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Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Senatorial Candidate Gary C. Peters and Gubernatorial Candidate Mark H. Schauer in Detroit, Michigan

November 1, 2014

The President. Hello, Detroit! Oh, it's good to be back in Michigan! It's good to be back at Wayne State! Go, Warriors!

Give it up for a Wayne State alum, your next Senator, Gary Peters! Give it up for your next Governor, Mark Schauer! We've got some outstanding lawmakers who are here today: my friend Carl Levin, Debbie Stabenow, John Conyers, Sandy Levin. We've got the dean of the House, John Dingell; the next Representative from Michigan's 12th, Debbie Dingell. We've got a full house. We've got folks fired up. We've got folks ready to go.

Three days. Three days, Michigan. Three days. Three days until you get to choose a new Governor and a new Senator. And here's what you've got to do until then. If you came to this rally, I know you also are going to go vote or are—I don't worry about you. I need you to grab a friend. I need you to get some classmates. I need you to get some coworkers. I need you to knock on some doors and make some phone calls. I need you to visit iwillvote.com, find your polling place. Take everybody you know to cast their ballots for Gary Peters and Mark Schauer. And then tell them to vote for Lisa Brown and Mark Totten and Godfrey Dillard and Warren Evans and Brenda Lawrence. Tell them to vote. [*Applause*] Tell them to vote.

Let me tell you why.

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you too. But I want to tell you why you need to vote. This country has made real progress since the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. Over the past 4½ years, we have seen American businesses create more than 10 million new jobs. Over the past 6 months, our economy has grown at the fastest pace in more than 10 years.

Audience member. Thank you!

The President. I don't have to tell you the auto industry that was on the brink of collapse is back on its feet, making better cars than ever, right here in Michigan. It's a testament to the grit and the resilience of American workers. We've got some leaders here who stick up for working folks every single day. We got Mary Kay Henry from SEIU. We've got Lily Eskelsen Garcia from the NEA. We've got Dennis Williams from the UAW. We've got some labor leaders here who know what it means to fight for working families.

And because of the strength and resilience of the American worker, the auto industry has come back. Housing is beginning to recover. We've seen progress on almost every economic measure. But we are here tonight because we know we've got more work to do. As fast as we've been moving, we know we'd be moving faster if a lot more of our politicians lived by the same values of hard work and responsibility that the ordinary people they represent take with them every single day when they go to the job. And over the next week, you've got a chance to make that happen. You have the chance to choose leaders that don't put political ideology first, that don't put just winning an election first, they put you first.

And you couldn't have a better example than Mark and Gary. You couldn't have a better example of the kind of leaders you want. I mean, look at these two guys. They've spent their

entire lives in Michigan. Mark ran a nonprofit that helped unemployed workers get back on their feet. Gary helped folks save for college and retirement as a financial planner. Then he served in the Navy Reserve. They ran for office for the same reason: to fight for hard-working families like yours, because your story is their story.

They weren't born with a silver spoon in their mouths. They know what it's like to struggle. They know what it's like to have to work hard and piece together a budget and save. And they know what it's like when their parents or grandparents make sacrifices for them. And since they've taken office, they've led. They led to clean up the Great Lakes. They helped to cut taxes for Michigan's small businesses and invest in new, high-tech manufacturing. They fought to give Michigan's minimum wage workers the raise they deserve.

When the chips were down and our most iconic industry was on the line, they said, we shouldn't walk away. If the auto industry went down, communities across this State and Midwest would have gone down too. So Mark and Gary placed their bet on Michigan. They placed their bet on American workers, making American products. And thanks to the grit and ingenuity and pride of American workers, that bet that they made paid off in a big way.

Now, some of the folks who figured we should have thrown in the towel 6 years ago are the same folks who are asking you for your vote next week. They've got a lot of nerve. [*Applause*] They've got a lot of nerve. If they're not there for you when you need them—[*laughter*]—I think you should vote for Mark and Gary instead. That's what I think. Because you know they had your backs, and now we've got to get theirs.

And that's what this election is all about, Michigan. When you step into that voting booth, you are making a choice not just about candidates or parties. You're making a choice about two different visions of what America is about. And it boils down to a simple question: Who is on your side? Who's going to fight for you? Who's going to fight for your future?

Now, I want to be clear. Republicans are good people, they're patriots. They love their country. They love their family.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote. No, but I mean what I say here. Listen, I mean what I say. We're all Americans. We're all Americans. We're Americans first. So they're patriots. They love this country. But they've got bad ideas.

Audience members. That's right!

The President. And I always try to explain, look, I've got members of my family who I love and have bad ideas. [*Laughter*] I still love them, I just wouldn't put them in charge. [*Laughter*] Right? You all have got somebody in your family like that. You're going to have them over for Thanksgiving, but you don't want to put them in charge. [*Laughter*] Am I right?

