

Administration of Barack Obama, 2012

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in North Las Vegas, Nevada

November 1, 2012

The President. Hello, Nevada! It is great to be back in Vegas! It's great to be here with your next Senator, Shelley Berkley, who's going to join my great friend, Majority Leader Harry Reid, in fighting for the people of Nevada.

Audience member. Where's Michelle?

The President. Michelle couldn't come, but she says hey. She loves you guys.

Audience member. We love her!

The President. Now, for the past few days, all of us have been focused on——

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

The President. Thank you. All right. Thank you so much.

Listen, for the past few days, all of us have been focused on one of the worst storms in our lifetime. We are awed by the destructive power of nature. We're mourning those who've been lost. And we're going to pledge to those whose lives have been turned upside down that we will not quit until we have given them all the help they need to recover.

This afternoon, as I was flying out to Vegas, we had conference calls with mayors all across New Jersey, had conference calls with mayors and local elected officials all across Connecticut. I spoke to the Governors of New Jersey, Connecticut, and New York, and they're struggling. And the cleanup, the aftermath of this storm is going to be hard, and it's going to take some time.

But the thing that I have repeated them—to them every time I talk to them is, America will not forget them. We are going to make sure they get everything they need. We're going to cut through the redtape and the bureaucracy. We've got military transport getting equipment in to get the power back on. We've got food and water and medical supplies that we're shipping in. And we're not going to stop, because what we understand is, is that this could happen to any of us.

And that's why, even in the midst of tragedy, the situation on the East Coast has also inspired, because it reminds us that when disaster strikes we see America at its best. All the petty differences that consume us in normal times somehow melt away. There are no Democrats or Republicans during a storm, just fellow Americans: leaders of different parties working to fix what's broken; neighbors helping neighbors cope with tragedy; communities rallying to rebuild; a spirit that says in the end, we're all in this together, that we rise or fall as one Nation.

That's what we have seen on display over these last few days. That is the spirit that we need going forward. That spirit has guided this country along its improbable journey for more than two centuries. It's carried us through the trials and tribulations of the last 4 years.

In 2008, we were in the middle of two wars and the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Today, our businesses have created over 5 million new jobs. The American auto industry is back on top. American manufacturing is growing faster than any time in the last 15

years. We're less dependent on foreign oil than any time in the last 20 years. Home values are on the rise. Thanks to the service and sacrifice of our brave men and women in uniform, the war in Iraq is over. The war in Afghanistan is coming to an end. Al Qaida has been decimated. Usama bin Laden is dead.

Audience member. Thanks to you!

The President. So we've made real progress these past 4 years. But, Nevada, we know our work's not yet done. We know our work is not yet done in making sure that New Jersey and New York and Connecticut and West Virginia, that they all recover from the hardships they've experienced.

Our work is not done as long as there's a single American who wants a job and can't yet find one. As long as there are families who are working harder and harder, but falling further behind, our work is not yet done. As long as there is a child languishing in poverty, barred from opportunity, anywhere in this country, anywhere in Nevada, our work is not yet done.

Our fight goes on, because we know this Nation can't succeed without a growing, thriving middle class and strong, sturdy ladders into the middle class. Our fight goes on because America has always been at its best when everybody gets a fair shot and everybody is doing their fair share and everybody is playing by the same rules. That's what we believe. That's why you elected me in 2008, and that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

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

The President. We knew from the beginning that our work would take more than one year or even one term. Because, let's face it, the middle class was getting hammered long before the financial crisis hit, because the economy has changed. Technology made us more productive, but it also made a lot of good jobs obsolete. Global trade brought us cheaper products, but it also allowed companies to move and hire people in low-wage countries.

American workers saw their paychecks squeezed, even as corporate profits were rising and CEO salaries exploded. The guaranteed security of pensions and health care started slowly to disappear.

And these fundamental changes in the economy—the rise of technology and global competition—these changes are real. We can't wish away these challenges. But here's what I know, Nevada. We can meet these challenges. This is America. We've got the world's best workers and the world's best entrepreneurs. We've got the world's best scientists and the world's best researchers. We've got the best colleges and the best universities. And we've got the most innovative spirit. We've got everything we need to thrive in this new 21st-century economy. And there's not a country on Earth that would not gladly trade places with the United States.

But we've got a choice to make if we're going to realize that promise, if we're going to make sure that that success is there for the next generation.

In 5 days, we will choose our next President. And, Nevada, it's more than just a choice between two candidates. It's more than just a choice between two parties. You're going to be making a choice between two fundamentally different visions of America.

On the one hand, we've got folks who are arguing to return to the top-down policies that crashed our economy.

Audience members. No!

The President. What we're talking about is a future that's built on a strong and growing middle class.

Nevada, we know the choice that needs to be made, and we're here today because we believe that if this country invests in the skills and ideas of its people, then good jobs and businesses will follow.

