

out. I want you to put pressure on Congress. The folks here, they're already voting for it, so you've got to go find some people who aren't. And I'm asking you to join me in finishing what we started in 2008.

Now, these have been tough, tough times for everybody, these last 2½ years. I know there are times, there are moments, when folks feel discouraged. You may still have the old "Hope" poster in the back somewhere. [Laughter] But you're thinking, man, we're struggling, the unemployment rate's still high, and the politics in Washington seem just as polarized as ever. So you feel frustrated. And there's a natural tendency to sink back into cynicism, to say, you know what, this can't be fixed. But I tell you what, if we had that attitude back in 2008, we never would have won. And more importantly, if we had that attitude throughout our history, then America wouldn't be what it is today.

Every bit of progress that's been worth making has been a struggle, whether it was civil rights or women's rights, the movement to expand educational opportunities to all, the institution of our basic safety net like Social Security and Medicare. It's always been a struggle. And there have been points at every juncture where it's been discouraging. And people have felt like, well, maybe change can't happen. Maybe we're stuck. Maybe America's best days are behind us. And what's prevented that from happening has been the American people, that sense not only of innate decency, that sense of fairness that is just in the DNA of America, but also that sense, you know what, we're not

somebody who—we're not a people who sit back and give up. We don't just let things happen to us. We make things happen.

And that spirit, which we captured in 2008, we need this spirit now more than ever. So I need you guys to shake off any doldrums. I need you to decide right here and right now, and I need you to talk to your friends and your neighbors and your coworkers. You need to tell them, you know what, we're not finished yet. We've got more work to do. We are going to build an America that we believe in, a place where everybody has a fair shot, everybody does their fair share, a generous, big, tolerant America, an optimistic America.

We are tougher than the times that we live in. We are bigger than the small politics that we've been witnessing. We are a people who write our own destiny, and it is fully within our power to write it once more. So let's meet this moment. Let's get to work. Let's show once again why the United States of America is the greatest country on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:38 p.m. at the Paramount Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to former National Basketball Association guard Leonard R. Wilkens and center William F. Russell; Mayor Michael P. McGinn of Seattle; President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea; and Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 26.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in San Jose, California

September 25, 2011

The President. Hello, everybody. It is good to be back in Silicon Valley. It is good to be back at the Thompson residence. I try to make this a regular stop. [Laughter] Once every year or two, I figure, well, I need a little dose of John and Sandi and their friends. So thank you

all for being here. Thanks for arranging wonderful weather.

A couple of other people I want to acknowledge. First of all, I hope they're still here, because I love them and they do a great job every single day: Congressman Mike Honda in the

house; and Congresswoman Anna Eshoo. We've also got Jean Quan, mayor of Oakland, in the house. And I want to thank Bruce Hornsby and Chris Cornell for their outstanding entertainment.

Now, as I was in the photo line, it turned out there are at least three birthdays here. Where are the birthday boys? There's one of them. There's another one. And then—[laughter]—four, five, six, seven. [Laughter] So this obviously a propitious day, with so many birthdays. Happy birthday to all of you. It is wonderful to help celebrate. But don't—for the kids, don't let your parents say, this is what you're getting for your birthday. [Laughter] I mean, I know that trick and—[laughter].

As Sandi said, these folks have been great friends for a long time. Many of you were here when I was still running for President.

Audience member. Senate!

The President. For Senate, even better. And I think, at the time, we understood there were enormous challenges that the country was facing, that there were problems that we had been putting off for decades. But I don't think we fully grasped, at least in 2007, the full magnitude of the challenges we were going to be facing. We've now gone through the worst financial crisis and the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. So for most of our lifetimes, we've never seen anything like what we've seen over the last 2½ years.

And I think you may remember that, on Inauguration Day, when it was already becoming apparent, we could see the clouds on the horizon—Lehman's had already happened—I warned people my election was not the end. It wasn't the end of the journey, it was the beginning of a journey. And it was going to be a tough journey. Because not only did we have to stabilize the financial system and get the banking system working once again, not only did we have to make sure that we yanked ourselves out of the great depression that could have happened had we not intervened, and not only did we have to take emergency measures like save the U.S. auto industry, but even after we did all that, we were going to have to tackle some fundamental structural problems that

were preventing ordinary people, were preventing middle class families from thriving and prospering and achieving the American Dream.