And the worst idea they've got is this same economic theory that they just keep on putting out that we know undermines the middle class: More tax breaks for folks at the top, less investment in education, looser rules on big banks and credit card companies and polluters, a thinner safety net for folks when they fall on hard times. You know what, we've tried those things.

Audience member. They don't work!

The President. They don't work. Don't work. I mean, it would be one thing if we hadn't tried them. We might say, okay, well, maybe that works. [*Laughter*] But when you've done it

again and again, and each time the middle class has a tougher time, and the folks at the top are doing better and better, I don't know why we would think it would work differently this time.

They're not changing their tune either. Every time the Republican Party leaders in Washington had to take a stand this year on policies that would help the middle class, their answer was no. They said no to raising the minimum wage. They said no to fair pay legislation to make sure women get paid the same as men for doing the same job. They said no to helping young people refinance their student loans. They actually voted for rules that would make it more expensive for students when they take out student loans.

The only thing they voted yes on was another massive tax cut for millionaires. I know that's shocking, but it's true. And it's the clearest display of whose side they're on. The same Washington Republicans who blocked a $2.85-an-hour raise for some of the hardest working people in America—the folks who clean up your bedpans, the folks that make up and take care of seniors—they made clear that they're not going to do that. One of the first things they do is change the rules to jam tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans through. They're not going to raise the minimum wage.

Their leadership said tax cuts for those at the top are "even more pressing now" than they were 30 years ago. That's what they said. When one of George W. Bush's economic advisers took a look at how many jobs their agenda would create, he said, "not many." That's George W. Bush's adviser admitting. They don't have an agenda for the middle class. They don't have an agenda for Detroit. They don't have an agenda for Michigan. At a time when nearly all the gains of this recovery are flowing to the top 1 percent, cutting taxes for those same folks doesn't make any sense. It's the wrong vision for the future.

But the good news is Mark and Gary have a different vision, a vision rooted in the conviction that in America, prosperity does not trickle down from the top, it comes up from folks who are working every single day, middle class folks, folks trying to work hard to get into the middle class. That's what we believe as Democrats. That's what we believe here in Michigan. We believe in an economy that grows for the many, not the few.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. Mark and Gary are not running to give tax breaks to folks who don't need them. He's running to build economies—Michigan's economy from the middle class out. They know that the ideas to create jobs, they're not Democrat or Republican, but they've got to work. They've got to work. And they know that education, for example, isn't just the key to economic growth, it's the surest path into the middle class. They're not going to slash investments in schools or make it harder for students to go to college. They're going to make it easier for students to go to college and make sure teachers are respected and make sure we got early childhood education for our kids. That's what they're going to run on.

We believe that in America, public servants should work for the people they represent. Instead of wasting taxpayer dollars on frivolous lawsuits or ideological crusades, Mark and Gary will spend their time protecting ordinary citizens, making your lives better. And by the way, as your next Attorney General, that's what former prosecutor Mark Totten will focus on too: looking out for you.

Let me tell you something else that Mark and Gary believe in. They don't think, if you're working full time in this country you should be raising your family in poverty. They're not backed by special interests who think that the minimum wage is something we should get rid of, they're running because they think we should champion the efforts of folks who work hard,

but still have trouble paying the bills at the end of the month. That's what they believe. That's what they're going to fight for. And if you believe that too, you've got to vote.

Mark and Gary believe that the economy is stronger when women are full participants in our economy. I already told you Republicans said no to a national fair pay law. One of the Republicans running for national office, he said—I'm quoting here—he said, "You could argue that money is more important for men."

Audience members. No!

The President. That's a quote. Now, I don't know what woman he talked to. [*Laughter*] He didn't talk to you. Did he talk to you? No.

Audience members. No!

The President. I know he didn't talk to Michelle. [*Laughter*] No. See, if you're going to strengthen the 21st-century economy, you've got to be in the 21st century. You've got to understand that women now make up an increasing part of the workforce. They're bringing home more of the bacon. They need to be paid fairly and treated fairly.

And just like Gary talked about, we've got to make sure that women control their own health care choices. Not their boss or their insurer, and certainly not any politician. You know, it's funny, if you ask a Republican in Congress if they believe in climate change, they say, "Well, uh, I'm not a scientist." "I'm not a scientist"—that's what they say. But when it comes to a woman's right to choose, suddenly, they're a doctor. [*Laughter*] It's like, come on, now. They've got to update their attitudes.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. "Mad Men" is a good show. I like that show. But it's set in the sixties. We're now in the 21st century. And we've got to understand that in America, when women succeed, America succeeds.

