

portantly, I would wake up every single day fighting as hard as I knew how, to make your lives a little bit better, because I saw myself in you. In your grandparents, I saw my grandparents. In your kids, I saw Malia and I saw Sasha. In your story, I saw my own.

And, Oakland, I've kept that promise. Every day that I've had the privilege of having this office, I have been thinking about you and fighting as hard as I knew how to make sure that your hard work pays off.

And now I'm asking you for your help. Now I'm asking you for your vote. Now I'm asking you to knock on doors and make phone calls and do all the things that we did in 2008. And if you're willing to stand with me and fight with me, then I promise you, we will finish what we

started. And we will grow this economy and build the middle class and remind the world just why it is that the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:55 p.m. at the Fox Theater. In his remarks, he referred to musician Ledisi A. Young; Nnamdi Asomugha, defensive back, National Football League's Philadelphia Eagles; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson, brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson, and sister Maya Soetoro-Ng.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Portland, Oregon July 24, 2012

The President. Hello, Portland! Thank you. Well, it is great to be back in Portland. And I just want to point out every time I come to Portland, it's like 80 degrees and sunny. [Laughter] I just want to make that point. I'm not saying that I'm the reason. [Laughter] But there does seem to be a correlation between—

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back. Thank you. Thank you.

A couple of people I want to acknowledge because they're doing outstanding work—first of all, your excellent Governor, John Kitzhaber. He's making a difference. Former Governor Barbara Roberts, we love Barbara. Secretary of State Kate Brown is here. Kate is making sure here in Oregon, everybody gets a chance to vote. We like that in her. Mayor Sam Adams is here. I want to thank somebody who put so much work into this event: Terry Bean. Give Terry a big round of applause.

And even if you are a Ducks fan, I want you to give a big round of applause to the best brother-in-law anybody could ever hope for and an outstanding basketball coach of the Oregon State Beavers: Craig Robinson. So no offense, Ducks fans, but I've got to root for family. [Laughter] All right.

Now, if folks have chairs, feel free to sit down. If you don't—I see a few do. If not, just keep—make sure to bend your legs so you don't—[laughter]—you don't faint.

It is wonderful to be back in Portland. One of my favorite events ever was the rally we had by the water in Portland 4 years ago. It was a day just like today. It was just as pretty as could be, and there were folks out kayaking and out in boats, and you just could see as far as—it was just beautiful. And the people could not have been warmer. And so I just want to thank all of you for being so welcoming.

This is my last political campaign. No, I'm term limited. That's the way it works. [Laughter] And it got me thinking about some of my first political campaigns, when I was first running for the State senate. And Craig will remember this because we'd have to go to Kinko's to print out flyers. [Laughter] And he'd be drafted, along with Michelle and some friends, and we'd just go around neighborhoods knocking on doors.

And then, later, when I ran for the United States Senate, which was a loftier office, obviously, but I didn't have a loftier infrastructure around me; so we didn't have Marine One, we did not have Air Force One. I drove myself in

my car, usually with one staff person. And back then, young people, you will not remember this, but there were these things called maps, because we did not have GPS. [Laughter] And so—and they were on paper, and you'd have to fold them. You'd unfold them and then trying to fold them back was really difficult. [Laughter]

And I'd get lost because Illinois is a big State, and I'd take the wrong turn and wind up in the wrong town. And when I finally got to the event, I'd have to look for my own parking spot and—[laughter]—you'd end up being late, and sometimes, it would be raining, and you had to see if you could find the umbrella somewhere in the back with all the junk that was there. [Laughter]

But I have such fond memories of those campaigns because when I'd travel throughout Illinois—you'd go to inner cities, you'd go to rural, small farm towns, you'd go to suburbs, you'd meet folks from every walk of life, every race, every faith, every background, every income level—what I'd heard are stories that reminded me of my own family's stories.

