

## Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Portsmouth, New Hampshire September 7, 2012

*The President.* Hello, New Hampshire! Oh, it is good to be back in Portsmouth! It is great to be with your outstanding Governor, John Lynch, who, like me, had the good judgment to marry up. [Laughter] We love Susan as well.

One of the best Senators in the country, Jeanne Shaheen. Your mayor, Eric Spear. And your next Congresswomen, Carol Shea-Porter and Annie Kuster.

It is good to see all of you. And it's just great to be back in Portsmouth. I was telling John that—

*Audience member.* We love you!

*The President.* I love you back.

I was telling John that I will always have great memories of Portsmouth, because one of the things that happens as you're running for President is the bubble starts closing in on you, so I still remember some of the last places where I got to take a walk with nobody around. [Laughter]

And Portsmouth, in 2007, was one of those places. It was a gorgeous day like today. And I actually—we walked, and we came right down here. And there was a theater, an improv thing going on. And I sat there, and I think—I might have bought some ice cream. [Laughter]

Which reminds me, by the way, Malia and Sasha love New Hampshire not only because this is where they go to camp, but it's also where they first campaigned with us. And I think the first day of campaigning, they got ice cream four times in a row. [Laughter] So they turned to Michelle and me, and they said, we love this campaigning thing. [Laughter] We want to campaign with you all the time. [Laughter]

Now, I've just come from Charlotte, where we had a great convention. Folks down there could not have been more welcoming. Michelle was amazing. President Clinton made the case in the way only he can. Somebody e-mailed me after his speech; they said, you need to appoint him secretary of explaining stuff. [Laughter] That was pretty good. I like that: secretary of explaining stuff. 'Splainin'. [Laughter]

Joe Biden was fired up. And I meant what I said at the convention: I could not have a better Vice President. But as importantly, I could not ask for a better and more loyal friend than Joe Biden. He is a wonderful, wonderful man.

And last night, I did my best to lay out the stakes in this election. You see, now that both sides have made their argument, there's a big choice to make. And I honestly believe this is the biggest choice, the clearest choice, of any time in our generation, because it's not just a choice between two candidates or two political parties. It is a choice between two different paths for America, two fundamentally different visions for how we move forward.

See, ours is a fight for that basic bargain that built the largest middle class and the strongest economy the world has ever known: the promise that hard work will pay off, that responsibilities will be rewarded, that everyone gets a fair shot, everybody is doing their fair share, everybody is playing by the same rules, from Wall Street to Main Street to Washington, DC. That basic bargain is why I ran for President, and that's why I'm running again. That's what this election is about.

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

*The President.* That is what this election is about.

I mentioned last night, I got my start in service because I worked with folks who had been laid off from the steel plants that had closed when jobs started getting shipped overseas. And over the last 10 years, we've seen that happen more and more and too many families struggling with costs that keep rising even when paychecks don't. So people are having to use their credit cards or home equity loans just to try to make the mortgage or pay tuition or put gas in the car or food on the table.

And that debt is why this house of cards collapsed in the great recession: millions of innocent Americans losing their jobs and their homes, folks losing their life savings. And we

are fighting to recover from that and it's a long, tough journey.

But our friends at the Republican Convention, they've talked a lot about what they thought was wrong with America; they didn't tell you what was right. They didn't tell you what they'd do to make it right. They want your vote, but they don't want to show you their plan.

And that's because they know their plan won't sell. That's because all they've got to offer is the same prescriptions that they've had for the last 30 years: Tax cuts, tax cuts, gut some regulations, oh, and more tax cuts. [Laughter] Tax cuts when times are good, tax cuts when times are bad. Tax cuts to help you lose a few extra pounds. [Laughter] Tax cuts to improve your love life. [Laughter] It will cure anything, according to them.

Now, let me tell you something. Listen, I've cut taxes for people who need it: middle class families, small-business owners. In 2008, I promised I would cut middle class taxes. The typical family's tax burden is—Federal level—is \$3,600 less since I took office. So I've kept that promise. I've kept that promise. We've cut taxes for small businesses 18 times.

But I do not believe that another round of tax breaks for millionaires is what's going to bring good jobs back to our shores or pay down our deficit. I don't believe firing teachers or kicking students off financial aid is going to grow our economy, not when China is producing more engineers and more scientists and we've got to compete with them.

After we were on the brink of financial meltdown because of irresponsible decisions made on Wall Street, I don't believe that rolling back regulations there is somehow going to help small-businesswomen or -businessmen expand or laid-off construction workers get back to work.

We have been there. We've tried what they're selling. It didn't work then; it's not going to work now. We're not going back. We are moving forward. That's why all of you are here today.

