

tage of? And how are we going to grow this economy so that it works for everybody? And then after two world wars and veterans coming back, how do we make sure they get an education so that they can live out this idea of America, that you can make it if you try?

Every step of the way has been hard. And if our parents and our grandparents and our great-grandparents, if they hadn't had that stick-to-it-ness, if they had just gotten disheartened because some folks got grumpy and said some mean things about them and got cynical and told them you couldn't do it, we would not be here.

And now it's our turn. So yes, it's hard. That's okay. It's supposed to be hard because nothing worthwhile is easy. Ted Strickland understands that. These Members of Congress understand that. I want all of you to understand that. I want you to knock on some doors, make some phone calls, call in some chips, get organized, get mobilized. Because if you do, we're going to reelect Ted Strickland as Governor of Ohio.

We're going to get all these Members of Congress back into Congress. I'm going to keep on working for you. I'm going to keep on fighting for you. We are going to grow this middle class, grow this economy, and make sure the American Dream is there for the next generation.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:01 p.m. at the residence of David and Carole Carr. In his remarks, he referred to John R. Climaco, founding partner, Climaco, Wilcox, Peca, Tarantino & Garofoli Co., LPA, and his wife Carolyn; Yvette McGee Brown, founder and president, Center for Child and Family Advocacy at Nationwide Children's Hospital; Rep. Pete Sessions, in his capacity as chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee; and musicians Beyonce G. Knowles and Paul D. "Bono" Hewson. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Rally in Columbus, Ohio October 17, 2010

The President. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

The President. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

The President. O—H!

Audience members. I—O!

The President. Oh, what do you think about Michelle Obama? [Applause] She's kind of cute, isn't she?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Yes, indeed. It is good to be back in Columbus. Thank you so much. I am so proud to be here with Governor Ted Strickland, one of the finest Governors in this country; Lieutenant Governor Lee Fisher; Yvette McGee Brown; Michael Coleman; an outstanding congressional delegation—Mary Jo Kilroy, Tim Ryan, Marcia Fudge, John Boccieri; outstanding former Senator and astronaut, John Glenn; the Central State University Drumline in the

house; and my friend John Legend; and about 35,000 of my closest friends.

It is good to be here with all of you Buckeyes. Now, let me just say, I am sorry about last night. [Laughter] But one thing I know about Buckeyes is, y'all don't quit. You get up, you keep fighting, you keep believing, and that's what we need from you right now.

We need you fired up. Because in a little more than 2 weeks, you can set the direction of this State and the direction of this country for not just the next 2 years, but the next 5 years, the next 10 years, the next 20 years. Just like you did in 2008, you can defy the conventional wisdom, the kind that says you can't overcome the cynicism of our politics, you can't overcome the special interests and the big money, you can't elect a skinny guy with a funny name, Barack Obama—[laughter]—you can't tackle our biggest challenges. Everybody said, no, you can't. And in 2008, you showed them, yes, we can.

So, in 2 weeks, you've got the chance to say once again, yes, we can. Now, look, let's be honest. This is a difficult election. This is hard. And it's hard because we've been through an incredibly difficult time as a nation. We've gone through a tougher time than anytime in the lifetimes of most of you. Think about it: For most of the last decade, middle class families saw their costs rise from everything from health care to college tuition while their incomes fell. Between 2001 and 2009, the incomes of middle class families fell by an average of 5 percent. Job growth was as sluggish it had been, most sluggish it had been since World War II. A lot of jobs moved overseas, especially here in Ohio. There were too many parents who couldn't afford to send their kids to college, too many people who couldn't afford to see a doctor when they got sick, Americans working two jobs and three jobs just to make ends meet.

And then all these problems were compounded with the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. And I think sometimes we forget how scary it was, the magnitude of this crisis. We lost 4 million jobs in the 6 months before I was sworn in, 750,000 the month I was sworn in, 600,000 the month after that, 600,000 more the month after that. We lost 8 million jobs during the course of this recession, a once-in-a-generation challenge.

And when I was sworn in, it was my profound hope—and I know it was the hope of many of you, not just Democrats, but Republicans—it was the hope of so many people that it would cause both parties to put politics aside for the moment for the sake of the country.

The notion was that we could move beyond the division and the bickering and the game-playing that had dominated Washington for so long, because although so many of us are proud to be Democrats, we are prouder to be Americans. We are prouder to be Americans.

