

Administration of Barack Obama, 2012

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Urbandale, Iowa
September 1, 2012

The President. Hello, Iowa! Oh, it is good to be back in Iowa!

Audience member. We love you, Mr. President!

The President. I love you back. That's why I'm back. Oh, this is a great crowd.

It's good to see my outstanding friends: Tom Harkin in the house; Leonard Boswell; Tom Miller. And can everybody please give Lucas a big round of applause, not just for the introduction, but for his service to our country?

And it is great to see all of you. We've got a spectacular day. College football is in the air. We will try to get you home in time to see the Hawkeyes and the Cyclones. I know we've got kickoff later. *[Laughter]* And although you guys got to see The Nationals and Chris Cornell perform before I got here, I just want you to know that I could not appreciate them performing—I could not appreciate more them performing for us. So please give them a big round of applause as well.

Now, Iowa, this is our first stop on the road to our convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. But there was a reason for me to begin the journey right here in Iowa, where it first began more than 4 years ago. Because it was you, Iowa, who kept us going when the pundits were writing us off. It was in your living rooms and backyards and VFW halls and diners where our movement for change began. And it will be you, Iowa, who choose the path we take from here.

Now, last week, the other party gave you their pitch at the convention down in Florida.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote.

Now, it was something to behold. Despite all the challenges that we face in this new century, what they offered over those 3 days was more often than not an agenda that was better suited for the last century. It was a rerun. We'd seen it before. You might as well have watched it on a black-and-white TV. *[Laughter]*

If you didn't DVR it, let me recap it for you. *[Laughter]* Everything is bad, it's Obama's fault—*[laughter]*—and Governor Romney is the only one who knows the secret to creating jobs and growing the economy. That was the pitch. There was a lot of talk about hard truths and bold choices, but nobody ever actually bothered to tell you what they were. *[Laughter]*

And when Governor Romney had his chance to let you in on his secret, he did not offer a single new idea, just retreads of the same old policies that have been sticking it to the middle class for years. They talked a lot about me. They talked a lot about him. But they didn't say much about you. And they spent even less time talking about what they planned to do, not just because they know you won't like it, but because you've lived through it and you can't afford to repeat it.

See, it turns out that we don't think making the middle class pay for another budget-busting \$250,000 tax cut for folks making \$3 million a year or more will magically translate into

jobs and prosperity for everybody else. We don't think families will be better off if we undo financial reforms that are there to prevent another financial crisis or rules that are there to protect our air and our water, protections to make sure your health care is there for you when you get sick. We really don't think the best way to strengthen Medicare is to give seniors a voucher that lives them—leaves them to pay any additional costs out of their own pockets.

Iowa, they have tried to sell us these tired, trickle-down, you're-on-your-own policies before. They did not work. They've never worked. They won't create jobs. They won't cut our deficit. They will not strengthen our middle class. They are not a plan to move our country forward.

We believe in something better. We believe in an America that says our economic strength has never come from the top down. It comes from the bottom up. It comes from the middle out. It comes from students and workers and small-business owners and a growing, thriving middle class. That's what we believe.

We believe in an America that doesn't let how much money you've got determine whether or not you can afford good health care or get a higher education. We believe in an America that leads not just by the force of our military, but also with the strength of our ideals and the power of our example. We believe in an America where no matter who you are, no matter what you look like, no matter where you come from, no matter who you love, you can pursue your own happiness and you can make it if you try.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. That's what the last 4 years have been about, Iowa. And that's what this campaign is about. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

Now, this Thursday night, I will offer you what I believe is a better path forward, a path that grows this economy, creates more good jobs, strengthens the middle class. And the good news is you get to choose which path we take. We can take their path, or we can take the path that I'm going to present.

We can choose whether we give massive new tax cuts to folks who've already made it or whether we keep the tax cuts for every American who's still trying to make it. I have cut taxes by a total of about \$3,600 for the typical family. And I'm now running to make sure that taxes aren't raised a dime on your family's first \$250,000 of income.

That's the path forward. But you're going to have to choose it. It will be up to you. You can choose whether we cede new jobs and new industries to countries like China and India or Germany or whether we fight for those jobs in States like Iowa.

My opponent's experience—he likes to talk about it—has been investing in companies that often were called "pioneers" in the business of outsourcing jobs. And when his advice was to "let Detroit go bankrupt," I said a million jobs were at stake, an iconic American industry is at stake; I'm going to bet on American workers and American manufacturing. And today, the American auto industry has come roaring back. That's the choice.

Unlike my opponent, I want to stop giving tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas. I want to start rewarding companies that create jobs right here in Urbandale and Des Moines, right here in Iowa, right here in the United States of America. That's what we're fighting for.