So I'd see a retired veteran, and he'd remind me of my grandfather. And I'd think back about my grandfather fighting in World War II in Patton's army, and while my grandmother was working on a bomber assembly line, and how when he came back, he was able to go to college on the GI bill and my grandparents were able to buy their first home with the help of an FHA loan. And I'd think about the incredible journey that they had traveled because they were lucky enough to live here in America.

And I'd meet a working couple. And I'd think about Craig and Michelle's parents. Their dad, by the time I met him, could barely walk because he had MS, so he had to use two canes. And he'd have to wake up an hour earlier than everybody else just to get dressed to make sure that he punched the clock on time. He worked a blue-collar job at the water filtration plant in Chicago. And Craig and Michelle's mom worked as a secretary. But they had such strong values and such love for their family and such a sense of responsibility that they were able to give their kids everything

they needed to thrive and succeed. And I'd think back to what an incredible country it was where Craig's mom and dad would be able to watch him succeed and Michelle become the First Lady of the United States, eventually.

And I'd meet a single mom, and I'd think about my own mom. My dad left before I even knew him, and so she had to raise me and my sister and work and go to school at the same time. But because she was able to get grants and scholarships, she was able not only to get a great education herself and, ultimately, help women around the world develop themselves, but she was also able to give me and my sister this incredible education and these incredible opportunities.

And so everywhere I'd go around Illinois, and eventually, everywhere I went as a Presidential candidate, what I'd consistently see is this running thread, this core theme, this basic bargain that is at the heart of this country. And it can be described very simply. It's that here in America, no matter what you look like, no matter where you come from, no matter what your last name is, no matter where you worship, here in America, if you're willing to work hard, you can make it. Here in America, if you are acting responsibly, you can succeed. Here in America, this basic notion that if you're willing to make an effort, you can find a job that pays a living wage and allows you to support a family, that you can get a home that you can call your own, that you can have the security that if somebody in your family gets sick, you won't go bankrupt, that you can send your kids to a good school, you can retire with some dignity and respect, and that your kids can do better than you ever imagined.

That's what America is about. That's what has made us the envy of the world: this idea that here you can make it and that everybody gets a fair shot and that everybody does their fair share and everybody is playing by the same set of rules. That's what built the greatest middle class in the history of the world. That's what made us an economic superpower.

And I'm here today for the same reason that I came 4 years ago. When I ran in 2008, it was because that basic bargain, that basic notion

that you could make it here if you try, that had started to slip away for more and more people.

We've gone through a decade in which people were working harder, but making less money, while the cost of everything from college education to health care were going up. We had fought two wars on a credit card. We had taken a surplus, and because of tax cuts that weren't paid for, we had turned them into deficits. And it all culminated in incredible recklessness on Wall Street that resulted in the worst financial crisis and economic crisis in our history.

And so, in an environment in which jobs and factories were being shipped overseas and folks at the top were doing very well while middle class families were struggling, we came together saying that, yes, it would take more than one year or one term or maybe even one President to turn this thing around. But we were going to fight for the kinds of changes that would ensure we got back to that basic American promise, that basic idea that if you work hard in this country you can make it.

Now, this crisis has been deeper and more brutal than, I think, anybody back then anticipated. But over the last 3½ years, everything I've done—everything my administration has done—has stayed focused on that goal. And so where we were losing 800,000 jobs a month when I was sworn into office, we've been creating jobs now for almost 3 years straight: 4½ million new jobs, 500,000 in manufacturing, the fastest manufacturing growth since the 1990s. We've helped to make sure that small businesses were able to survive this brutal recession and invested in them.

And so we've made progress. But we still have millions of folks who are out of work and in homes that are underwater, so we've got a lot more work to do. Understanding all that, though, when I hear cynics say that—or suggest that our best days are behind us, I've got to tell them, you haven't witnessed the character of the American people. One of the great privileges of being President is you meet people all across the country, just like I used to meet folks all across Illinois. And when you see the character and the grit and the determina-

tion of the American people, you can't help but be optimistic.