But the Republican leaders in Washington made a different decision. They made a tactical decision. Their basic theory was that we had gone into such a deep hole, the economy was so badly damaged, they knew it was going to take time for us to repair the economy. They knew it was going to take longer than anybody would

like. And they knew that people would be frustrated and they'd be angry. And some of the enthusiasm that we had seen in the 2008 election would start to dissipate as people looked at their friends losing jobs and their small businesses having to close their doors. And they figured if they just sat on the sidelines long enough and if they opposed everything that we did, if they said no even to policies that traditionally they had supported, then they figured that they could ride people's anger and frustration all the way to success in the next election. That was their working theory. In other words, they were basically counting on you forgetting who caused the mess in the first place.

And now they're sitting back, and they basically want you to believe that this election is a referendum on the economy, a referendum on me. They don't want you to understand this is a choice. But make no mistake, this election is a choice, and the stakes could not be greater. Because if they win this election, the chair of a Republican campaign committee has promised that they will pursue the exact same agenda as they did before they took office.

Now—so just understand, this is not like the Republicans went off and they said, boy, we really screwed up; we've got to rethink everything. And they went off into the desert, and they meditated, and then they finally came back with some new ideas. [Laughter] That's not what happened—the very same agenda.

And we know what that agenda is. You cut taxes for millionaires and billionaires. You cut rules for special interests, whether it's insurance companies that want to drop your coverage when you get sick or credit card companies that want to jack up your rates or Wall Street banks that are dealing in all kinds of derivatives that end up crashing the market. You cut the middle class loose to fend for themselves.

They'll tell you it's the ownership society, but basically, it's saying, you're on your own. If you lose your job, you're on your own. If your child doesn't have health care, tough luck, you're on your own. You're a young person, you can't afford to go to college, too bad. Lift yourself up by your own bootstraps. You're on your own.

It's an agenda that turned a record surplus into a record deficit, an agenda that produced slower job growth than we've had this past year, an agenda that let Wall Street run wild at the expense of folks right here on Main Street, an agenda that nearly destroyed the economy. Do they think that we have forgotten?

Audience members. No!

The President. I mean, it's not like we didn't try what they're peddling. We tried it for 8 years. It didn't work. And if they take over Congress, the other side has already promised to roll back health reform so that insurance companies can go back to denying you coverage when you get sick.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. They want to roll back Wall Street reform so that taxpayers can be on the hook for the next bailout.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. They want to let credit card companies hit you with hidden fees or penalties.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. They want to cut education by 20 percent to help pay for a \$700 billion tax break for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans, folks who don't need it and won't even—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Look, this is the same theory they have been peddling for years. And, Ohio, it is up to you to tell them we do not want what they are selling. We've been there before, and we are not going back.

Let me—I've been explaining to people around the country, it's as if they drove America's car into the ditch. They drove it into the ditch, and it was a big ditch. And so I came along, and Ted Strickland came along, and we put on our boots, and we went down into the ditch. And it was hot down there, and it was muddy. [Laughter] There were bugs. [Laughter] But we said, that's okay. Even though we didn't drive it into the ditch, it's still our responsibility to get that car out of the ditch.

And so we pushed and we pushed. And every once in a while, we'd look up, and up on the road, you'd see the Republicans standing there,

fanning themselves, sipping on a Slurpee, having a latte. [Laughter]

And we'd say: "Hey, why don't you come down and help push a little bit? We need some help down here." And they'd say, "No, that's all right." [Laughter] They said: "But you need to push harder. You're not pushing the right way."

And we just kept on pushing. We kept on pushing. Finally, we get this car up on level ground. It's pointing in the right direction. We're ready to move America forward. But the next thing we know, we get this tap on our shoulder, and we look back, and who is it? It's the Republicans. And they say, "We want the keys back." [Laughter] You can't have the keys back. You don't know how to drive!

Now, if you want, you can roll with us. [Laughter] But you got to be in the backseat. I don't know if you've noticed, if you want to take your car forward, you got to put it in what?

Audience members. "D"!

The President. In "D." If you want to go backwards, it goes what?

Audience members. "R"!

The President. We don't want to go backwards. We're moving America forward.

Because—

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. I love you back. Now, let's examine what's happened over the last 20-something months. Because of the steps we've taken, we no longer face the possibility of a second depression. The economy's growing again. The private sector's created jobs 9 months in a row. But you know what, we still have such a long way to go. We've got so much more work to do.

I know there are people out there who are just hanging by a thread, people who are hurting. It's what keeps me up at night. It's what keeps me fighting.

But I also know this: The biggest mistake we could make right now, Ohio, is to go back to the very same policies that caused all this hurt in the first place.

