more than a simple thank you, especially from those of us who've been elected to serve.

I've often said that my top priority is growing the economy, creating new jobs, and restoring middle class security. And a very important part of that is making sure that every veteran has every chance to share in the opportunity he or she has helped defend. In addition to the care and benefits they've earned—including good mental health care to stay strong—that means a good job, a good education, and a home to call their own.

If you fight for your country overseas, you should never have to fight for a job when you come home. I've made sure the Federal Government leads by example, and since I took office, we've hired about 300,000 veterans to keep serving their country. Our new transition assistance program is helping veterans and their spouses find that new job and plan their career. And I'm going to keep calling on Congress to do the right thing and pass the veterans jobs corps. Put our veterans to work rebuilding America.

Our troops gain unmatched skills while serving in harm's way. So we're also doing everything we can to connect more businesses with highly skilled veterans: more help with job searches, more tools to connect veterans to job openings, more chances to earn licenses and credentials for civilian jobs, and new tax credits for companies that hire veterans and wounded warriors, tax credits which Congress should make permanent.

And America's businesses have worked with Michelle and Jill Biden's Joining Forces campaign to help returning heroes find jobs in the private sector. They've already hired or trained 290,000 veterans and military spouses, and they've committed to hiring over 400,000 more.

We're also committed to giving today's veterans and their families the same shot at a great education this country gave my grandfather when he came home from World War II. We're helping more of them earn their degrees under the post-9/11 GI bill. We've worked with thousands of schools across the country to set new standards to protect against dishonest recruiting and predatory lending practices that target our veterans. And we're helping hundreds of community colleges and universities do more to welcome and encourage our veterans on campus.

Thanks to these efforts and the efforts of the private sector, we've made progress getting our vets back to work. But we've got a lot more to do. And as more than a million of our troops return to civilian life, we're going to have to work even harder. Because the skill, dedication, and courage of our troops is unmatched, and when they come home, we all benefit from their efforts to build a stronger America and a brighter future for our kids.

So to all our veterans, on behalf our entire Nation, thank you for everything you've done and will continue to do for our country. As your Commander in Chief, I'm proud of your service and grateful for your sacrifice. And as long as I'm your President, I will make it my mission to make sure that America has your back, not just on one day or one weekend, but 365 days a year.

Thanks. God bless you, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:10 p.m. on November 7 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast on November 9. 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 8, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 9.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Weekly addresses.

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