And we talked, when I was running, about what some of those challenges were. We knew that we were going to have to create an energy policy that would not only free ourselves from dependence on foreign oil, but also start changing how we think about the planet and how we think about climate. We knew that we were going to have to make sure that we changed our health care system that was broken, leaving millions of people without health insurance and leaving folks who did have health insurance less secure than they needed to be. We knew that we were going to have to get control of our Federal budget, but do so in a way that ensured that we could still make the core investments in infrastructure and basic research and education that are so vital for us winning the future. We knew that we were going to have to not only put more money into our education system, but we were going to have to revamp it so that not just a few of our kids are prepared for the 21st century, but all of our kids are prepared for the 21st century.

So we knew that we had all these incredible challenges domestically. And then, overseas, we knew that it was unsustainable for us to continue two wars and to think that the only way that we were going to be able to project American power around the world was through our military. And we had to remind ourselves that diplomacy, the power of our example and the power of our values, ultimately was going to make more of a difference in terms of how influential we are around the world.

But I'm back to report to you, my stockholders—[laughter]—in the last 2½ years, we've stabilized the economy. We've ended the war in Iraq. We are on a pathway to bringing our troops home from Afghanistan. We have decimated Al Qaida and killed bin Laden. We have made sure that by 2013, as long as I get a second term, that we are implementing a health care reform package that will provide 30 million people with health insurance and make the entire system more efficient and more

effective. We have signed into law everything from making sure that every woman and every young girl who is thinking about a career is going to make sure that she gets paid equally for an equal day's work. We ended "don't ask, don't tell" because we don't believe that anybody—

Audience member. Good job, Mr. President!

The President. —that anybody who wants to serve this country should be prohibited because of who they love. We passed some of the toughest financial regulations in our history, including making sure that consumers are finally getting the protection they deserve. We made sure that, despite constant battles with Congress, that we continue to make progress on the environmental front. And some of it we did administratively. So we made sure, for example, that for the first time in 30 years we are doubling fuel efficiency standards on cars and trucks and heavy trucks, which will reduce carbon in our atmosphere and actually save folks money over the course of their lifetimes.

So we've done a lot. But here is the challenge I have for all of you. We've got so much more work to do. Yes, we stabilized the economy, but at a level where the unemployment rate was way, way too high. And we still have all sorts of international challenges that we're facing, from Europe to Asia. So we're still going to have to do a lot to restructure our economy to meet the competitive challenges of the 21st century. And that means we've got to continue to invest in cutting-edge research that enables the kind of explosion of technology that's taken place here in Silicon Valley. It means that we've continually got to revamp our education system. It means that we've got to make sure that we're rebuilding the best infrastructure in the world.

And we've got to think short term about how do we put people back to work, as well as long term, how do we make sure that a middle class can thrive in this country again.

And that's why I need your help. That's why I need your help. Because the fact of the matter is, is that too many people are hurting out there right now, and we've got to take some steps right now. So before I even talk to you

about the campaign, I need your help to make sure that we get this jobs bill passed that puts people back to work.

Every idea that we have in this jobs bill has, in the past, been supported by Democrats and Republicans. Rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our airports and our schools, that's not a partisan idea, that's part of what made America an economic superpower. We've got all kinds of workers out there who are unemployed because of the housing bubble burst. We could put them to work right now rebuilding America. It will be good for the economy now, but it will also be good for our economic future.

We need to put teachers back in the classroom. We have—even in the midst of this economic crisis, we've actually created 2 million jobs over the last couple of years. The problem is we've also lost half a million jobs, mostly in State and local government, and a huge proportion of those are teachers that should be in our classrooms right now. We've got to change that, and the jobs bill would put people back in the classroom where they belong.

At a time when—I had lunch with the President of South Korea, and I asked him, "What's your biggest challenge?" And he says, "Just keeping pace with the huge demand for education." He said, "Our parents are too demanding." [Laughter] He says: "They want kindergarteners to learn English. I'm having to ship teachers in from foreign countries to meet the demand, because we understand that whoever wins the education battle, they're going to win the economic battle of the future." And at the same time as that's happening, we're laying off teachers in this country? That makes absolutely no sense. We've got to put them back in the classroom.

This jobs bill provides a tax cut not only to every working family in America, which will put more money in their pockets and allows them to make sure that they can buy all the great products that are created here in Silicon Valley, but it also cuts taxes for small businesses and entrepreneurs. It cuts taxes for companies that are hiring new workers or who are

providing their workers raises. And it provides a tax credit for those who are hiring veterans.