We believe that America's free market has been the engine of America's progress, driven by risk takers and innovators and dreamers. Folks in Nevada know about dreaming. But we also understand that in this country, people succeed when they've got a shot at a good education, when they have a chance to learn new skills, and by the way, businesses benefit because they're hiring those workers, and some of those workers end up starting businesses of their own.

We believe that when we support research into medical breakthroughs, research into new technology, entire new industries will start here and stay here and hire here.

We don't believe government should poke its nose in everything we do, but we do believe this country is stronger when there are rules to protect our kids from toxic dumping and mercury pollution, when there are rules to protect consumers from unscrupulous credit card companies and mortgage lenders. We believe we grow faster when our Tax Code rewards hard work and companies that create jobs here in America. And we believe that quality health care for everybody and a dignified retirement for everybody aren't just achievable goals, they are a measure of our values as a nation. That's what we believe.

For 8 years, we had a President who shared these beliefs. His name was Bill Clinton. And when he was elected, he asked the wealthiest Americans to pay a little more so we could reduce the deficit and still make investments in things like education and training and science and research. And here's an interesting thing: Plenty of folks who were running for Congress at the time said it would hurt the economy, that raising taxes on the wealthy would kill jobs. And if that argument sounds familiar, one of those candidates who was running back then happens to be the guy who is running for President right now.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote. Vote.

Turns out their math was just as bad back then as it is today—[laughter]—because by the end of Bill Clinton's second term, America had created 23 million new jobs. Incomes were up. Poverty was down. Our deficit became the biggest surplus in history.

So, Nevada, we know our ideas work. We also know the ideas that don't work. Because in the 8 years after Bill Clinton left office, his policies were reversed. The wealthiest Americans got tax cuts they didn't need and we couldn't afford. Companies enjoyed tax breaks for shipping jobs overseas. Insurance companies and oil companies and Wall Street were given free license to do whatever they pleased. Folks at the top got to play by a different set of rules than the rest of us. And the result of this top-down economics was falling incomes, record deficits, the slowest job growth in half a century, and an economic crisis that we're still cleaning up after.

So in the closing weeks of this campaign, Governor Romney has been using all his talents as a salesman to dress up the very same policies that failed our country so badly, the very same

policies we've been cleaning up after over these 4 years, and with a straight face, he's offering them up as change. [Laughter] He's saying he's the candidate of change.

Now, let me tell you, Nevada, we know what change looks like. And what the Governor is offering sure ain't change. Giving more power back to the biggest banks isn't change. Leaving millions without health insurance isn't change. Another \$5 trillion tax cut that favors the wealthy isn't change. Refusing to answer questions about the details of your policies isn't change.

Audience members. No!

The President. Turning Medicare into a voucher, that is change, but we don't want that change.

Audience members. No!

The President. Ruling out compromise by pledging to rubberstamp the Tea Party's agenda as President, that's definitely not change.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. In fact, that's exactly the attitude in Washington that needs to go.

So after 4 years as President, you know me by now. You may not agree with every decision I've made, you may be frustrated at the pace of change, but you know what I believe. You know where I stand. You know I'm willing to make tough decisions, even when they're not politically convenient. And you know that I will fight for you and your families every single day as hard as I know how.

So my opponent can talk about change, but I know what real change looks like, because I've fought for it. I've got the scars to proof it. You have too. And after all that we've been through together, Nevada, we sure as heck can't give up now.

Audience members. No!

The President. Change is a country where Americans of every age have the skills and education that good jobs require. And government can't do this alone: Parents have to parent; teachers have to teach. But don't tell me that hiring more teachers won't help this economy grow or help young people compete. We know that it will.

Don't tell me that students who can't afford college should just borrow money from their parents. That wasn't an option for me. I'll bet it wasn't an option for a whole lot of you. We shouldn't be ending college tax credits just to pay for a millionaire's tax cut, we should be making college more affordable for everybody who's willing to work for it.

We should recruit 100,000 math and science teachers so that high-tech, high-wage jobs aren't created in China, they're created right here in Nevada. We should work with our community colleges to train another 2 million Americans with the skills that businesses are looking for right now. That's my plan for the future. That's what change is. That's the America we're fighting for in this election.

Change comes when we live up to our legacy of innovation, when we make America home to the next generation of outstanding manufacturing, scientific discovery, technological

breakthroughs. I am proud that I bet on American workers and American ingenuity and the American auto industry. Today, we're not just building cars again, we're building better cars, cars that by the middle of the next decade will go twice as far on a gallon of gas.

Today, there are thousands of workers building long-lasting batteries and wind turbines, installing solar panels all across the country. And those jobs, they weren't there 4 years ago.