Anybody who thinks that our best days are behind us, they haven't met the small-business owners in Minnesota who chose to sacrifice some of their own perks and pay just to avoid laying off a single worker during the recession. They haven't been to auto plants in Michigan or Ohio that were never supposed to build another car again and now can't build them fast enough.

The cynics, they must not have met the workers that I meet: a factory worker in her fifties in North Carolina, who decided that, when the furniture industry left town, she'd get her degree in biotechnology from the local community college. She said, not just to get a job of the future, but also to show her kids that in this country, we don't give up. If we get knocked down, we pick ourselves back up, and we can succeed and achieve our dreams.

So there are no quick fixes or easy solutions to some of the challenges we face. They built up over decades, and we have begun to move this country in the right direction. But I have no doubt that we've got the capacity to meet every single one of these challenges.

We've got the best workers in the world and the best entrepreneurs. We've got the best scientists and the best researchers, the best colleges and the best universities. We've got the greatest diversity of talent and ingenuity that's coming from all around the globe, every corner. And no matter what the naysayers may tell us, there's not a country on Earth that wouldn't trade places gladly with the United States of America.

So what's standing in our way, for all the progress we've made, what's preventing us from making even more progress is politics. It's what's going on in Washington. It is a stalemate in which one side has an uncompromising view that the only path forward is to go back to the stuff that didn't work before, the same top-down economics that got us into this mess in the first place.

I disagree with them. I think they are wrong.

At stake in this election are two fundamentally different visions about how we move this

country forward. They believe in top-down economics. I believe in middle-out economics. I believe in bottom-up economics. I believe we're all in this together. That's what I'm fighting for, and that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

Let me give you a few examples of the choice because all of you are going to ultimately be the ones who break this stalemate. Tomorrow the Senate is going to vote on a bill that says that if you earn less than \$250,000 a year, your taxes will not go up next year by a single dime. Now, members of both parties say that they agree this should happen so that our families and our businesses have a little more security and certainty going forward, which would be good for the economy. But of course, we are dealing in Washington, the only place where people agree on something and still can't get it done.

So Republicans in Congress, they've decided apparently that they're not going to let this bill pass. Despite the fact that 98 percent of Americans make \$250,000 a year or less, so we could provide 98 percent of Americans certainty that their taxes would not go up—despite the fact that this would be good for the economy and investment climate—they've decided to hold middle class tax cuts hostage until we also agree to spend another \$1 trillion on tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, folks who don't need tax breaks, and frankly, many of them aren't even asking for them.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Now, Governor Romney doesn't just approve of this strategy, he wants to import this into the White House. His economic plan is—and this is the entire gist of his economic plan—is to cut more taxes for the most wealthy Americans, to cut more regulations for banks and corporations, including regulations we just put in place in response to the worst financial crisis we've had in our lifetimes, to cut more investments in things like education and research, all with the hopes that somehow this is going to create more jobs and prosperity. That's what Mitt Romney believes; that's what his allies in Congress believe.

Now, there's one problem with that. It is an economic theory. *[Laughter]* The hitch is that we tried this. As Bill Clinton put it a couple of weeks ago, this is exactly what was done before I took office, "except on steroids." *[Laughter]* And it didn't work.

So it's not what you believe will grow the economy. It's not what I believe will grow the economy. It's not what most Americans, regardless of party, believe will grow the economy. This country was not built that way, from the top down.

It was built from the middle out. It was built from the bottom up. It was built because incredible self-reliance and rugged individualism and entrepreneurship and risk-taking was rewarded. And it was built because we invested in great schools and great universities and we put rules of the road in place to make sure that everybody was being treated fairly. That's how we became the most prosperous nation on Earth. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States: to go back to what works.