You can decide whether "borrow money from your parents" is an acceptable answer for a young person hoping to go to college or start a business.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Or you can say, let's make sure America once again leads the world in educating our kids and training our workers. Let's help more young people go to college ready to learn. Let's hire more great teachers, especially in math and science. Let's help more Americans go to community colleges to get the skills for the jobs they need right now. Governor Romney wants to end the college tax credit we created that's saving families up to \$10,000 over 4 years in tuition. I want to extend it. In America, higher education can't be a luxury. It is an economic necessity and something everybody should be able to afford. That's what we're fighting for.

Iowa, you can choose an energy plan written by and for the big oil companies, or you can choose an all-of-the above energy strategy for America. At a time when homegrown energy is creating new jobs right here in Iowa, when farmers are helping to create new biofuels, when once-shuttered factories are churning out new wind turbines, my opponent wants to end tax credits for wind energy producers. He said new sources of energy like these are "imaginary." His running mate calls them a "fad." Nearly 7,000 jobs in this State depend on the wind industry. These jobs aren't a fad, they are the future.

And I think it's time to stop giving \$4 billion in taxpayer subsidies each year to big oil companies that are making money every time you go to the pump. Let's give some of that money to homegrown energy sources like wind that have never been more promising. That's the choice in this election. That's what we're fighting for.

It's up to you whether we go back to a health care system that let insurance companies decide who to cover and when——

Audience members. No!

The President. ——or whether we keep moving forward with the new health care law that's already cutting costs and covering more people and saving lives. Now's not the time to refight the battles of the past 4 years. Now's the time to move forward.

This November, you get to decide the future of this war in Afghanistan. Governor Romney had nothing to say about Afghanistan last week, let alone offer a plan for the 33,000 troops who will have come home from the war by the end of this month. He said ending the war in Iraq was "tragic." I said we'd end that war, and we did. I said we'd take out bin Laden, and we did.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Today, all of our troops are out of Iraq. We are bringing them home from Afghanistan. And as long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will serve our veterans as well as they've served us—veterans like Lucas, who got his education thanks to the post-9/11 GI bill—because nobody who fights for this country should have to fight for a job or an education or a roof over their heads when they come home. That's what's at stake in this election.

On issue after issue, Iowa, Governor Romney and Congressman Ryan will take us backward. But the story of America is about moving forward. And soon you'll get a chance to choose a path that will actually lead to a better future. But over the next 2 months, the other side will spend more money than we have ever seen on ads that basically tell you the same thing they told you at the convention: The economy is not doing good, and it's Obama's fault.

[*Laughter*] They know their economic plan isn't popular. Go figure that raising taxes on middle class families to pay for new tax cuts for billionaires and millionaires doesn't go over that well.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. So that's not what they're going to talk about. They're counting on the fact that you get so discouraged by these negative ads that you decide your vote doesn't matter. You'll decide that you can't compete with \$10 million checks from wealthy donors.

I'm counting on something different. I'm counting on you. And I need your help. First and foremost, I need you to go to gottaregister.com to make sure that you are registered to vote. Now, this is "gotta register." It's—I'm sorry, any English teachers who are in the room, this is—[*laughter*—it's not "got to," it is "gotta," g-o-t-t-a-register.com. And once you're registered, then you got to go to gottavote.com—that's g-o-t-t-a-vote.com—to find out how to cast your ballot early. Because in Iowa, you don't have to wait until November 6 to vote. You can be among the very first to vote in this election, starting September 27.

That's gottaregister.com and gottavote.com, because we got a lot more work to do. We "gotta" lot more work to do. [*Laughter*]

We've got more good jobs to create. We've got more homegrown energy to generate. We've got more young people to send to college. We've got more good teachers to hire. And we've got more good schools to build. We've got more troops we've got to bring home. We've got more veterans we got to take care of. We've got more doors of opportunity to open to every single American who's willing to work hard and work through them. We've come too far to turn back now.

That's why I'm asking for a second term, Iowa. And if you're willing to stand with me and join with me and knock on some doors with me and make some phone calls with me, and if you're willing to vote for me in November, we will win Polk County again. We will win Iowa again. We will win this election. We will finish what we started. And we will remind the world just why it is that the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. at Living History Farms. In his remarks, he referred to Iowa National Guard veteran Lucas Beenken of Belmond, IA; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney and Vice Presidential nominee Paul D. Ryan.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign rallies : Urbandale, IA.

Locations: Urbandale, IA.

Names: Beenken, Lucas; Boswell, Leonard L.; Cornell, Chris; Harkin, Thomas R.; Miller, Thomas J.; Romney, W. Mitt; Ryan, Paul D.

Subjects: Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Colorado : President's visits; Education : Postsecondary education :: Affordability; Education : Teachers; Elections : 2012 Presidential and congressional elections; Elections : Voter participation; Iowa : Democratic Party events ; Iowa : Energy, alternative and renewable sources and technologies ; Iraq : U.S. and coalition forces, withdrawal; Taxation : Tax cuts, budgetary effects; Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist group; Veterans : Benefits.

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