And I'm not going to pretend that this path is quick or easy. And by the way, I never have.

As Bill Clinton reminded us on Wednesday night, it's going to take more than a few years for us to solve challenges that were building up over decades. We know that. Today we learned that after losing around 800,000 jobs a month when I took office, business once again added jobs for the 30th month in a row, a total of more than 4.6 million jobs.

But that's not good enough. We know it's not good enough. We need to create more jobs faster. We need to fill the hole left by this recession faster. We need to come out of this crisis stronger than when we went in.

And there's a lot more that we can do. When Congress gets back to town next week, you need to send them a message: Go ahead and give middle class families and small businesses the confidence of knowing that their taxes—your taxes—will not go up next year. Everybody agrees we shouldn't raise taxes on the middle class; let's go ahead and get that done. Let's get it done now.

And by the way, if the Republicans are serious about being concerned about joblessness, we could create a million new jobs right now if Congress would pass the jobs plan that I sent to them a year ago: jobs for teachers, jobs for construction workers, jobs for folks who have been looking for work for a long time. We can do that.

But I need your help, New Hampshire. I need your voices. You see—

*Audience member.* You've got them!

*Audience member.* We're with you, man!

*The President.* I appreciate that. Then I need you to get your cousins—[laughter]—and your friends, your coworkers.

Look, I am not just asking for your vote. I'm asking the entire country to rally around a set of goals for our country: goals in manufacturing, energy, education, national security, and the deficit. And these—this is a real, achievable plan that will lead to new jobs and more opportunity and rebuild this economy on a stronger foundation. That's what we can do in the next 4 years. That's why I'm running for a second term as President: to finish the job, to keep moving forward, to build up the progress we've made.

So let me be a little more specific. First, I've got a plan to export more products, not out-source jobs. After a decade of decline, this country created over half a million manufacturing jobs in the last 2½ years. We've reinvented a dying auto industry that's back on top of the world.

And so now, Americans, we have a choice. We can keep giving tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas, or we can start rewarding companies that are investing right here in New Hampshire, putting Americans back to work, selling products around the world. We can help big factories and small businesses double their exports. We can create a million new manufacturing jobs in the next 4 years. You can make that happen, but I'm going to need your help.

Second, I've got a plan to control more of our own energy. After 30 years of inaction, we finally raised fuel standards so that by the middle of the next decade, your cars and trucks will go twice as far on a gallon of gas. That will save you money. [Applause] That will save you money. We've doubled our use of renewable energy: solar, wind, biofuels. And tens of thousands of Americans have jobs today because they're building wind turbines and long-lasting batteries.

The other side likes to talk about energy, but they don't mention that the United States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in nearly two decades. The other side wants to reverse that progress. I want to build on it. I'm not going to let oil companies dictate the country's energy plan, and I don't want them to keep collecting \$4 billion a year in corporate welfare from our taxpayers. We've got a better path.

We want to keep investing in wind and solar and clean coal technology. We want to see farmers and scientists harness new biofuels to power our cars and our trucks. I want construction workers who are sitting at home right now, I want them building homes and factories that waste less energy and retrofitting those that are already built to save energy.

And we can develop a hundred years' supply of natural gas right beneath our feet. If we

choose this path, we can cut oil imports in half by 2020. We can support 600,000 new jobs in natural gas development alone. That's how we move forward. Third—

*Audience member.* Let's do it!

*The President.* Let's do it. [Applause] Let's do it. We can do this. We can do this.

Look, third—

*Audience members.* Yes, we can!

*The President.* Third, third—I've got even more—[laughter]—I've got a plan to give more Americans the chance to gain the skills that they need to compete. Education: I would not be standing here if I hadn't gotten a great education. Michelle would not be where she is without the opportunities that were given. And as she told you on Tuesday night, we didn't come from wealth or fame or power, but in this country, we've always made a commitment that if you've got talent and you're willing to work hard, somebody is going to give you the opportunity to get a great education, and then you can go as far as your dreams can take you. It is the gateway to a middle class life in the 21st century.

So what have we already done? Nearly every State has answered our call to raise standards for teaching and learning. Some of the worst schools in the country have already seen real gains in math and reading. Millions of students are paying less for college today because we took on a system where \$60 billion was going to banks and lenders as middlemen for the student loan program. We said, let's cut out the middleman and give that money directly to students so that they get a better deal.

So now you've got a choice. We can gut our commitment to education like the other side's budget would end up doing.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* Or we can decide, here in America, no child should give up her dreams because a classroom is overcrowded or a school is crumbling. No family should set aside that college acceptance letter because they figure they just can't afford it. And no company should be looking for the workers they need overseas because they can't find them here at home.