And by the way, let me just point out that the approach that I'm talking about has also been tested. Just like their theories have been tested and didn't work, my theories have been tested. The last time they were tried was by a guy named Bill Clinton. And we created 23 million new jobs, went from deficits to surplus, and we created a lot of millionaires to boot. *[Laughter]* The well-off did well because they had a lot of customers. *[Laughter]*

That's how we've grown our economy. In some ways, the other side understands that their theories aren't particularly popular. So rather than explain them clearly, they're going to spend most of their time trying to distort what I say. Earlier today Governor Romney was at it again. He has been twisting my words around to suggest that I don't value small business. Now, keep in mind, in politics, you have to endure a certain amount of spin. Everybody does it. I understand that. Those are the games that are played in campaigns. Although I have to say, when people omit entire sentences from a speech—*[laughter]*—and they start splicing and dicing, they may have tipped a little bit

over their skins. They may have gone over the edge here. [Laughter]

Audience member. [Inaudible]—his tax returns. [Laughter]

The President. But there's a real choice here. As I said, I believe with all my heart that it is the drive and ingenuity of Americans who start businesses that lead to their success. And by the way, that's why I've cut taxes on small businesses 18 times since I've been President. I believe the ability for somebody who is willing to work hard and sweat and sacrifice to turn their idea into a profitable business, that's what makes us such a robust, dynamic economy. We prize that.

But I also believe that if you talk to any business owner, small or large, they'll tell you what also helps them succeed alongside their hard work, their initiative, their great ideas, is the ability to hire workers with the right skills and the right education. What helps them succeed is the ability to ship and sell their products on new roads and bridges and ports and wireless networks. What helps them succeed is having access to cutting-edge technology, which like the Internet often starts with publicly funded research and development. And what helps them succeed is a strong and growing middle class so they've got a broader base of customers.

And for two centuries, we've made these investments, not just Democrats, but Republicans as well. This was an American idea, the idea that what it takes to give our people and businesses the best possible chance at success involves individual initiative. But it involves us working together as a nation to create these platforms for success, to expand opportunity.

And Mr. Romney disagrees with this, and he is entitled to his opinion. But the approach that he is talking about is not going to help small businesses, and it's not going to create more markets for large businesses. He is wrong. We did not build this country on our own. We built it together. And if Mr. Romney doesn't understand that, then he doesn't understand what it takes to grow this economy in the 21st century for everybody.

Let me give you another example—because this is going to be discussed over the next 3 months—the issue of debt and deficits. Now, we've got to reduce our debt, and we've got to reduce our deficits. I, when I came into office, had a trillion dollars of deficit waiting at my doorstep. And obviously, the recession made it worse. But we've got to take this seriously over the long term. The question is, how do we reduce it in a balanced way that promotes economic growth?

I believe you can't reduce the deficit without asking folks like me who have been incredibly blessed by this country to give up a little bit of the tax cuts that they've been enjoying for a decade, particularly since we're the ones who've gained most of the growth in productivity over the last decade or two. We've done well. We can afford to give a little back.

So I'm going to cut Government spending that we can't afford. Not every Government program works. It's got to be tested. And if it doesn't work, if it's not helping to grow the economy and give people opportunity, we can't afford it in this environment. But I'm also going to ask folks who make over \$250,000 a year to go back to the tax cuts—or the tax rates that we had under Bill Clinton.

Now, Mitt Romney has a different theory. He actually wants to cut taxes by an additional \$5 trillion. And the math is hard to figure. [Laughter] It's hard to figure how you reduce the deficit by blowing an additional \$5 trillion hole in the deficit. And the only way you can pay for it is not only to slash and gut investments in education and research and infrastructure; it's not only cutting back on the social safety net for vulnerable families; it's not only that you've got to voucherize Medicare, as he's proposed—but you also ultimately over the long term end up having to impose a greater tax burden on the middle class. That's not how to grow the economy.

That's part of the debate that we're going to be having over the next 3 months. And if you ask most Americans and you break it down in that way, they'll agree that we should not see a bunch of teacher layoffs or middle class taxes go up to pay for a tax break for me. That's part

of the reason I'm running for a second term as President.

