

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

it right. They want your vote, but they don't want you to know their plan because they know you wouldn't buy it, because we tried it.

All they've got to offer is the same prescription they've been offering for 30 years: Tax cuts, tax cuts, tax cuts, gut a few regulations here and there, 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 pounds. [Laughter] Tax cuts to improve your love life. [Laughter] Whatever the issue, they've got one answer.

Now, Iowa, I've cut taxes for folks who need it: middle class families, small-business owners. When I was campaigning in Iowa back in 2007, 2008, I said we're going to cut taxes for middle class families, and that's what we've done. The average family has seen their tax burden go down \$3,600 since I've become President. I kept that promise.

But I don't know about you, I don't believe that another round of tax breaks for millionaires will bring good jobs back to our shores or pay down our deficit. I sure don't think firing teachers or kicking students off of financial aid is somehow going to grow our economy or help us compete with scientists and engineers that are coming out of China.

I don't know about you, but after all we've been through, after the crisis we went through in 2007, 2008, I don't think that rolling back regulations on Wall Street are somehow going to help the small-businesswoman in Iowa City expand or the laid-off construction worker in Des Moines keep his home. We have been there. We have tried that. We are not going back. We are moving forward. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

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

*The President.* Now, I won't pretend—I told you last night, I will not pretend that the path I'm offering is quick or easy. Anybody who says it is, they're not telling you the truth. I've never said it was going to be quick and easy. What I said was, we can move forward. We can make progress. We can make things better. We can

strengthen our middle class. We can rebuild a strong foundation for our economy.

As Bill Clinton reminded us on Wednesday night, it is going to take more than a few years for us to solve challenges that have built up for decades. We know that. Today we learned that after losing 800,000 jobs a month when I took office, businesses added jobs for the 30th month in a row. We've added more than 4.6 million jobs.

But we know that that's not good enough. We can do better. We need to create jobs even faster. We need to fill the hole left by this recession. We need to come out of this crisis stronger than when we went in. I don't want to just get back to where we were in 2007. I want us to do even better. There is a lot more that we can do.

And when Congress gets back to town next week—you don't need to call Dave Loebsack, he's already on the program—but you can tell some of these other Congressmen to give middle class families and small businesses the confidence they need by telling them that their taxes will not go up next year. Everybody agrees we shouldn't raise taxes on the middle class, so let's get that done, and let's get it done now. What's the hold up? What's the wait?

And by the way, we could create a million additional new jobs if this Congress would pass the jobs bill I sent them a year ago: jobs for teachers and construction workers and folks who have been out there looking for work for a long time. We can do that, but I need your help, Iowa. I need your voices.

*Audience members.* You got it! [Laughter]

*The President.* Say, I want to make this point. At our convention, I wasn't just asking for your vote. I was asking us to rally around an achievable set of goals for our country: goals in manufacturing and energy and education and national security and defense. Real, concrete goals 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.

Now, for those of you who missed it last night, let me just repeat what I want us to do.

First, I've got a plan to export more products around the world and outsource fewer jobs around the world.

So the good news is, after a decade of decline, America has created over half a million manufacturing jobs in the last 2½ years. We re-invented the dying auto industry. It's now back on top of the world. So we need to build on that progress, and you've got a choice.

You can go along with the other folks and give more tax breaks to companies that are shipping jobs overseas, or we can start rewarding companies that are investing in new plants and equipment and training new workers and creating new jobs right here in the United States of America.

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 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 and it will help our environment.

And we've doubled the use of renewable energy, especially here in Iowa. We've got thousands of Americans who have jobs today building wind turbines and long-lasting batteries. And today, the United States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in nearly two decades. Think about that.

So now you've got a choice: between the other guys, who want to reverse on that progress, or those of us who want to build on it. See, unlike my opponent, I will not let oil companies write this country's energy plan. I'm not going to let them collect another \$4 billion in corporate welfare from our taxpayers. We've got a better path.

I want to keep investing in wind and solar, clean coal technology, farmers and scientists harnessing new biofuels to power our cars and trucks. I want to put construction workers back to work building homes and factories that waste less energy, and retrofit buildings so that they're using less energy. And we can develop

a hundred years' supply of natural gas that's right beneath our feet and do it in an environmentally sound way. And if you choose this path, we can cut our oil imports by half in 2020 and support more than 600,000 new jobs in natural gas alone. But I'm going to need you to keep moving forward on this energy agenda. We can't go backwards.

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

*The President.* This is great, but you haven't even heard the third thing yet. [Laughter]

Number three, I've got a plan to give more Americans like you the chance to gain the skills they need to compete. Education was the gateway for opportunity for me. It was the gateway for opportunity for Michelle. All of you who are students here understand this is the ticket to a middle class life.

So what we've done over the last 3½ years, for the first time in a generation, nearly every State has answered our call to raise standards for teaching and learning. Some of the worst schools in the country have made real gains in math and reading. Millions of students—maybe some of you—are paying less for college today because we finally took on a system that was wasting billions of dollars on banks and lenders. We cut out the middleman: Let's give those loans directly to students. The money we saved allowed us to help millions of more students and keep student loans and grants out there for folks.

So now you've got a choice. You can go with the other folks' plan—

*Audience members.* No!