And sure, not all technologies we bet on will pan out. Some of the businesses we encourage will fail. But I promise you this: There is a future for manufacturing in America. There's a future for clean energy in America.

I refuse to cede that future to other countries. I don't want a Tax Code that rewards companies for creating jobs overseas, I want to reward companies that create jobs right here in the United States of America. I don't want a Tax Code that subsidizes oil company profits when they're already making money hand over fist, I want to support the energy jobs of tomorrow, the new technologies that will cut our oil imports in half. That's my plan for jobs and growth. That's the future that I see for America.

Change is finally turning the page on a decade of war to do some nation-building right here at home. So long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will pursue our enemies with the strongest military the world has ever known. We will not let up. But it's time to use the savings from ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to start paying down our debt and rebuild America.

Right now—we could be putting more folks back to work right now, fixing roads and bridges, expanding broadband to rural neighborhoods, making sure our schools are state of the art. Let's put Americans back to work doing the work that needs to be done, especially our veterans, because no one who fights for this country should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they come home.

That's my commitment to you. That's what's at stake in this election. Change is a future where, yes, we reduce our deficit, but we do it in a balanced, responsible way. I've already signed a trillion dollars' worth of spending cuts. I'll work with both parties to streamline agencies and get rid of programs that don't work. But if we're really serious about the deficit, then we've also got to ask the wealthiest Americans to go back to the tax rates they played—they paid when Bill Clinton was President.

Because as long as I'm President, I am not going to turn Medicare into a voucher just to pay for another millionaire's tax cut. I won't allow this Nation to be plunged into another battle over health care reform just so insurance companies can jump back in the driver's seat. And I will never allow politicians in Washington to control the health care choices that women should make for themselves.

So, Nevada, we know what change is. We know what the future requires. We don't need a big government agenda, or a small government agenda, we need a middle class agenda that rewards the values of hard work and responsibility. We don't need a partisan agenda, we need a common-sense agenda that says when we educate a poor child, we'll all be better off; that says when we fund the research of a young scientist, her new discovery will benefit every American.

We need a vision that says we don't just look out for ourselves, we look out for one another. We look out for future generations. We meet those obligations working together. That's the change we believe in. And that's what this election is all about. That's what this election is all about.

Now, Nevada, let's be clear: Achieving this agenda won't be easy. It's never been easy. We always knew it would be hard. Back in 2008, when we talked about change, I told you I wasn't just talking about changing Presidents. I wasn't just talking about changing political parties. I was talking about changing our politics. I ran because the voices of the American people—your voices—had been shut out of our democracy for way too long: by lobbyists and special interests; by politicians who believed that compromise is a dirty word; by folks who would say anything to stay in office or win office or do anything to make sure that the special interests who support them get what they want.

The protectors of the status quo are a powerful force in Washington. And over the last 4 years, every time we've pushed to make change, they fought back with everything they've got. They spent millions to stop us from reforming health care, spent millions to fight us when we tried to reform Wall Street. Their strategy from the start was to engineer pure gridlock, refusing to compromise on ideas that both Democrats and Republicans had supported in the past.

And what they're counting on now is that the American people will be so worn down by all the squabbling in Washington, so tired of all the dysfunction, that you'll actually reward their obstruction and put people back in charge who advocate the very same policies that got us into this mess.

Audience members. No!

The President. In other words, their bet is on cynicism. But, Nevada, my bet's on you. [Applause] My bet's on you. My bet is on the decency and good sense of the American people. Because despite all the resistance, despite all the setbacks, we have never lost sight of the vision that we shared, that you'd have a voice; that there would be somebody at the table fighting every single day for middle class Americans, for folks who are striving to get into the middle class.

Sometimes Republicans in Congress have worked with me to meet our goals, and nobody could be happier. We cut taxes for small businesses and families like yours, and they helped. We opened new markets for American goods. We finally repealed "don't ask, don't tell," and we had some courageous Republican Senators supporting us.

But yes, we've also had some big fights: like when we forced the banks to stop overcharging for student loans and made college affordable for millions of students; like when we forced Wall Street to abide by the toughest rules since the 1930s; like when we stopped insurance companies from discriminating against Americans with preexisting conditions like cancer or diabetes so that no one in America goes bankrupt just because they get sick.

Audience member. Thank you!

The President. I didn't fight those fights for any partisan advantage. I've shown my willingness to work with anybody of any party to move this country forward. And if you want to break the gridlock in Congress, you'll vote for leaders—whether they're Democrats, Republicans, Independents—who feel the same way. You'll vote for candidates like Shelley Berkley and Dina Titus and John Ocegüera and Steve Horsford, people who just want to fix problems and help America and work on behalf of hard-working families like yours.

