

Now, the reason they have to advertise like this is because they know their economic theories don't sell. They know—we didn't get amnesia. We remember trying what they're selling, and it didn't work. [Laughter] So they're basically just going to repeat over and over again: The economy is not good and it's Obama's fault. They'll have variations on the theme, but it's the same thing over and over again. [Laughter]

Now, that may be a plan to try to win an election, but it's not a plan to create jobs. It's not a plan to strengthen the economy. It's not a plan to revive the middle class. It's not a plan to make America stronger. It feeds into fear and the cynicism that so many Americans feel about Washington, but it's not a plan for hope. It's not—it doesn't capture America at its best: a big, bold, generous, optimistic America.

And so the good news is, we've been outspent before, I've been counted out before, but what has always given me faith, what's given me hope, what's given me confidence is you. It's all of you. It's the fact that when the American people come together, they cannot be stopped. When people power is harnessed, when you guys are out there knocking on doors, making things happen, you can't be stopped.

So I'm going to need your help. We've come too far to go back now. We've got too many good jobs to create. We've got too many teachers we need to hire. We've got too many schools we've got to rebuild. We've got too many students who need help affording college. We've got too much homegrown energy that we've got to generate. We've got more troops we've got to bring home. We've got

more doors of opportunity that we have to open. And that's what's at stake.

And so I am not just asking for your vote, I am asking for your work. I need your help over the next 3 months. I don't need you just knocking on doors; I need you to make phone calls, I need you to talk to your friends, I need you to talk to your neighbors. I need you guys to load up and go over into Iowa, a battleground State, and knock on some doors and make some phone calls over there. We've got to get help. You've got to get involved in the election. You've got to get on our website. You've got to make sure that you are signing up.

If you are as passionate and as energized and as determined as you were before, then we won't lose. And it is true that I am older and a little grayer, but I made a promise to you in 2008. I said I'd always tell you what I thought, I'd always tell you where I stood. And most importantly, I told you I would always, every single day, every minute of every day, think about you, and fight as hard as I knew how for you. I have kept that promise.

I still believe in you. And if you still believe in me, and are willing to get out there and work over the next 86 days, we will not just win this election, but we will finish what we started and remind the world just why it is the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. at the Bridgeport Art Center. In his remarks, he referred to DJ Cassidy Poddell; and Kalpen S. Modi, Associate Director, White House Office of Public Engagement.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Chicago August 12, 2012

Hello, everybody! Well, first of all, welcome to my house. [Laughter] I have to say that the lawn hasn't looked this good in a while. [Laughter] But I figured—at least Michelle figured—that if company was coming over, we'd better neaten up a little bit. [Laughter]

It is wonderful to be back home. And it is wonderful to be among both old friends and new friends. There are some folks here who have known me since I first got out of law school. And not only did I not have any gray hair—[laughter]—but I think I barely owned a

suit, because back then I was working here on the South Side of Chicago in a lot of low-income communities, trying to help folks help themselves. And it was challenging. We had some successes; we probably had more failures. But this place is where I learned about the importance of bringing communities together to solve problems.

And this is also the place that produced my wife. And so although I'm not born and bred South Side of Chicago, I think it's fair to say that I'm now an adopted son of the South Side of Chicago. This is home. And to all the people who are here who helped me along the way, I just want to say it's wonderful to see all of you.

I don't want to give a long speech because I want to save a little time to respond to some questions. But every election, Presidents or candidates will say, "This is the most important election of my lifetime." This is the most important election of my lifetime. [*Laughter*]

It's more important than 2008 in a lot of ways, because in 2008, there was a sense that although we were entering into the worst financial crisis and economic crisis that we'd seen since the Great Depression, there did still seem to be some overlap between the parties in terms of the things that we need to get done to ensure opportunity for the next generation. My opponent, John McCain, believed in immigration reform, believed in campaign finance reform, believed in climate change. And we might have disagreed in terms of how to solve the problems, but there was a conversation going on, and there were some rough agreement about the facts.

That's not so much the case now. You have a stark choice—as stark as we've seen in a generation at least—between two fundamentally different visions about how we move this country forward.

On the one hand, Mr. Romney, and now his running mate, Paul Ryan, fundamentally believe that if folks at the top are doing well and we eliminate regulations that help on clean air and clean water and help to constrain how an insurance company operates or increased transparency on Wall Street, that somehow

prosperity will come roaring back and will trickle down to everybody.

