

version of the way things ought to be, to leave the questions that affect your lives up to big oil and insurance companies, and a bunch of men in Congress.

That's what they're counting on, and so I just want all of you to understand your power. Don't give it away, not when you're young. If you're going to get cynical, wait till you get older. [*Laughter*] Wait till you have a few bumps and bruises. But right now America is counting on you. And I'm counting on you.

Those who oppose change, those who benefit from an unjust status quo, they've always bet on your cynicism and complacency. But throughout American history, they have lost that bet. They're going to lose that bet this time because of you.

Because we've got a lot more work to do. You're going to have to register to vote. You're going to have to get your friends registered to vote. You're going to have to drag your friends to the polls. You're going to have to refuse to wait for the next person to do it, because somebody is waiting on you. They're waiting on you to bring about this change. They're waiting for you to lead.

Sometimes, your parents may be waiting on you. Back in 2008, part of the way we ended up winning was because we had a whole bunch of

young people telling their parents, you got to get on board. It's time for change.

Yes, we can. Fired up. Ready to go. And I'm still fired up, and I'm still ready to go, because we've got more work to do. We've got more jobs to create. We've got more schools to build. We've got more teachers to hire. We've got more young people to send to college. We've got more troops to bring home. We've got more renewable energy to generate. We've got more doors of opportunity to open to everybody who is willing to work hard and walk through them.

That's what's at stake in this election. And that's what's at stake right here in Colorado because if we win Colorado, we will win this election. If we win Fort Collins, we will win this election. We win Fort Collins, and we'll finish what we started, and we will remind the world just why it is that the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. at Colorado State University. In his remarks, he referred to Haley Damm-Hamblin, student, Colorado State University; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts and Vice Presidential candidate Rep. Paul D. Ryan.

## Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia August 29, 2012

*The President.* Hello, Virginia! Go Hoos! Wa-hoo-wah! I still don't know what a Wahoo is. [*Laughter*] But I know we've got some here today.

It's is good to be back. I love coming to this pavilion.

I want to thank Mathias for the great introduction. Give him a big round of applause. I want to thank my great friends, Tom Perriello and your next United States Senator, Tim Kaine.

So it is good to be back in Charlottesville.

*Audience member.* I love you, Obama!

*The President.* I love you back.

Before I get started, let me just say that on the flight over here, I was on the phone with our FEMA Director, Craig Fugate, and Janet Napolitano, who does our homeland security, as well as some of the Governors and mayors who are now being affected and are having to deal with Hurricane Isaac. And I think it's important for all of us—because we know we've got some prayerful people here—to just let people on the coast know our thoughts are with you, our prayers are with you.

We are going to make sure that we are doing every single thing that we need to do to ensure that the folks down there are taken care of and

have the support and the love of the rest of this country. Because when things like this happen, there are no Democrats or Republicans. There are just Americans. And we stand by Americans in their hour of need.

Now, I know it's—for me, it's great to be back in Charlottesville. And this is an exciting time of year. Class is back in session. Come on, we need a little more enthusiasm, students. The football team has got a home game on Saturday. And in just over 2 months—just over 2 months from now—for the first time in many of your lives, you're going to get to pick the next President of the United States.

Now, I know that there's some young at heart here who are not so young, like me. [Laughter] But let me just take a moment to speak to the young people here. You guys have more at stake in this election than anybody. When you step into that voting booth, the choice that you make in that one instant is going to shape your country—it's going to shape the world—for decades to come.

I know that's a pretty heavy idea to lay on you on just the second day of class, but—[laughter]—but it's true. The decisions that we make as a country right now on everything from the economy and jobs and taxes to education and energy and war and climate change, all these decisions—

[At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.]

*The President.* —all these decisions are going to be affecting your lives in very personal ways.

*Audience members.* Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

*The President.* Thank you. Listen, I couldn't really hear what those young people were saying, but that's good that they're getting involved. And—but what I'm trying to tell you here is, don't just chant. You've got to vote. [Applause] You've got to vote.

The decisions we make—war, peace, the economy, the environment—all those things are going to be decided. And they're not just going to affect you, they're going to affect Malia and Sasha too, my daughters.

So this is how our democracy works. Your generation is going to have to push the generations in front of you to make sure that they're making the right decisions. Your generation will choose not just between two candidates or two political parties, but will choose the path that we take as a country. And it will affect your lives in very personal, profound ways.

