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overcome the cynicism of politics. No, you can't overcome the special interests and the big money. No, you can't take on the big challenges of our time. No, you can't elect a skinny guy with a funny name to the Presidency of the United States. What did you say?

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. That's what you said.

But, Philly, I've got this message for you today. I want everybody to understand, our victory in that campaign, that wasn't the end of the road. That was just the beginning of the road. That was just the start of the journey. By itself, it does not deliver the change that we need. I know a lot of you thought, just because of election night and the Inauguration, everybody was having fun and Beyonce was singing and Bono, and so everybody thought, boy, this is it.

But that was just the start, because we understood what we were going up against. The only thing that the election did was, it gave us the chance to make change happen. It made each of you a shareholder in the mission of rebuilding our country and reclaiming our future. And Philly, I'm back here 2 years later because our job is not yet done, and the success of our mission is at stake right now. On November 2, I need you as fired up as you were in 2008, because we've got a lot of work ahead of us.

After that last election, it was my hope that we could pull together, Democrats and Republicans, to confront the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. I hoped that we could get beyond the divisions of red States and blue States. That's what we thought. Because although we are proud to be Democrats, we are prouder to be Americans, and I know there are plenty of Republicans out there in this country who feel the exact same way.

But when we arrived in Washington, the Republicans in Congress, they had a different idea. They knew it would take more than 2 years to climb out of this recession. They knew that by the time of this election, people would still be out of work. They knew people would still be frustrated. And so what they figured was, if we just sat on the sidelines, if Republicans just opposed everything we said we could do, if they rejected every compromise we offered, if they spent all their time attacking Democrats instead of attacking problems, they figured they might be able to do well in the polls.

So they sent—they spent the last 20 months saying no, even to policies that they had supported in the past. They said no to middle class tax cuts. They said no to help for small businesses. They said no to a bipartisan deficit reduction commission that they had once cosponsored. If I said the sky was blue, they said no. If I said there were fish in the sea, they said no. They figured, if Obama fails, then we win. Am I wrong, Joe? That's exactly what they said.

Now, they made a—they may have thought that playing political games would help them win an election, but I knew it wouldn't get America through the crisis. So I made some different decisions. I took whatever steps were necessary to stop the economic freefall, to stop a second depression, even if those decisions were not popular, even if they were not easy. Because you didn't elect me to do what was easy. You elected me to do what was right. That's why you sent me to Washington. You didn't send me to Washington to put my finger to the wind and figure out which way the wind was blowing, to spend all my time reading the polls. You sent me there to solve problems.

And 20 months later, we no longer face the possibility of a second depression. Our economy is growing again. The private sector created jobs 9 months in a row now. There are 3 million Americans who would not be working today if not for the economic plan that Joe and I put into place. That's the truth.

Now, what's also the truth is we've still got a long way to go. The hole we're climbing out is so deep, the Republicans messed up so bad, left a—such a big mess, that there are still millions of Americans without work. I want everybody to understand this, just in case there's still some undecideds out there. Before I was inaugurated and before Joe was inaugurated, we had lost 4 million jobs in the 6 months before that. We lost almost 800,000 jobs the month I was sworn in, 600,000 the month after that, 600,000 the month after that. Before any of our economic