Let me tell you some things that will work. When the American auto industry was on the brink of collapse and more than 1 million jobs were on the line, Governor Romney said, let's "let Detroit go bankrupt." I said, let's bet on American workers and American ingenuity, and now GM is back on top. And Ford and Chrysler are building more cars than ever. And so what I've said is, let's not stop at Detroit. Let's not stop at the auto industry. Let's make sure that we're promoting American advanced manufacturing all across the country.

And let's change our Tax Code so that we are providing tax breaks to companies not that are shipping jobs overseas; let's give tax breaks to companies that are investing right here in Oregon, right here in the United States of America, and putting American workers back to work making American products. That's why I'm running for a second term.

I'm running because after a decade of war, I think it's time for us to do some nation-building here at home. That will grow our economy. Because of the outstanding efforts of our men and women in uniform, we were able to end the war in Iraq, as I promised. Because of their outstanding efforts, we were able to refocus on those who actually carried out the 9/11 attacks. And Al Qaida is on the run, and we got bin Laden. In Afghanistan, we've blunted the Taliban's momentum, and now we are beginning to transition so that Afghans are in the lead for their own security, and we are beginning to bring our troops home.

And so now the question is, what are they coming home to? As long as I'm Commander in Chief, this country will serve and care for our veterans the same way that they served us, because nobody who fought for American should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they come home.

But what will also help our veterans is what will help our entire economy, and that is making the investments that will help us grow. I want to take half of the money that we're saving on war, and let's put people back to work—a whole bunch of hard hats out there—rebuild-

ing our roads and our bridges and our schools, laying broadband lines into rural communities, expanding our wireless networks, building high-speed rail. That's what's going to help build America.

I'm running to make sure that America once again leads the world when it comes to educating our kids. I want to help our schools hire and train and retain the best teachers, especially in math and science. I want to create 2 million more slots for community colleges to train workers, including folks who've been laid off, for the jobs that local businesses are hiring right now. And I want to make sure that we continue to work on reducing the cost of college for every young person in America, because in the 21st century a higher education is not a luxury, it is an economic necessity that everybody should be able to afford. That's why I'm running for a second term.

We're starting to see glimmers of the housing market improve in some markets, but in a lot of places it's still a big drag on the economy. So what I've said is let's make sure that every family can refinance at these historically low rates, save an average family \$3,000, which they will then spend, and we'll expand our economy and strengthen the housing market. Mr. Romney's proposal is to let the foreclosure market bottom out. I don't think that is a plan; that is the problem.

And yes, I believe that in America nobody should go bankrupt because they get sick. We passed the Affordable Care Act. The Supreme Court has spoken. We are now implementing it; 30 million people will have health insurance that didn't have it before. Everybody who has health insurance will have greater security. Women will have control of their health care choices. That's the right thing to do. We're not going backwards, we're going forwards.

On almost every issue, there's a contrast. I believe we did the right thing in ending "don't ask, don't tell." I believe that fairness is a hallmark of this country. Mr. Romney disagrees when it comes to "don't ask, don't tell." But we're not going backwards, we're going forwards.

Mr. Romney wants to get rid of funding for Planned Parenthood. I think that is a bad idea. I've got two daughters. I want them to control their own health care choices. We're not going backwards, we're going forwards.

And all these things—whether it's investing in clean energy and making sure that solar panels and wind turbines are built here in the United States of America, whether it's making sure that health care is there for people who are working hard and doing the responsible thing, whether it's making sure all our young people have access to the higher education that they need—all these things tie together. It goes back to that central idea, the promise that if you work hard, you can get ahead, the same promise that our parents and our grandparents passed down to us and that we now have a responsibility to pass on to our children and our grandchildren.

Now, over the next 4 months, the other side will spend more money than we've ever seen on ads, almost all of them negative. They'll tell you the same thing that you've been hearing for months. As I said, they can't sell their own ideas, so they're going to go after us. And you can boil down their message very simply: The economy is still struggling, and it's Obama's fault. That's what they will repeat. There will be a lot of variations, but that's going to be their basic message. And that may be a plan to win an election. It's not a plan to create jobs. It's not a plan to revive the middle class. They don't have a plan; I do.