So you think about the questions that are at stake here. Are we going to make sure that good jobs and opportunities take root in China or Germany, or are we going to make sure they take root in Charlottesville and Richmond, right here in Virginia and all across America?

Are we going to make sure that an honest day's work is rewarded so that somebody who really works hard, they can afford to have their own home, and they'll have health care when they get sick, and they'll be able to retire with dignity and respect? And most of all, they'll be able to make sure their kids are doing better and dreaming bigger than they did.

Are we going to make sure that not just you, but folks who follow you can afford to get a college degree and are able to pay off their student loan debt? Are we going to build more good schools and hire more good teachers and make sure that our young people are prepared to attend colleges like UVA?

Will this be a country that keeps moving away from foreign oil and invests in renewable sources of energy like wind and solar and bio-fuels that help our economy and make our planet more secure?

Will this be a nation that leads not just with the strength of our military, but with the power of our example and fidelity to our values? Is that the kind of country we will continue to be?

And most of all, will this continue to be an America where no matter who you are, no matter what you look like, no matter where you come from, no matter what your last name is, no matter who you love, you can pursue your own happiness and make it if you try?

That's what my Presidency has been about. That's what this campaign is about. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

That's what Tim Kaine stands for. That's what Tom Perriello stand for.

And I know that right around this time, before football season has started, there are some folks who get sick of politics. I understand that. Sometimes the campaigns seem meaner and smaller, and Washington seems more gridlocked all the time. And you've got a steady stream of cynics who are telling you change isn't possible; you can't make a difference; you won't be able to close the gap between how things are and how they should be; you were naive last time when you had all that hope and change stuff. [*Laughter*]

And frankly, the other side, they've made this a strategy. They will tell you how bad things are over and over again, and they'll helpfully add that it's all Obama's fault. [*Laughter*]

And what they're hoping is that even if you don't vote for them because you know that what they're peddling doesn't work, what they do hope is, is that you get so discouraged that you just stay home.

*Audience members.* No!

*The President.* That's what they're banking on. But I don't believe that. I don't think you believe that. We knew that solving our biggest challenges would take more than one year, or one term, or one President. We know we've still got a lot of work to do, but we are determined to get it done. We are determined to finish the job. We're determined to finish the race, and that's why I'm running for a second term.

And you know what makes me confident is you. The American people have gone through some tough times, but the American people are always tougher. And this generation of young Americans, I've seen your passion. I have seen your service. I've seen you eager to make a difference. You've already proved that you can make a difference.

Think about it. Some of you did vote 4 years ago, and some of you, even if you were too young to vote, worked on the campaign. And you believed 4 years ago that we could put a college education within reach of everybody who is willing to work for it. That's what you believed.

So we created a college tax credit that's saving middle class families up to \$10,000 on college tuition. We fixed the student loan system that was giving billions of dollars to banks as middlemen. We said, let's use that money to double grant aid for millions of students. We won the fight to prevent student loan rates from doubling for more than 7 million students.

None of this would have happened if it hadn't been for you, if it hadn't been for the work that you did, if it hadn't been the faith that you had in your ability to make a difference. You helped millions of young people, maybe including yourself, to earn a college education. You made that happen. And that makes me believe; that gives me confidence. It gives me confidence about the future.

Four years ago, we talked about how we could use less foreign oil, reduce the carbon footprint that threatens our planet. And in just 4 years, we have doubled the generation of clean, renewable energy like wind and solar. We've created thousands of good American jobs because of it. Today, we're less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in nearly 20 years. We're on track to emit fewer greenhouse gases this year than we have in nearly 20 years. We can keep those trends going. And that is all happening because of you.

Four years ago, you believed that nobody in America should go broke because they get sick. Today, because of the new health care law, affectionately known as Obamacare—because of that law, nearly 7 million young people are able to stay on their parents' health insurance plans. Your grandparents are saving money on their prescription drugs. Women have gained access to free preventive care like mammograms and contraception. Thirty million Americans will be able to finally have the security of health care coverage. You can't be barred because of a preexisting condition. You made that happen. That's because of you.

Four years ago, we said we'd end the war in Iraq; we did. More troops are home with their families. They're earning their education, in some cases, with the post-9/11 GI bill. They're out there starting new businesses. But that's

not the only change we made, because no one ever again will have to hide who they love in order to serve the country they love. We ended “don’t ask, don’t tell.” You made that happen.

The point is, Virginia, your vote mattered. Your voice made a difference. Change was possible because you made it possible. So you can’t get tired now. [Laughter] Because we’ve got more work to do. We’ve got more work to do to grow this economy. We’ve got more work to do to create more good jobs and strengthen the middle class. And in November, your voice will matter more than ever.