So we've got an opportunity to put people back to work right now. And by the way, it is paid for, every dime. Now, this has caused some controversy: Well, how do you pay for it? Keep in mind that it is absolutely true that we've got to have a Government that lives within its means. And we weren't living within our means over the last decade: two wars we didn't pay for, a prescription drug plan we didn't pay for, tax cuts we did not pay for. So we've already made \$1 trillion worth of cuts over the course of this summer. We've slated another half million dollars in cuts, including making some modest modifications to entitlements.

So we're doing our part. But what we've said is the only way we actually close the gap if we want to have long-term fiscal sustainability is we've also got to make sure that everybody is doing their fair share—everybody—and that includes the people in this audience. We've got to do our fair share.

Now—and I want to be very clear about this. I mean, there are just some basic principles. Warren Buffett's secretary should not be paying a higher tax rate than Warren Buffett. It's a pretty straightforward principle. A teacher making \$50,000 a year shouldn't be paying a higher tax rate than somebody who's pulling in \$50 million.

Contrary to what the Republicans claim, that's not class warfare. This is not about leveling down. The people in this audience, some of you have been extraordinarily successful, and that's what America is all about. We want everybody to thrive. We want everybody to succeed. God bless you. If you're starting a business, you've got a good idea, you've got a new product, a new service, put that out onto the market, create jobs, create opportunity for others. That's great. But we have to remind ourselves that the reason we're successful is because somebody else made an investment in us. Somewhere along the line, somebody made an investment in us either directly—people like myself getting college scholarships—indi-

rectly, because somebody invested in DARPA a few years back.

The fact of the matter is we're not—we didn't do all this on our own, and we've got an obligation to make sure that the folks coming behind us are going to have the same opportunities that we did. That's not class warfare. That is common sense. That's what America is all about. That's our values. Those are our ideals.

Now, I need all of you to be vocal about trying to get this jobs bill passed over the next 14 months. That's going to be absolutely critical. But I'll be honest with you, we're not—I don't know if you've noticed, we're not getting a lot of cooperation from Members of Congress. [Laughter]

Audience member. Party of no!

The President. I like that. We might have to use that. [Laughter] And for those—some of you here may be folks who actually used to be Republican, but are puzzled by what's happened to that party—[laughter]—are puzzled by what's happened to that party. I mean, has anybody been watching the debates lately? [Laughter]

You've got a Governor whose State is on fire denying climate change. [Laughter] No, no, it's true. You've got audiences cheering at the prospect of somebody dying because they don't have health care and booing a servicemember in Iraq because they're gay. That's not reflective of who we are. We've had differences in the past, but at some level we've always believed, you know what, that we're not defined by our differences. We're bound together.

And so the reason I bring this up is we're going to get everything we can out of this Congress over the next 14 months, because the American people can't wait. But let's face it, we're also going to need changes in Washington if we are going to be able to achieve the kind of vision that we talked about back in 2008. We're going to have to fight for this.

And this is a choice about the fundamental direction of our country—2008 was an important election; 2012 is a more important election. Now, in order for us to be successful in this 2012 election, I'm going to need all of you.

Audience member. You got it!

The President. I'm going to need you to be out there talking to your friends, talking to your neighbors, talking to your coworkers. And I'm going to need you to be advocates for what we believe in. It's not enough just to support me. I need you to go out there, and if other folks have been reading the Wall Street Journal editorial page or watching FOX News, and they're full of inadequate information—[laughter]—I need you to push back. I need you to push back.

You have to make an argument that, yes, the President wants to close this deficit, but we can't do it just on the backs of the poor and the middle class and our seniors and that we've got to all do our part.

Yes, what's driven our success historically has been a free market, but we've always been successful because we also made sure that that market operated fairly and that there were basic consumer protections, and people who were providing good products and good services were rewarded, not people who were trying to game the system.

I need you to be out there making arguments that the notion the only way we succeed in international competition is by stripping away laws against polluting our planet. That's a shortsighted approach to economic development, and it's not going to work. We're never going to be able to compete on having the dirtiest air or the cheapest labor. We'll never compete that way.

And in some cases, I may need you to have some arguments with our progressive friends. Because, let's face it, the fact of the matter is, is that over the last 2½ years, even as we've gotten a huge amount done, there's a lot of folks on our side who get dispirited because we didn't get it all done in 2½ years.

