

Audience members. Pass this bill!

The President. If you want to help our veterans share in the opportunity that they defend, pass this bill.

Now is the time to act. We're not a people who just watch things happen. We're Americans; we make things happen. We are tougher than the times we live in. We are bigger than the politics that we've been putting up with. We are patriots and pioneers and innovators and entrepreneurs, who, through individual effort, but also through a commitment to one another, built an economy that's the engine and the envy of the world.

We write our own destiny. It's within our power to write it once more. So let's meet this moment. Let's get to work. Let's show the world once again why the United States of America is the greatest country on Earth.

Thank you very much, Ohio. Thank you, Columbus. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:33 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Tom Sisterhen, construction manager, Smoot Alfred Resources; and Jason Chuong, music teacher, Philadelphia, PA, public school system.

Remarks at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina September 14, 2011

The President. Hello, North Carolina! Thank you! Thank you so much. How's it going, Raleigh? It is good to be back at NC State! Good to have all these wolves in my wolfpack. I just hope none of the students here are skipping class on account of me. [Laughter] Your professors can see you on TV, you know.

I want to thank so many people who helped to set this up, but a couple of folks in particular I want to acknowledge. First of all, the outstanding Governor of the great State of North Carolina, Bev Perdue is in the house. Bev has been working tirelessly on behalf of the State and obviously helped to guide so much of the emergency efforts that were taking place after the hurricane. So we're grateful to her. And we also have one of the finest public servants I know: The former Governor of the great State of North Carolina, Jim Hunt is in the house.

I want to thank Chancellor William Woodson, chancellor of North Carolina State University, as well as Thomas Ross, president of North Carolina State University [the University of North Carolina].^o And I want to thank the Power Sound of the South for their outstanding performance. Thank you.

Now, everybody can sit down if you want. You all have seats—[laughter]—that's fine. I

got a few—except folks in the front. See, this is the hard core right here. I want to thank Erv for the introduction. Now, as he mentioned, I just visited his small business, which is called WestStar Precision. It's down the road in Apex. And like Erv said, what they do is what a lot of companies here in the Research Triangle do so well. They hire smart people. They give them the best technology. They create something of lasting value. And that's how this country built a strong and growing economy and a strong, expanding middle class. That's our history, and that's what we've got to get back to. And that's why I came to Raleigh here today.

I came to talk about how America can get back to a place where we're creating good middle class jobs again: jobs that pay well, jobs that offer some security, jobs that are available for all the young people who are going to be graduating from NC State. Because I know that's what the students are thinking about. And we can do that if we can finally get Washington to act, if we can get folks to stop worrying so much about their jobs and start worrying a little more about your jobs.

Now, on Monday, I sent Congress this piece of legislation. It's called the "American Jobs Act." It's a plan that does two things: It puts

^o White House correction.

more people back to work, and it puts more money back into the pockets of working Americans. Everything in this proposal, everything in this legislation, everything in the “American Jobs Act,” is the kind of proposal that in the past, at least, has been supported by Democrats and Republicans. Everything in it will be paid for. Anybody who wants to know more about it, you can read it on whitehouse.gov. [Laughter] I know you guys don’t have enough to read. And every single one of you can help make this bill a reality by telling Congress to pass this bill. Pass this jobs bill.

Now, let me tell you why you need to pass this bill. Tell them to pass this bill so we can help the people who create most of the new jobs in this country, and that’s small-business owners like Erv. Because while corporate profits have come roaring back, smaller companies haven’t. So what this jobs bill does is it cuts taxes for small businesses that hire new employees. It cuts taxes for small businesses that raise the salaries of their current employees. It cuts small businesses’ payroll taxes in half, and that would help 170,000 small-business owners in North Carolina alone. And if they choose to make new investments next year, it lets them write off those investments.

And for small-business owners who have contracts with the Federal Government, we’re going to do more than that. Today I’m ordering all Federal agencies to make sure those small-business owners get paid a lot faster than they do now. In many cases, it will be twice as fast. So that puts more money in their pockets quicker, which means they can hire folks quicker.

Now, we’ve got to tell Congress to do their part. You’ve got some Republicans in Congress, they like to talk about how, “We’re in favor of America’s job creators.” Well, you know what, if you’re in favor of America’s jobs creators, this is your bill. This will actually help America’s job creators. So we need to pass this jobs bill right away.

But that’s not all this bill does. Pass this jobs bill, and companies will get new tax credits for hiring America’s veterans. Now, we ask these men and women to leave their careers, leave

their families, risk their lives to fight for us, to fight for our freedoms. The last thing they should have to do is fight for a job when they come home. That’s why Congress needs to pass this bill.

Pass this bill because it will help hundreds of thousands of young people find summer jobs next year. It’s also got a \$4,000 tax credit for companies that hire anybody who’s spent more than 6 months looking for a job. It extends unemployment insurance, which means it’s providing help and support for folks who are out there, want to work, but haven’t found a job yet. And that also puts more money into the economy, because they spend that money in small businesses and in large businesses, and that means they have more customers and they’ll hire more people. But we’re also saying that if you’re collecting unemployment insurance, you’re going to get connected to temporary work as a way to keep your skills sharp while you’re looking for a permanent job.