But if the price of peace in Washington is cutting deals that will kick students off of financial aid or get rid of funding for Planned Parenthood or eliminate health care for millions on Medicaid who are poor or elderly or disabled just to give a millionaire a tax cut, I'm not

having it. That's not a deal worth having. That's not bipartisanship. That's not real change. That's surrender to the same status quo that's hurt middle class families for way too long. And I'm not ready to give up on the fight just yet.

I'm not giving up on the fight, and I hope you aren't either, Nevada. I hope you aren't either. I need you still fired up.

The folks at the very top in this country, they don't need a champion in Washington. They'll always have a seat at the table. They'll always have access and influence. That's okay. We understand that. But the people who need a champion are the Americans whose letters I read late at night, the men and women I meet on the campaign trail every single day.

The laid-off furniture worker who is retraining at the age of 55 after they got laid off, she needs a champion. The small restaurant owner who needs a loan to expand after the bank turned him down, he needs a champion. The cooks and waiters and cleaning staff working overtime at a Vegas hotel, trying to save enough to buy a first home or send their kid to college, they need a champion.

The autoworker who's back on the job after thinking he might never go back, filled with the pride and dignity of building a great American car, he needs a champion. The young teacher doing her best in an overcrowded classroom with outdated textbooks, digging into her own pocket to buy school supplies, never giving up on those kids, understanding that they can learn, she needs a champion.

And all those young people in inner cities and small farm towns, in the valleys of Ohio or rolling Virginia hills or right here in Vegas or way up in Elko—kids dreaming of becoming scientists or doctors, engineers or entrepreneurs, diplomats, maybe even a President—they need a champion in Washington.

The future will never have as many lobbyists as the past, but it's the dreams of those children that will be our saving grace. And that's why I need you, Nevada: to make sure their voices are heard, to make sure your voices are heard.

We've come too far to turn back now. We've come too far to let our hearts grow faint, to go weary. Now is the time to keep pushing forward: to educate all our kids and train all our workers, to create new jobs and rebuild our infrastructure, to discover new sources of energy, to broaden opportunity, to grow our middle class, to restore our democracy, to make sure that no matter who you are or where you come from or how you started out, you can make it here in America. That's why we are moving forward.

In the midst of the Great Depression, FDR reminded the country that "failure is not an American habit; and in the strength of great hope we must all shoulder our common load." That's the strength we need today.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. That's the hope I'm asking you to share. That's the future in our sight. That's why I'm asking you for your vote. [*Applause*] That's why I'm asking you, Nevada, for your vote.

And if you're willing to work with me and knock on some doors with me and make some phone calls for me, if you're willing to turn out for me and grab some friends and neighbors for me, we'll win Clark County again. We'll win Nevada again. We'll win this election. And

together, we'll renew the bonds and reaffirm the spirit that make the United States of America the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Let's go vote! Let's get this done!

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:05 p.m. at the Cheyenne Sports Complex. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Christopher J. Christie of New Jersey; Gov. Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut; Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York; Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; former Rep. A. Constandina Titus; and former State Rep. John Ocegüera and former State Sen. Steven A. Horsford of Nevada.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign rallies :: North Las Vegas, NV.

Locations: North Las Vegas, NV.

Names: Berkley, Rochelle L. "Shelley"; Christie, Christopher J.; Clinton, William J.; Cuomo, Andrew M.; Horsford, Steven A.; Malloy, Dannel P.; Obama, Michelle; Ocegüera, John; Reid, Harry M.; Romney, W. Mitt; Titus, A. Constandina.

Subjects: Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Armed Forces, U.S. : "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, repeal; Budget, Federal : Government programs, spending reductions; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; Business and industry : Small businesses :: Promotion efforts; Commerce, international : U.S. exports :: Expansion; Congress : Senate :: Majority leader; Connecticut : Governor; Connecticut : Hurricane Sandy, damage and recovery efforts; Economy, national : Economic concerns; Economy, national : Financial regulations, strengthening efforts; Economy, national : Improvement; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education : Global competitiveness; Education : Postsecondary education :: Affordability; Education : Postsecondary education :: Community colleges; Education : Science and math programs; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Energy : Alternative and renewable sources and technologies :: U.S. production; Energy : Alternative and renewable sources and technologies :: Promotion efforts; Energy : Oil and gas industry :: Subsidies, elimination; Environment : Quality and improvement efforts; Health and medical care : Health insurance reforms; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Health and medical care : Women's health issues; Iraq : U.S. and coalition forces, withdrawal; Natural disasters : Hurricane Sandy; Nevada : Democratic Party events; Nevada : President's visits; New Jersey : Governor; New Jersey : Hurricane Sandy, damage and recovery efforts; New York : Governor; New York : Hurricane Sandy, damage and recovery efforts; Science and technology : Research and development; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Taxation : Tax cuts, budgetary effects; Taxation : Tax relief; Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist group; West Virginia : Hurricane Sandy, damage and recovery efforts.

DCPD Number: DCPD201200843.