And although, obviously, when folks are writing \$10 million checks to run negative ads against you, it gets your attention. I've been outspent before. We've been counted out before. But what gives me hope is that when it counts, the American people can cut through the nonsense, and they can focus in on what's true and what's right.

They remember the stories of their own families. You remember the stories of parents or grandparents or great-grandparents who came here as immigrants, some who came here not of their own accord, folks who might have worked on farms or in the mines or in a factory, but understood there was something special

about this country that meant your circumstances weren't determined by your birth, that there was something around the corner, something on the horizon that you could strive towards.

And they didn't always know what to expect, but they understood that that is what made America special. That in our central charter there was this idea that we were endowed with certain inalienable rights by our Creator—life and liberty and this pursuit of happiness—not the guarantee of success every time, understanding we'd be knocked down sometimes, but this idea that we could pursue happiness.

And our parents, grandparents, they understood being middle class, it wasn't just a matter of how much money you had in your bank account, it was a matter of values, understanding that you weren't going to get a handout, that you had to take responsibility, but if you did, you'd have a shot; you'd have a fair shot. That's what they understood, and that's what they passed on to us.

And when the American people latch on to that idea, when they focus on it, when you guys, as you did in 2008, understand that that's what's at stake, you can't be stopped. You make change happen. And so sometimes, I'm asked: Mr. President, you've got a pretty tough job; what gets you up every morning? It's you. You guys still inspire me. I still believe in you.

And some of you may remember in 2008, I tried to not make promises I couldn't keep. But I made one promise. I said, you know, I'm not a perfect man—Michelle will tell you that—*[laughter]*—I am not going to be a perfect President. But I can promise you this: I will always tell you where I stand, I will always tell you what I think, and I will wake up every single day fighting as hard as I know how for you.

Because I see myself in you. In your grandparents, I see my grandparents. And in your kids, I see my kids. Your story is my story. That's what I'm fighting for. That's why I'm running again. I still believe in you. And if you still believe in me and are willing to stand with me and knock on doors with me and make phone calls with me, we'll finish what we

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started. And we'll remind the world why America is the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m. at the Oregon Convention Center. In his remarks,

he referred to Terrence Bean, chair, Oregon Finance Committee, Democratic National Committee; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson and sister Maya Soetoro-Ng.

Statement on the Death of President John Evans Atta Mills of Ghana *July 24, 2012*

It was with great regret that I learned of the passing of President John Evans Atta Mills of Ghana. I will always remember my trip to Ghana in 2009 and the hospitality that President Mills and the people of Ghana showed to me, Michelle, Malia, Sasha, and our entire delegation. I was also pleased to host President Mills in the Oval Office earlier this year.

President Mills tirelessly worked to improve the lives of the Ghanaian people. He helped promote economic growth in Ghana in the midst of challenging global circumstances and

strengthened Ghana's strong tradition of democracy. Under his leadership, the United States and Ghana deepened our partnership in the promotion of good governance and economic development. He was also a strong advocate for human rights and for the fair treatment of all Ghanaians. On behalf of the American people, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the people of Ghana and reaffirm the deep and enduring bonds between our democracies that President Mills helped to strengthen.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Actions of Certain Persons To Undermine the Sovereignty of Lebanon or Its Democratic Processes or Institutions *July 24, 2012*

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared with respect to the actions of certain persons to undermine the sovereignty of Lebanon or its democratic processes and institutions is to continue in effect beyond August 1, 2012.

Certain ongoing activities, such as continuing arms transfers to Hizballah that include increasingly sophisticated weapons systems, undermine Lebanese sovereignty, contribute to political and economic instability in the region, and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared on August 1, 2007, to deal with that threat and the related measures adopted on that date to respond to the emergency.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
July 24, 2012.