I believe that the way we grow this economy is to make sure that we've got a strong middle class and we continue to have ladders for people to get into the middle class. And that means, even as we control Government spending and we make sure that every taxpayer dollar that does come in is wisely spent, that we're also investing in things like education and making college more affordable, in our infrastructure, in research and development, in an energy policy that frees ourselves from dependence on foreign oil.

And that vision is one that is supported by the record. I mean, this argument is one in which we can actually look at evidence. We tried the approach that the other side is promoting for about a decade, and it resulted in the most sluggish job growth, incomes and wages going down relative to inflation, and culminated in a complete economic disaster.

The approach that I'm talking about we tried under Bill Clinton, and we created 23 million new jobs, and we went from deficits to surplus. And by the way, those of us who've been blessed by this country and have enjoyed enormous success, we did pretty well under that system too. Because it turns out that when teachers and construction workers and receptionists and firefighters, when they're doing well, then they've got money to spend, and businesses have customers, and the entire economy grows.

Now, there are going to be a whole host of other issues in which the arguments are almost as stark. I believe that women should have control over their health care choices. Mr. Romney and Mr. Ryan have a different view. I believe it was right to end "don't ask, don't tell" and let anybody who loves this country fight for this country. Mr. Romney and Mr. Ryan have a different view. I believe in investing in clean energy, that we shouldn't just restrict our energy approach to fossil fuels. Mr. Romney and Congressman Ryan have a different view. On international policy, I think ending the war in Iraq was the right thing to do. Governor Romney disagrees.

And so, across the board, we're going to have a wide range of arguments. But this issue about how we grow an economy in which everybody has a fair shot, everybody is doing their fair share, and everybody is playing by the same set of rules, the argument about how we reduce our deficit and our debt in a way that allows us to still pass on to the next generation greater opportunity, that's going to be at the heart of this campaign. That's what the American people are going to be paying the most attention to.

And that's an argument I'm confident we can win. But we can only win it because of you, because of the enormous support and effort and sacrifice that all of you have been willing to make. And so, on behalf of Michelle and myself, I want to thank you. But I also want to warn you this is going to be a close election. We've got 86 days left. Now is not the time to get weary, now is the time to double down.

I heard from a couple folks who said they'd been really excited by the Olympics, and I just want to remind you this is not going to be a race like Usain Bolt, where we're—[laughter]—like, 40 yards ahead and we can just kind of start jogging 10 feet before the finish line. We're going to have to run through the tape. But we're really well positioned to not just win, but also keep America moving forward.

And I'll just end with this quick story; it's appropriate for Chicago. Some of you know a dear friend of mine, he's a friend of some of yours: Ab Mikva. Ab actually got started as a

politician here. He was part of the reformist movement back in the days when the machine in Chicago was still very strong, and Ab was a young, idealistic congressional candidate. And there's a famous story where he went to the ward committeeman in this area and said: "Look, I'd like to get involved in politics. I've got a lot of good ideas. I'd like to run." And the committeeman said, "Who sent you?" And Ab Mikva said, "Nobody sent me." And the committeeman looked at him, he said, "We don't want nobody nobody sent." [Laughter]

I know who sent me. You guys sent me. And—which brings me to the other story Ab likes to tell, which is that being friends with a politician is a little bit like perpetually having a child in college—[laughter]—because every so often you've got to write a big check. The good news is, I'm about to graduate. [Laughter] So this will be my last campaign. If everybody is willing to work hard, given the big investment you've already made, make sure I graduate here, that I get another 4 years.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:56 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; Usain St. Leo Bolt, sprinter, 2012 Jamaican Olympic team; and former White House Counsel Abner J. Mikva. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Chicago August 12, 2012

Hello, everybody. It is good to be back home!

Let me, first of all, just say something about Barbara. I think so many of you know the incredible contributions she had made to the city. She was a leader in early childhood education. She has helped to reshape and redesign how we think about teaching our young people so that they get a great education. And she has just been an extraordinary friend to me and so

many people all across this city and all across the country.

And her and Jim Bowman were folks who took me under their wing, and Michelle under their wing, when we were young and still trying to find our way. They have been great friends ever since. And I could not be prouder to be with her today, especially since she let all of you tear up her backyard. [Laughter] So please give Barbara Bowman a big round of applause.