I mean, think about it for a second. It just doesn't make sense. The other side is counting on all of you having amnesia, just forgetting what happened here. We can't return to a philosophy that nearly destroyed our economy and

decimated the middle class right here in Ohio. And I say this not to relitigate the past, I say it because we can't relive the past. And that's what this election's about, not just where we've been, but where we want to go. Not where we are right now, but where we want to be 10 years from now and 20 years from now. What does America's future look like? What's the work we've got left to do?

This election is not just about moving forward versus moving backwards. It's also a contest between our deepest hopes and our deepest fears. And the other side is playing on fear. That's what they do. That's what they do.

You see, we Democrats have a different idea about what the future should look like, and it's an idea rooted in our belief about how this country was built. It's a—it's based on not just ideas in books, it's based on the lived history of Ted Strickland and Michelle and myself. We didn't come from wealthy families. We didn't come from famous families. We came from working families. We came from some ordinary folks. We had to go to school on scholarships and grants. If we wanted some spending money, we had to work for it.

We—and so we remember the story of our families' lives, and it's the story of your lives. And we know that government doesn't have all the answers to our problems. We believe government should be lean and efficient. But in the words of the first Republican President, Abraham Lincoln—who, by the way, I'm not sure could win a nomination in the Republican Party right now—[laughter]—we also believe that government should be there to help people do what they cannot do better for themselves. That means we believe in a country that rewards hard work and responsibility, but also a country where we give each other a hand up, where we look after one another, where we say, I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper. That's the America I know. That's the choice in this election.

We see a future where the next century is driven by American innovation, American ingenuity. We don't want to give tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas. We want to give tax breaks to companies right here in the Unit-

ed States of America, to small businesses and American manufacturers and clean energy companies, because we want the solar panels and wind turbines and electric cars made right here in the U.S. of A. by American workers. That's the choice in this election.

We see an America where every citizen has the skills, the training to compete with any worker in the world. The other side might think it's a good idea to cut education by 20 percent, but let me tell you who doesn't think that. China doesn't think it's a good idea. South Korea, India, they don't think it's a good idea. They're not cutting back on education, because they're not playing for second place. And the United States of America doesn't play for second place. We play for first.

That's why tens of billions of dollars in taxpayer subsidies that used to go to big banks, you know where they're going now? Where they should, to students and families to help pay for their student loans, to help pay for their education.

That's why we're making a college tax credit permanent, worth \$10,000 in tuition relief for every student who is going to college. We see an America where the middle class is growing, where opportunity is shared, where it's not just some people who make it, but everybody has got a chance to make it, where the only limit to your success is how hard you're willing to try.

That's why we want to give tax cuts and make them permanent for middle class families. That's why we'll fight efforts to privatize Social Security. That's not going to happen on my watch. We're not going to take the retirement savings of a generation of Americans and hand it over to Wall Street.

That's why we refuse to go back to the days when insurance companies or the banks or the oil companies had free rein to do whatever they wanted, running roughshod over the interests of middle class families. I want to make sure that insurance companies, if you're paying your premium, then they are paying for your health care when you get sick. I want to make sure that credit card companies aren't hitting you with hidden fees and penalties. I don't want taxpayers to be on the hook for Wall Street's mistakes.

I do that as somebody who profoundly believes in the free market. But the free market works when there are rules of the road in place and when the best businesses, the ones that are competing for your business on the basis of high quality and a good price and good customer service, when they're the ones who succeed because there are decent rules out there looking out for consumers, looking out for you. That's the choice in this election. That's what we're fighting for. That's what we're fighting for.

Now, I want to warn you about something—and by the way, I hope you don't mind I'm losing my voice, because I'm still fired up. But I've got some campaigning to do over the next couple weeks here.

Right now the same special interests that would profit from the other side's agenda, they're fighting back. The empire is striking back. [Laughter] To win this election, they are plowing tens of millions of dollars into front groups. They're running misleading, negative ads all across the country. They don't have the courage, they don't have the gumption to stand up and disclose their identity. They could be insurance companies, banks, we don't know. This isn't just a threat to Democrats. This is a threat to our democracy.

And the only way to fight it, the only way to match their millions of dollars is all of you, millions of voices who are ready to finish what we started in 2008. That's where you come in. That's where you come in. That's why you need to vote in this election.

Thanks to early voting here in Ohio, you can vote right now. Look, look, a lot of you got involved in 2008 because you believed we were in a defining moment in our history. You believed this was a time where the decisions we make, they're going to shape the lives of our children and our grandchildren for decades to come.