And listen, if you doubt that, then pay a little attention to what’s happening in Tampa this week.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* Don’t boo, vote. Vote.

I mean, my opponents are down there, they’re offering their agenda. And it’s a pretty entertaining show. [Laughter] They’ve got wonderful things to say about me. [Laughter] But you know what’s interesting is, you can listen very carefully, very hard, and you won’t hear them offer a clear, serious path forward. You won’t. I mean, they’ve got an economic plan that can be summed up very simply. They say that if we give a \$5 trillion tax cut, which includes giving an extra \$250,000 tax cut to people making \$3 million a year or more, then somehow, prosperity is going to rain down on the rest of us. [Laughter]

Now, many of you were too young to remember, but we tried this for about a decade before I came into office. It didn’t work then; it’s not going to work now.

I don’t want to pay for another millionaire’s tax cut by raising taxes on the middle class. I don’t want to pay for that by cutting financial aid for tens of millions of students. Our economic strength does not come from the top down. It comes from students and workers and small-business owners and a growing, thriving middle class.

That’s who we’re fighting for. And in just over 2 months, you can make a decision about which path we take. You can decide whether we give a massive new tax cut to folks like me and Mr. Romney, who don’t need it—he

doesn’t even need—he needs it even less than I do—[laughter]—or whether we work to keep taxes low for Americans who are still trying to make it.

I’ve cut taxes for middle class families. And I want to make sure that taxes aren’t raised a dime on your income tax for families’ first \$250,000 worth of income. That means, by the way, 98 percent of Americans would not see any increase in their income taxes. But that depends on how you vote in November.

You can choose whether we cede new jobs and new industries to countries like China or whether we fight for those jobs here in Virginia, here in the United States, by investing in the research of our scientists, investing in the drive of our students, and investing in the innovation that harnesses new sources of energy and brings new generations of manufacturing to places like Charlottesville and Richmond.

*Audience members.* U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

*The President.* U.S.A.! That’s what we need, but again, you can’t just chant, you got to vote.

You will decide whether we can keep making college more affordable or whether we take my opponent’s advice and just have your parents lend you money. [Laughter] See, I think that we should help more Americans earn the kind of education you receive here at UVA. We’ve also got to help more Americans go to community colleges to get the skills and the training that employers are looking for right now.

And I’ll say this again, just so you know I mean it. Michelle and I, we’ve been there. We know what it’s like. We just finished paying off our student loans 8 years ago. Think about that. We shouldn’t be making it harder for young people. We should be making it easier for young people. We shouldn’t end the college tax credit we created. We should be expanding it. Higher education isn’t a luxury. It is an economic necessity for every single American.

You can decide that an energy plan written by and for the big oil companies will be best for America; that’s an option. But I think that the kind of all-of-the-above strategy that we’re talking about, a strategy that includes more

American oil and gas, but also more wind and solar, and sets new goals for efficiency and makes sure that we're getting energy and using energy in smarter ways, that's the key to the future.

One of the things that we've done is develop new fuel standards so that by the middle of the next decade, your cars will get nearly 55 miles per gallon. That's double what they are now. That means you've only got to dig into your pocket to fill up your tank half as often. But not only does it save you money at the pump, it moves us closer to energy independence. It reduces greenhouse gas emissions by as much as all the cars in the world emit each year combined. This is a smart thing to do. It's the right thing to do.

And by the way, my opponent is against that. So you're going to have to make a decision. Just yesterday my opponent called my position on fuel efficiency standards "extreme." [Laughter] I don't know. [Laughter] It doesn't seem extreme to me to want to have more fuel-efficient cars. Maybe the steam engine is more his speed. [Laughter] But I think that we set goals and we meet them; that's what we do as Americans.

Listen, what's extreme about the idea that instead of giving \$4 billion a year in tax subsidies to oil companies that are making a profit every time you pump gas, it makes more sense to keep investing, using that money to invest in homegrown energy sources that have never been more promising. That's not extreme. That's good for jobs. That's good for our economy. It's good for our planet. It's good for our future.

That's what's at stake. That's what you'll decide. That's why I'm running for President.

We could go back to a health care system that lets insurance companies decide who and when and what to cover. But I think we've got to move forward with Obamacare. It's already cutting costs. It's covering more people. It's saving lives.