So, New Hampshire, I need you to help me recruit 100,000 math and science teachers, and improve early childhood education and give 2 million workers the skills they need at community colleges and help colleges and universities cut tuition growth in half over the next 10 years. We can meet these goals together. That's the America that we want for our kids.

*Audience member.* Forward!

*The President.* Forward. Forward! I need 4 more years, and we're going to move forward.

Fourth, fourth, my plan would reduce our deficit without sticking it to the middle class. Now, the debt and the deficit are real medium- and long-term problems, and we're going to have to address it. And I want to get working. Independent analysis shows that my plan would cut our deficit by \$4 trillion; that's with a "t." And I've worked with the Republicans in Congress already to cut \$1 trillion in spending, and I'm prepared to do more.

I want to reform our Tax Code so that it is simple and fair and so it asks the wealthiest households to pay higher taxes on incomes over \$250,000. So even well-to-do folks would still keep their tax break up to \$250,000, but after that, we want to go back to the same rates we had when Bill Clinton was President. Our economy created 23 million new jobs then; we had the biggest surplus in history; we created a whole lot of millionaires to boot. We didn't punish success, we created an environment for greater success all across the economy. That's what we're fighting for.

My opponent says he wants to reduce the deficit too. But as was pointed out at the convention, there's a basic component missing from his plan: math. [*Laughter*] Arithmetic.

When Governor Romney and his allies tell us we can somehow lower our deficit by spending trillions more on new tax breaks skewed towards the wealthy, the math doesn't work. You can't dig yourself a deeper hole. You can't take 5 trillion out of the Treasury and then say you're going to close it.

And when you ask them, well, how are you going to do it, well, they won't answer real clearly, but there are only a few ways of doing it, and most of them involve sticking it to the

middle class. I refuse to ask middle class families to give up their deductions for owning a home or raising kids just to pay for another millionaire's tax cut.

I refuse to ask students to pay more for college or kick children out of Head Start programs or eliminate health insurance for millions of Americans who are poor or elderly or disabled, all so folks like me and Mitt Romney can pay less.

I won't turn Medicare into a voucher system. You shouldn't have to spend your golden years at the mercy of insurance companies after a lifetime of work. You should be able to retire with dignity and respect. You've earned it.

And so yes, we need to reform and strengthen Medicare for the long haul, but we've got to do it by reducing the actual cost of health care, not by dumping those costs on to seniors who end up paying thousands of dollars more. That's not how we're going to do it.

And we will keep the promise of Social Security by taking responsible steps to strengthen it. But we're not going to privatize it. We're not turning it over to Wall Street. We're not going to do that.

Now, rebuilding the economy is essential. But our prosperity at home is linked to what we do abroad. Four years ago, I promised to end the war in Iraq, and we did. I said we'd wind down the war in Afghanistan, and we are. A new tower rises above the New York skyline. We have decimated Al Qaida's leadership, and Usama bin Laden is dead.

So now our—now we—moving forward, as Commander in Chief, I will sustain the strongest military the world has ever known. We are going to make sure that we've got a strong Navy. And what goes on here in the Yard and all across the country where we've got people not only in uniform, but also folks who are working, we've got to make sure that they've got the support.

And when our troops take off their uniform, we're going to serve them as well as they've served us. Because nobody who fights for this country should ever have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads or the care they need when they come home.

My opponent said it was “tragic” to end the war in Iraq. I disagree. He won’t tell us how he’ll end the war in Afghanistan. I have, and I will.

And while my opponent would spend more money on military programs that our Joint Chiefs even say won’t make us safer and we don’t need, I’m going to use that money that we’re no longer spending on war to help pay down our debt, and put more people back to work rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our schools and our runways. Because after a decade of war, it’s time to do some more nation-building right here at home, right here in New Hampshire.

So that’s the choice that we now face, and that’s what this election comes down to. We keep on getting told that bigger tax cuts, fewer regulations, that that’s the only path to prosperity, and that government, because it can’t do everything, somehow should almost do nothing. I don’t believe that.

I don’t believe that if you can’t afford health insurance, you’re on your own; that if companies release toxic pollution into the air that your children breathe, that somehow that’s a requirement for economic growth. I don’t believe that if you can’t afford to go to college, that the best we can do is tell you to borrow money from your parents. That’s not who we are. That’s not what this country is about.

We insist on personal responsibility. We insist on individual initiative. We know we’re not entitled to success; we know we’ve got to earn it. We honor entrepreneurs and businesspeople and strivers and dreamers and the risk takers. We know that that’s the driving force behind our free enterprise system.