Pass this bill, and right here in North Carolina, about 19,000 construction workers will have a job again. This is a commonsense idea. Governor Perdue can tell you, there are a lot of roads and a lot of bridges that need fixing. There is a lot of work that needs to be done in schools and airports. All these things are in need of repair. In North Carolina alone, there are 153 structurally deficient bridges that need to be repaired. Four of them are near here, on or around the Beltline. Why would we wait to act until another bridge falls? All across North Carolina, all across the country, there are schools with leaking ceilings and lousy heating, ventilation so poor, it can make students sick. How can we expect our kids to do their best in places like that?

And the answer is, we can’t. This is America. I don’t know about you, but I don’t want any of our young people studying in broken-down schools. I want our kids to study in the best schools. I don’t want the newest airports or the fastest railroads being built in China. I want them being built right here in the United States of America. There are construction projects like these all across the country just waiting to get started. There are millions of unemployed

construction workers looking for work. My question is, what's Congress waiting for? There's work to be done; there are workers ready to do it. Let's pass this jobs bill right away, and let's get it done. Let's go!

Pass this jobs bill, and there will be funding to save the jobs of up to 13,000 North Carolina teachers, cops, and firefighters. I hope some of the young people here plan to go into teaching, plan to go into education. But here's the challenge: We've got incredibly talented young people who want to teach, but while places like South Korea are adding teachers to prepare their kids for the global economy, we're laying off teachers left and right. You've seen it here in North Carolina. Budget cuts are forcing superintendents all over the State to make layoffs they don't want to make. It's unfair to our kids. It undermines their future; it undermines our future. It has to stop. If we want our kids ready for college, ready for careers in the 21st century, tell Congress to pass the "American Jobs Act" and put teachers back into the classroom where they belong.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Yes, we can. We could pass this thing, but we need Congress to help us do it.

Now, if we pass this bill, the typical working family in North Carolina will get a \$1,300 tax cut next year. Thirteen hundred dollars that would have been taken from your paycheck will now go into your pocket. That will help local businesses know that they've got customers. But if Congress doesn't act, if Congress refuses to pass this bill, middle class families will get hit with a tax increase at the worst possible time. We can't let that happen.

As I pointed out last Thursday, there are folks in Congress who have been fighting pretty hard to keep tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. You need to tell them they need to fight just as hard to help middle class families. Tell them to pass this jobs bill.

So that's the "American Jobs Act." It will lead to new jobs for young people, for construction workers, for teachers, for veterans, for the unemployed. It will provide tax relief for every worker and every small business in

America. It will not add to the deficit. It will be paid for.

We will pay for this plan. We will pay down our debt. We'll do it following the same principles that every family follows. We'll make sure the Government lives within its means. We'll cut what we can't afford to pay for what we really need. And that means we're going to have to make—we're going to have to cut some things we wouldn't make if we hadn't racked up so much debt over the last decade.

But it does mean that we're going to keep on doing the things that matter, like making sure that you guys who are here at NC State aren't coming up with all that debt. That's why we've made sure to increase Pell grants. That's why we've made sure to increase student loan affordability, to make sure you guys can get the education you deserve. But in order to do that, we've got to make sure everybody pays their fair share, including the wealthiest Americans and the biggest corporations.

Ultimately, North Carolina, this comes down to what our priorities are. Do you want to keep tax loopholes for oil companies?

Audience members. No!

The President. Or do you want to renovate more schools and rebuild more roads and bridges so construction workers have jobs again? Do you want to keep tax breaks for multimillionaires and billionaires?

Audience members. No!

The President. Or do you want to cut taxes for small-business owners and middle class families?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. It would be nice if we could do it all, but we can't. We've got to make choices. That's what governing is about. And we know what's right. We know what we have to do to create jobs right now and create jobs in the future. We know that if we want businesses to start here and stay here and hire here, we've got to be able to outbuild and outeducate and outinnovate every country on Earth. We've got to give workers new skills for new jobs. We've got to give our young people a chance to earn a college education. And we've got to follow Erv's example. We've got to start manufactur-

ing and selling more goods around the world stamped with three proud words: Made in America. Made in North Carolina. Made in Raleigh.

We need to build an economy that lasts. And, Raleigh, that starts now.

Audience member. I love you, Barack!

The President. I love you back. That starts—[*applause*]*—*but if you love me, if you love me, you got to help me pass this bill. [*Applause*] If you love me, you got to help me pass this bill. It starts with your help. Democrats and Republicans have supported every kind of proposal that's in the "American Jobs Act" in the past. But we got to tell them, support it now. That's where you come in.