Governor Romney has promised that sometime on his first day, he is going to kill Obamacare. He's going to sit down, grab a pen—now, this would mean that he—by a stroke of a

pen, apparently he thinks that he can kick 7 million young people off their parent's plan. He can make prescription drugs higher for seniors.

*Audience members.* No!

*The President.* Suddenly, folks with preexisting conditions are out of luck.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* He calls my health care law Obamacare; I call his plan "Romney doesn't care." He's running on the "Romney doesn't care" platform.

This law is here to stay. The Supreme Court has spoken. We're not going to re-fight the battles of the last 4 years. We're moving forward. That's what's at stake in this election.

I'm telling you, on almost every issue he wants to go backwards, sometimes all the way to the last century. [Laughter] In November, you can say that in this century, women should be trusted to make their own health care choices. You can say that in this century, we don't think young immigrants who were brought here when they were children and understand themselves as Americans and have pledged allegiance to the flag should suddenly be deported to countries where they've never been.

You can say we shouldn't rewrite the Constitution to prevent gay Americans who love each other from being able to marry the people they love.

You can reaffirm the strength of the American character. It doesn't come from shoving anybody to the sidelines. It doesn't come from kicking folks to the curb. It comes from hearing everybody's voices, harnessing everybody's talents, realizing that here in the United States of America we are greater together than we are on our own. That's what I believe. That's what I believe. That's what you believe. That's what's at stake in this election.

This November, you get to decide about the future of the war in Afghanistan. Governor Romney said that me ending the war in Iraq was "tragic." He doesn't have a plan to bring home the 33,000 troops who will be coming home from Afghanistan next month. He likes to talk tough, but he doesn't have a lot of details when it comes to these critical issues.

And so what I have said not just to you, but most importantly, to those young men and women in uniform who are serving us every single day is that you will know where I stand. When I say I will end the war in Iraq, I will end it. When I say that we will go after bin Laden, we'll go after him. And when I said that as we bring our troops home, first from Iraq, now from Afghanistan, that as long as I am Commander in Chief, we will serve our veterans as well as they've served us, I mean it. Because nobody should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they come home after they've been fighting for our freedom.

So here's the bottom line. Passing a new \$5 trillion tax cut targeted at wealthiest Americans, it won't create jobs. It sure won't bring down the debt; it will increase it. Ignoring inequalities don't make them go away. Denying climate change doesn't make it stop. Looking backwards doesn't make our future brighter. It doesn't make your future stronger.

In the next 2 months, you get to choose. And we've got a plan that will actually lead to a better future. And you can prove the cynics wrong one more time.

But the other side will spend the next 2 months, spending more money than we have ever seen in our lives, an avalanche of attack ads and insults and distractions and sometimes they just make things up. But they've got a bunch of folks who can write \$10 million checks, and they'll just keep on running them.

I mean, somebody was challenging one of their ads—they just, they made it up—about work and welfare. And every outlet said, this is just not true. And they were asked about it and they said—one of their campaign people said, we won't have the fact checkers dictate our campaign. [*Laughter*] We will not let the truth get in the way. [*Laughter*]

Think about that. They're counting on young people to just accept their version of the way things ought to be. They expect that you will not be paying attention enough or you will be distracted enough or you will be discouraged enough that you walk away, and that

means big oil writes the energy bills, and the insurance companies write the health care bills, and politicians in Washington decide what a woman can or can't do when it comes to her own health.

And you know what, I think they're wrong. I am counting on you. I'm counting on you because those who oppose change have always bet on your cynicism, they've always bet on a lack of hope. And throughout American history, they have lost that bet. And they're going to lose that bet this time too, as long as you register to vote, as long as you're going out there to vote, as long as you're getting your friends to go out there and vote.

I need you—America needs you—to close the gap between what is and what might be. We've got more jobs to create and more good schools to build. We've got more homegrown energy to generate. We've got more troops to bring home. We've got more young people to send to college. We've got more doors of opportunity to open to everybody who is willing to work hard and walk through them. And it all depends on you.

So don't worry about letting me down, don't let America down. Don't let yourselves down. Go out there. Register. Stand up. And if you do, we will win Virginia. And if we win Virginia, we will win this election. And we will finish what we started. And you and I together, we'll remind the world just why it is the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:31 p.m. at the nTelos Wireless Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Mathias Wondwosen, student, University of Virginia; former Rep. Thomas S.P. Perriello; former Gov. Timothy M. Kaine of Virginia; Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; and Neil Newhouse, partner and co-founder, Public Opinion Strategies.