That's why you knocked on those doors. That's why you made those phone calls. That's why you stood in line, some of you, to cast your vote—some of you for the very first time in your lives—because you believed that your actions could make a difference, that you could play a role in making change.

And now we're not just advocating change. We're not just calling for change. We're doing the hard work of change; we're grinding it out. Sometimes it's frustrating. We're delivering change inch by inch, day by day. It's not easy. Believe me, I know it's not easy.

I understand that some of you, when you think back, you know, election night looked so good. Inauguration Day, Beyonce was singing. [Laughter] Bono was up there. Everybody had a good feeling.

And then you know what happens is, we start trying to solve these problems, and it doesn't happen as quick as we want. Suddenly, the other side is obstructing, and people start looking around and seeing a family member of mine's still losing a job or another foreclosure sign's gone up in my neighborhood. And you're seeing all these TV ads, and politicians are tearing each other down. And pundits are saying you can't really change politics.

I know it gets discouraging sometimes. But don't let anybody tell you this fight isn't worth it. Don't let them tell you you're not making a difference.

Ohio, because of you, right now there's a woman in New Hampshire who no longer has to choose between losing her home and treating her cancer. Because of you, there are parents who can look their children in the eye and say, yes, you are going to college. Because of you, there's some clean energy entrepreneur that is out there building some new plant somewhere and calling people, putting them to work, putting up "Help Wanted" signs. Because of you, 100,000 brave men and women are no longer at war in Iraq. That's all because of you.

So don't let them tell you that change isn't possible. Don't let them take this country backwards because we didn't fight for it. Because here's what I know: Nothing in America has ever been easy. The very founding of this country was hard. It required a revolution. And when you thought about those 13 Colonies coming together, how unlikely was it that they could gain their freedom from the most powerful empire on Earth and then draft a document based on principles that had never been tried before: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men

are created equal, that we are endowed with certain inalienable rights?

And then we had to grapple with the legacy of slavery and a Civil War. And we had to fight to make sure that workers could get a decent deal on their job. And we had to fight to make sure that women got the right to vote. And then World War II came, and we had to fight to defeat fascism and overcome a depression.

And when folks came back, we had to invest in them with the GI bill to make sure we could grow a middle class that was the envy of the world and win a cold war and put a man on the Moon. Each and every one of those steps required struggle. And each and every time there was somebody out there who said, we can't do that. Each and every time, there was somebody who said, you know what, you're wasting your time. There was somebody who was saying, you know what, change isn't going to happen.

And if our parents and our grandparents and our great-grandparents had made the decision to sit it out 50 years ago, 100 years ago, 200 years ago, we wouldn't be here tonight. The only reason we're here is because past generations have been unafraid. They're unafraid to push forward even in the face of difficulty. They're unafraid to do what's necessary, even when things are uncertain. That's how we got through war. That's how we got through depression.

That's why we have civil rights and women's rights and workers' rights.

And if you will recapture that spirit, if you are out there knocking on doors and making phone calls, talking to your friends and neighbors, if you do not give up hope, then I guarantee you that not only are we going to win this election—because this was never just about putting a President in the White House; it was about building a movement for change that lasted for a long time—we will build a movement for change that will last 10 years from now and 20 years from now, and we will grow this economy and restore the middle class to its rightful place. And once again, the American Dream will be alive and well.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 p.m. at Ohio State University. In his remarks, he referred to Yvette McGee Brown, candidate for Lieutenant Governor of Ohio; Mayor Michael B. Coleman of Columbus, OH; Rep. Pete Sessions, in his capacity as chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee; and musicians John Legend, Beyonce G. Knowles, and Paul D. “Bono” Hewson. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President.

Remarks at a White House Science Fair *October 18, 2010*

Thank you, everybody. Everybody, please have a seat. I am having so much fun. [*Laughter*] It is great to see all of you here for our first White House science fair. I have been looking forward to doing this for a long time. One of the great joys of being President is getting to meet young people like all of you and some of the folks in the other room, who I just had a chance to see some of their exhibits and the work that they were doing. It's inspiring, and I never miss a chance to see cool robots when I get a chance. [*Laughter*]

We are joined by several Nobel laureates, including our Energy Secretary, Dr. Steven Chu. These are obviously the older folks who have helped to expand the frontiers of human knowledge. But we're also joined by a few people who inspire young people to pursue that knowledge. One of them is the one and only Science Guy, Bill Nye, who's in the house. I'm also pleased to welcome Jamie Hyneman and Adam Savage, known as the MythBusters. I can announce today that I taped a special guest appearance for their show, although I didn't get to blow any-