That's not how America works. This is a big, messy, tough democracy. And we're not going to get a hundred percent. So if we get a health care bill passed that provides health insurance for 80 million—30 million people and has the strongest patient bill of rights in history and young people can now stay on their folks' insurance so we actually know that a million

young people have health insurance right now because of the bill that we put in place—your kids and grandkids—the notion that somebody is out of joint because we didn't get a public option—come on!

No, we haven't gotten everything done on the environmental front because we're in the midst of a very tough economic time and people naturally are more hesitant about big changes at a time when they're worried about their jobs. But that doesn't mean all the good work that we have done and are doing can be ignored. And the other thing that everybody has got to keep in mind—my friend Joe Biden, he has a quote he likes to use. He says, "Don't compare me to the Almighty; compare me to the alternative." [Laughter]

So the fact of the matter is, we're going to have a stark choice in this election. But I have to make sure that our side is as passionate and as motivated and is working just as hard as the folks on the other side, because this is a contest of values. This is a choice about who we are and what we stand for. And whoever wins this next election is going to set the template for this country for a long time to come.

So I expect all of you, again, not just to be supporting me, you have to be out there, active, engaged, just as engaged as you were in 2008.

Audience member. We're with you!

The President. And if you do that, here and all across the country, if people of like mind, people who believe in a big and generous and a tolerant and ambitious and fact-based America, an America that believes in science and an America that believes in education, an America that believes that investing in our children is an investment in all of us, if you believe in those things, then I need you out there knocking on doors and making phone calls.

If you guys are working like that, then not only am I optimistic about the election, I'll be optimistic about the future.

Thank you so much, everybody. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:56 p.m. at the residence of John W. and Sandra Thompson.

In his remarks, he referred to musicians Bruce Hornsby and Chris Cornell; President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea; Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.; and Gov. J.

Richard Perry of Texas. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 26. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in San Jose September 25, 2011

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. I'm just letting Zuckerberg know, I'm taking her on the road. [Laughter] So somebody else is going to have to manage things while she's gone.

Thank you so much, Sheryl and David and the kids, for opening up this beautiful home. Thank you all for being here tonight.

I don't want to spend too much time just in monologue. I want to—I know that one of the hallmarks of Silicon Valley and the Internet is that it's a two-way thing, it's not just one way. So I want to make sure that we have a good conversation. But let me just say a couple of things off the top.

First of all, many of you have been involved in my campaign dating back to 2008. Some of you I'm meeting for the first time. But all of you have a commitment to a particular vision of what America should be. Everybody here believes that the reason America is so special is because everybody can make it if they try; at least that's the ideal that we cling to. We all believe that education has to be not just the province of a few, but a gift for the many, because that's not only good for our kids, but that's good for our economic future. We're all committed to innovation and science and a belief that if you unleash the skills and the talents of people, that it's possible for us to create an economy that is doing well, but where prosperity is also broadly shared. We all believe in an America where it shouldn't matter where you come from or what you look like or who you love, but rather do you have values and gifts and talents that you're sharing with other Americans as citizens.

And those values are going to be tested in this election: the values of shared prosperity, being good stewards of the environment, making sure that we are investing in our kids, mak-

ing sure that everybody has a shot. Those values are going to be tested. And so if 2008 was an important election, let me tell you, 2012 is an even more important election, because of all the reasons that Sheryl noted.

The American people are going through a very tough time. This is a big transition, and by the way, it's not unique to America. This is a global shift that's taking place. We've got a world that has shrunk and is interconnected and is more competitive than ever. And every country out there is trying to adjust and trying to figure out, how do we make sure we've got the best educated citizens, and how do we make sure we've got the most dynamic, innovative economy, and how are we making sure that we're investing in industries of the future like clean energy, and how do we make certain that in our international affairs we're projecting power not just based on our military, but also based on our diplomacy and the power of our ideas.

And those changes that are taking place are scary. And given that we've just gone through the worst financial crisis in our lifetimes—I'm looking around the room, and I don't think too many folks were around back in the 1930s. Just a guess. [Laughter] Given that so many Americans are still out there hurting each and every day, and although we've been able to stabilize the economy from what could have been a worse catastrophe—we've got 9-percent unemployment. And I get letters every single day from folks who are losing their homes and seeing their businesses shut down, not being able to work enough hours to pay the bills at the end of the month, or having to defer their retirement in order to make sure their kids go to college.

Given all the stresses and strains that ordinary folks are feeling and given the fact that some of the challenges we faced had been