

can't connect the two. And keeping our commitments to our veterans has been one of my top priorities as Commander in Chief, and that includes helping them make the transition back to civilian life.

That's why we're fully funding the post-9/11 GI bill, which is helping more than 500,000 veterans and their family members pursue a college education. That's why we supported extending the bill to include noncollege degrees and on-the-job and apprenticeship training. That's why I directed the Federal Government to be a model employer and hire more veterans, including more than 100,000 in the past year and a half alone.

So today we're taking it a step further.

First, we need to do more to make the transition from military to civilian life easier for our veterans. That's why I'm directing the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to design what we're calling a reverse boot camp. The problem is that right now, we spend months preparing our men and women for life in the military, but we spend much less time preparing them for life after they get out. So we'll devote more time on the back end to help our veterans learn about everything from benefits to how they can translate their military training into an industry-accepted credential. In addition, we'll make it easier for veterans to go to their local One-Stop Career Center and get help pursuing a career that fits them best.

These steps will help bridge part of the gap between veterans looking for work and companies looking to hire. But that's only part of the equation. The other half is about encouraging companies to do their part. That's why I'm proposing a new returning heroes tax credit for companies that hire unemployed veterans. And I'm proposing an increase in the existing tax credit for companies who hire unemployed

veterans with a disability, who still have so much to offer our country.

And finally, we're challenging the private sector to hire or train 100,000 unemployed post-9/11 veterans or their spouses by the end of 2013. This builds on commitments that many companies have already made as part of the Joining Forces campaign championed by my wife Michelle and Dr. Jill Biden. Siemens, for example, recently met their goal of hiring 300 veterans, so they're aiming to hire 150 more by December. Microsoft is helping more than 10,000 veterans get IT-certified over the next 2 years. And today groups from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to Accenture to Lockheed Martin have all agreed to do their part to help veterans get back in the workforce.

The bottom line is this: We still have a long way to go and a lot of work to do to give folks the economic security and opportunity they deserve. And that begins with connecting Americans looking for work, including our veterans, with employers looking to hire.

Over the last few years, another generation of young veterans has learned that the challenges don't end in Kandahar or Baghdad. They continue right here at home. Today we're saying to our veterans, you fought for us, and now we're fighting for you, for the jobs and opportunities that you need to keep your families strong and to keep America competitive in the 21st century. And at a time when there is so much work to be done in this country, we need everyone's help to do it.

So thank you, God bless you, God bless all our Services, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

## Statement on Congressional Passage of Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Legislation

August 5, 2011

I'm pleased that Congress has passed an agreement which will allow tens of thousands

of people to return to their jobs, rebuilding runways and working on construction projects

all over America, while removing the uncertainty hanging over the jobs of thousands of hard-working FAA employees. This impasse was an unnecessary strain on local economies

across the country at a time when we can't allow politics to get in the way of our economic recovery. So I'm glad that this stalemate has finally been resolved.

## The President's Weekly Address

*August 6, 2011*

This week, Congress reached an agreement that's going to allow us to make some progress in reducing our Nation's budget deficit. And through this compromise, both parties are going to have to work together on a larger plan to get our Nation's finances in order. That's important. We've got to make sure that Washington lives within its means, just like families do. In the long term, the health of our economy depends on it.

But in the short term, our urgent mission has to be getting this economy growing faster and creating more jobs. That's what's on people's minds; that's what matters to families in this country. And the fact is, this has been a tumultuous year for the economy. We've weathered the Arab Spring's effect on oil and gas prices, the Japanese earthquake and tsunami's effect on supply chains, the economic situation in Europe. And in Washington, there was a contentious debate over our Nation's budget that nearly dragged our country into financial crisis.

So our job right now has to be doing whatever we can to help folks find work, to help create the climate where a business can put up that job listing, where incomes are rising again for people. We've got to rebuild this economy and the sense of security that middle class families have felt slipping away for years. And while deficit reduction has to be part of our economic strategy, it's not the only thing we have to do.

We need Democrats and Republicans to work together to help grow this economy. We've got to put politics aside to get some things done. That's what the American people expect of us. And there are a number of steps that Congress can take right away when they return in September.

We need to extend tax cuts for working and middle class families so you have more money in your paychecks next year. That would help millions of people to make ends meet. And that extra money for expenses means businesses will have more customers and will be in a better position to hire.

Yesterday I proposed a new tax credit for companies that hire veterans who are looking for work after serving their country. We've got a lot of honorable and skilled people returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and companies that could benefit from their abilities. Let's put them together.

We need to make sure that millions of workers who are still pounding the pavement looking for jobs are not denied unemployment benefits to carry them through hard times.

We've got to cut redtape that stops too many inventors and entrepreneurs from quickly turning new ideas into thriving businesses, which holds back our whole economy.

It's time Congress finally passed a set of trade deals that would help displaced workers looking for new jobs and that would allow our businesses to sell more products in countries in Asia and South America, products stamped with three words: Made in America.

And we ought to give more opportunities to all those construction workers who lost their jobs when the housing boom went bust. We could put them to work right now, by giving loans to companies that want to repair our roads and bridges and airports, helping to rebuild America.

Those are a few commonsense steps that would help the economy. And these are ideas that have been supported by both Democrats and Republicans in the past. So I'm going to keep calling on both parties in Congress to put aside their differences and send these bills to