Already, you've got some Republicans in Washington who've said that some of this stuff may have to wait until the next election—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. —and said maybe we can just kick our problems down the road and stretch this thing out rather than work together right now. Some of them were even quoted as saying, even if they agreed with some of the things in this bill, that they don't want to pass it because it would give me a win.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Give me a win? Give me a break! [*Laughter*] That's exactly why folks are fed up with Washington. This isn't about me. This isn't about giving me a win. This isn't about giving Democrats or Republicans a win. It's not about positioning for the election. It's about giving the American people a win. That's what it's about. It's about giving small-business owners and entrepreneurs a win. It's about giving students a win. It's about giving working families a win. It's about giving all of us a win. I get fed up with that kind of game-playing. And we've been seeing it for too long—too long. We're in a national emergency. We've had—we've been grappling with a crisis for 3 years. And instead of getting folks to rise up above partisanship in a spirit that says we're all in this together, you got folks who are purposely dividing—purposely; thinking just in terms of how does this play out in terms of this election.

Now, that's not all Republicans. There are some Republicans who get it. I was in Ohio yesterday, and their Republican Governor, who—he doesn't agree with me on a lot of stuff, but he agreed that it's a good idea to cut taxes for the middle class. He said: "This is not a time for partisanship. This is a time to figure out a way in which we can get things moving in this country." He's absolutely right. A faction in Washington may be content to wait until the next election to do anything, but I've got news for them. The next election is 14 months away, and the American people don't have the luxury to wait that long. There are a whole bunch of students here who will graduate by then and will be looking for a job. They can't wait that long. There are a lot of folks living to paycheck to paycheck, day to day. They can't wait that long. They need action; they need action now. So, Raleigh, you need to put leaders—you need leaders who will put country before party and your jobs and your lives and your well-being and your futures above everything else.

So for those of you who did skip class today—[*applause*]*—*I've got a homework assignment for you. [*Laughter*] That's right. I am asking all of you, not just here at NC State, but—not just you who are in Raleigh, but anyone watching, anyone listening, anybody following online: I need you to lift your voice. Make it heard. You can call. You can e-mail. You can tweet. You can fax. You can Facebook. You can visit. You can write a letter. When was the last time you did that? [*Laughter*] Tell your Congressperson that the time for partisanship and politics is over. It's not—now is not the time for it. The time for gridlock and games is over. The time for action is now.

So I just want to say—I just want to make sure everybody understands their homework assignment. Tell them, tell them that if you want to create jobs, pass this bill. If you want construction workers back on the worksite, pass this bill. If you want teachers back in the classroom, pass this jobs bill. If you want tax cuts for middle class families and small-business owners, pass this jobs bill. If you want to help our veterans share in the opportunity that they have defended, pass this bill.

Now is the time to act. We are not people who just watch things happening. We make things happen. We're Americans. We are tougher than the hand that we've been dealt. We're bigger than the politics we've been putting up with. We're patriots and pioneers and innovators and entrepreneurs. Through individual effort, but also through a commitment to one another, we have built an economy that is the engine and the envy of the world. We're not going to stop now. The time for hand-wringing is over. The time for moping around—we've got to kick off our bedroom slippers and put on our marching shoes. We've got to get it to work.

There are people who—there may be people whose refrain is, no, we can't. But I believe, yes, we can. We are a people who write our own destiny. And we will write our destiny once more. So let's seize this moment. Let's get to work. Let's show the world once again why the United States of America is the greatest country on Earth.

Thank you, North Carolina. Thank you, Raleigh. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:51 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Ervin F. Portman, founder and president, WestStar Precision; and Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio.

Remarks at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Annual Awards Gala September 14, 2011

Hello, everybody. *Buenas noches*. Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody. Please, please, have a seat.

I want to thank Congressman Gonzalez, Senator Menendez for your outstanding leadership. I want to thank the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute for inviting us here this evening. It is wonderful to be back with all of you to help kick off Hispanic Heritage Month.

Now, before I begin, I want to acknowledge a few people who are with us here tonight. We are honored to be joined by Her Royal Highness Princess Cristina of Spain. We are honored to be joined by our first Latina Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor. I want to recognize House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, our great friend and champion, as well as congratulate Secretary Ken Salazar and Secretary Hilda Solis for their awards tonight and for their outstanding work.

I also want to give a special shout-out to my friend Rey Decerega, the program director here at CHCI. Not many people can give the President of the United States stitches in his lip and get away with it. *[Laughter]* Rey is in unique company. *[Laughter]* I sent him a photograph of the moment, as he was throwing his elbow at me, and said, he's the only person who ever did that and the Secret Service did

not arrest. *[Laughter]* And I hear he's pretty tough off the basketball court too.

Finally, I want to thank all the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus here tonight. And I also want to apologize for them because they spent last week listening to me talk. So you probably thought you could escape this by coming to this dinner.

But I'm here because we're at a critical time for our country. The fight we're having right now—the fight to put more Americans back to work, to make our country stronger in the long run, to prove that we can get something done here in Washington—this fight could not be more important for the people in this room, for the Latino community, and for millions of Americans who need help.

I don't have to tell you these are tough times. You know how hard this recession has hit families, especially Latino families. You know the sacrifices that folks are making every single day just to pay the mortgage or fill up the car or to keep the lights on, keep kids in school.

These are families in Los Angeles and San Antonio and Miami. But they're also families in Decatur and Des Moines. As I said when I spoke here last year, problems in the Latino community are problems for the entire Ameri-