But we also know that this country is built on an idea of citizenship, the idea that we have some obligations to each other and that when we work together we all do better. We’ve got obligations to future generations. That America is not just about what can be done for us, it’s about what can be done by us, together, as one Nation and one people.

New Hampshire, the election 4 years ago wasn’t about me. I told you that last night. It was about you. And it sounds like maybe you

were listening because you’re here. You were the change. You’re the reason that there’s a little girl with a heart disorder who will get the surgery she needs because now the insurance companies can’t limit her coverage.

You’re the reason some young person out there is going to be able to go to medical school, because now they can actually afford it. You made that possible. You’re the reason that a young immigrant, who grew up here and went to school here and pledged allegiance to our flag, is not suddenly going to be deported from the only home they’ve ever known.

You’re the reason why we were able to end “don’t ask, don’t tell.” You’re the reasons why thousands of families have been able to welcome brave troops, saying, “Welcome home.” You did that.

And so now you can’t turn away. We can’t turn away now. You can’t buy into the cynicism that change that we fought so hard for is impossible. You can’t give up on the idea that your vote makes a difference, because if you do give up, then the lobbyists and the special interests, they’ll fill the void: The folks who are writing the \$10 million checks, the folks running all these super PAC ads, the folks who want to tell you who you can marry or tell women that they can’t make decisions about their own health care.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* That’s who will fill the void if you’re not in this, if you’re not engaged, if you’re not focused, if you’re not fighting. We’re going to have to work because this is going to be a close election. Only you can make sure that we don’t go backwards. Only you have the power to move us forward.

But I’m asking you to use that power. I’m asking you to use that power. I’m asking you for your help. New Hampshire, I need you to make some phone calls for me. New Hampshire, I need you to knock on some doors for me. New Hampshire, I need you to tell your friends and neighbors and coworkers what’s at stake in this election.

If you’re not registered to vote, I need you to register right now. And I need you to turn out in November, because if you do, we’re go-

ing to finish what we've started. We will create more good jobs. We'll generate more home-grown energy. We'll hire more good teachers. We'll send more young people to college. We'll bring more troops home. We'll take care of more of our vets. We'll open up the doors of opportunity to everybody who's willing to work hard.

We will win Rockingham County. We will win New Hampshire. We will finish what we started, and we'll remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

## Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Iowa City, Iowa September 7, 2012

*The President.* Hello, Hawkeyes! Oh, it's good to be back at the University of Iowa.

A couple of people I want to mention, first of all, your outstanding Congressman Dave Loebsack is here. Your mayor, Matt Hayek, is here. And somebody who's been with me since we started our first road trip here in Iowa back in 2007, your attorney general, Tom Miller, is in the house. And all of you are here.

It is wonderful to be here. And some of you guys know I've just come from Charlotte, North Carolina, where we had an outstanding convention. Folks down there could not have been more welcoming.

Michelle—what can I say—she was amazing. President Clinton made the case the way only he can. Somebody sent around a tweet saying, you need to appoint him secretary of explaining stuff. [*Laughter*] So I thought that was a pretty good idea.

And then, Joe Biden was all fired up. He was ready to go.

And then, last night I did my best to lay out the stakes in this election, which could not be higher. Now, you've seen both sides make their argument, and you know now what a fundamental choice we have ahead of us. I honestly believe this is the clearest choice that we've had in my lifetime, because it's not just a choice between two candidates; it's not just a choice between two parties. It's a choice be-

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. on the grounds of Strawberry Banke Museum. In his remarks, he referred to former Rep. Carol Shea-Porter; Ann McLane Kuster, founder, Newfound Strategies, LLC; and Ben Greenman, staff editor, the New Yorker magazine. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden.

tween two fundamentally different visions of our future, where America goes.

Ours is a fight to build that basic bargain again that created the greatest, largest middle class and the strongest economy the world has ever known: the basic bargain that says if you work hard it will pay off, that responsibility will be rewarded, that everybody gets a fair shot and everybody is doing their fair share and everybody plays by the same set of rules, from Main Street to Wall Street to Washington, DC.

And restoring that basic bargain is why I got into public service in the first place. I started my career working in the shadow of steel mills where folks had been laid off as jobs were being shifted overseas. And for the last decade, we've seen too many families here in Iowa and all across the country struggling with costs that keep rising even when paychecks don't, people racking up more debt, using credit cards, home equity loans just to make the mortgage or pay tuition or put gas in the car or put food on the table.

And all that collapsed in the great recession, where millions of innocent Americans lost their jobs and their homes and their life savings. And we have been fighting to recover ever since from that devastation.

Now, our friends at the Republican Convention, they liked to talk about everything they think is wrong with America, but they didn't have much to say about what they'd do to make