So look, here's the bottom line. I know that, as I said, if you're here, you're going to vote. I get that. But I want you to feel a sense of urgency these last 3 days. The biggest corporations don't need another champion. The wealthiest Americans don't need another champion. You do. Opportunity for a few is not what Michigan is about. Opportunity for all is what built the middle class in this country.

And that's why you've got to vote. If you want something better, you've got to vote for it. You've got to work for it. If you believe working families need a tax break, not millionaires, you've got to vote for it. If you think we should invest in our children's schools and give teachers more support and get early childhood education in place so young people get a good start in life, and young people going to college aren't burdened with tens of thousands of dollars' worth of debt, you've got to vote for it. You've got to fight for it. If you think that folks who work hard should get an honest day's pay for an honest day's work, you've got to vote for it.

You know, I tell you, we give away our power all the time. Some of you know I started as a community organizer. And when I talked to folks in the community, the first thing I'd say is, why do you give away your power? And they'd say, what do you mean? And I'd say, well, you don't bother voting. You sit at home and complain. But complaining and not voting, that means you're just giving away your power. That means you are—you're giving away your precious right to help determine the course of your Nation.

So look, Michigan, you've had my back twice. [*Applause*] You've had my back twice. I love this State. But here's the problem. In recent years, Michigan has led the Nation in the number of voters who vote for President, but then stay home during the midterms. According to one estimate, you've got 900,000 folks in Michigan who voted in 2008 and then didn't vote in 2010—900,000. I don't know what's going on with those folks. But we've got to let them know their vote matters.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Their vote could decide whether 28 million American workers get the raise they deserve, whether American families continue to benefit from new health care coverage. Because, I don't know if you've noticed, but Obamacare works. Pretty soon, they're not going to call it Obamacare anymore. [*Laughter*] You know that's right. [*Laughter*]

Your vote will decide the course that Michigan takes from here. So Gary needs your vote, Mark needs your vote, I need your vote. But I also need you to go out there and get involved in these closing days. Talk to one of the organizers who are in the room. Or go to markschauer.com. Or go to petersformichigan.com. Volunteer for these last 3 days. Make some phone calls these last 3 days. Knock on some doors these last 3 days. Grab somebody you know, get them to vote for Mark. Get them to vote for Gary.

This election is too important to stay home. Don't let somebody else choose your future for you. When we vote, we win. [*Applause*] When we vote, we win. When we vote——

Audience members. We win!

The President.——we win.

The hardest thing in politics is changing the status quo. When you got a lot of people in power, they care about just keeping power, they don't care about helping you. And they count on you getting cynical. They count on you thinking you can't make a difference. They hope you don't get involved. They hope you don't organize. They hope you don't vote. And every day, they're sending you a message that you don't count.

Don't buy it. Despite all the cynicism, America is making progress. Despite the unyielding opposition of folks on the other side, there are workers who have jobs today who didn't have them before. There are auto plants who've got shifts that weren't there before. There are families who have health insurance who didn't have it before. There are students who are going to college who couldn't afford it before. There are troops who've been coming home from Afghanistan who weren't home before. There are the best cars in America and in the world rolling off assembly lines right here in Michigan, right here in the United States, that weren't coming off those assembly lines before.

Don't let them tell you that your vote doesn't matter. Don't get cynical. Cynicism didn't put a man on the Moon.

Audience members. No!

The President. Cynicism never cured a disease or started a business or built a V–8 engine or taught a young mind. Cynicism is a choice. And hope is a better choice.

Hope is what defeated fascism. Hope is what gave young people the strength to march for civil rights and voting rights and gay rights and immigrants' rights and women's rights. Hope that there are better days ahead. Hope that we can rebuild our middle class and pass on to our

kids something better. That's what built America. That's what Motor City is all about. That's what built Michigan!

Our best days are still ahead. Believe it. And vote for Mark, and vote for Gary. And let's get out there and win this thing.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:09 p.m. in the Matthaei Building at Wayne State University. In his remarks, he referred to Deborah A. Dingell, chair of the board of governors, Wayne State University, in her capacity as the Democratic congressional candidate for Michigan's 12th District; Lisa Brown, county clerk/register of deeds, Oakland County, MI, in her capacity as the Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor; Godfrey Dillard, Democratic candidate for secretary of state of Michigan; Warren C. Evans, Democratic candidate for county executive of Wayne County, MI; Mayor Brenda Lawrence of Southfield, MI, in her capacity as the Democratic congressional candidate for the Michigan's 14th District; Mary Kay Henry, international president, Service Employees International Union (SEIU); Lily Eskelsen Garcia, president, National Education Association; Dennis Williams, president, International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW); Matthew J. Slaughter, economics professor, Dartmouth College's Tuck School of Business, in his former capacity as a member of former President George W. Bush's Council of Economic Advisers; and State Sen. Glenn Grothman of Wisconsin.

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