*The President.* —and gut education, or we can decide that here in the United States of America, nobody should have their dreams set aside because of a crowded classroom or a crumbling school. No family should have to set aside a college acceptance letter because they don't have the money. No company should have to look for workers in China because they couldn't find the right skills here at home. That's not the future for America. We've got to have the best education system in the world. We know how to do it; we've just got to stay with it.

So help me recruit 100,000 new math and science teachers in the next 10 years. Let's improve early childhood education. Let's give 2 million workers the chance to get the skills they need at local community colleges. And let's help keep tuition low at colleges and universities all across the country, because you guys deserve to have the chance to succeed. That's what this election is about, and that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

*Audience member.* We love you, Obama!

*The President.* I love you back. But let me tell you the fourth thing, you'll love me even more. [Laughter]

Fourth, my plan would reduce our deficit without sticking it to the middle class. Independent analysis has shown that my plan would cut deficits by \$4 trillion. And I've already worked with the Republicans in Congress to cut a trillion dollars' worth of spending, because those of us who care about what Government can do to help people give them a ladder up, we've got to make sure that the money is well spent, and some programs aren't working. We've got to get rid of them. We've got to make sure that government is lean and efficient and providing good service to the American people.

So I'm willing to do more, but I want to make sure that we also reform our Tax Code so that it's simple and fair and so that we ask the wealthiest households in America to pay higher incomes—or higher taxes on incomes over \$250,000. Now, that means that if you make more than 250, you're still getting a tax break on the first 250. It just means that after you make additional money, you're paying the same rate we paid when Bill Clinton was President, the same rate we had when our economy created nearly 23 million new jobs, we had the biggest surplus in history, and we created a whole lot of millionaires to boot. That makes sense for America.

Now, the other side—since everything is cured by a tax cut, especially for wealthy Americans—so far they've balked. They've refused my offer to work with them on this. But this week, President Clinton pointed out that the

single biggest missing from my opponent's plan is arithmetic. [Laughter] It doesn't add up.

Governor Romney and his allies in Congress tell us that somehow we can lower our deficits—they say that the deficit is the most important thing. They say this is vital for our future. But when you ask them, all right, what's your plan, they say, well, we're first going to start by taking \$5 trillion out of the economy and giving it to folks like me and Mr. Romney—taking it out of Treasury, rather—and giving it to me and Mr. Romney, and then, somehow, it's all going to create prosperity for the rest of you.

Well, you do the math. If you want to lower the deficit, but we're spending \$5 trillion on tax cuts for folks who don't need it and weren't even asking for it, how is that going to work? The fact is the numbers in Mr. Romney's plan don't add up to lower deficits. And by the way, they don't add up to more jobs either, because the economists have actually said that my opponent's plan would make the recovery slower, not faster.

So I'm not going along with that plan. I refuse to ask middle class families to give up their deductions for owning a home or raising their 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, just so those with the most can pay less.

And I will never turn Medicare into a voucher system, because no American should have to spend their golden years, after years of labor, at the mercy of insurance companies. They should retire with the care and the dignity that they have earned.

We can strengthen and reform Medicare for the long haul, but we'll do it by reducing the costs of health care, not by just dumping the costs on seniors, asking them to pay thousands of dollars more. And we're going to keep the promise of Social Security by taking the responsible steps to strengthen it, not by turning it over to Wall Street.

Now, let me say rebuilding this economy is essential. That's priority number one. But our prosperity at home is linked to policies abroad. So, 4 years ago, I promised we'd end the war in Iraq; we did. I said we'd wind down the war in Afghanistan; we are. And as a new tower rises above the New York skyline, Al Qaida is on the path to defeat, and bin Laden is dead.

So long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will sustain the strongest military the world's ever known. And when our troops take off their uniform, we will serve them as well as they've served us, because no American who's fought for us should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads or the care that they've earned when they come home.

So just like there's a choice on domestic policy, there's a choice when it comes to foreign affairs. My opponent said it was "tragic" to end the war in Iraq.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* Don't boo, vote. [*Laughter*]

He won't tell us how he'll end the war in Afghanistan. And I have, and I will. And while my opponent would spend more money on military programs that the Joint Chiefs say we don't need, won't make us safer, don't want, I'm going to use that money that we're no longer spending on war to pay down our debt and to put more people back to work rebuilding roads and bridges and schools and runways. Because after a decade of war, it's time to do some nation-building here at home, Iowa. That's what we need to focus on.

This is the choice we now face. This is what the election comes down to. I said yesterday, over and over again, we've been told by our opponents that bigger tax cuts and fewer regulations are the only way to go, that since government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing.

If you can't afford health insurance, their theory is, I hope you don't get sick. If companies are releasing toxic pollution into the air, well, that's just the price of progress. That's their theory. If you can't afford to start a business or go to college, well, take my opponent's advice and borrow money from your parents. [*Laughter*] That's his theory. You know what,

that's not who we are. That's not what this country is about.

When I look at all these young people here, I'm reminded of what is essential about this country. As Americans, we insist on personal responsibility. We insist on individual initiative. Everybody here knows we're not entitled to success. We have to earn it. And we honor entrepreneurs and businesspeople, strivers, the dreamers, the risk takers who are the driving force behind our free enterprise system. And we believe that the free enterprise system is the greatest engine of growth and prosperity that the world has ever known.

But we also believe that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations. We understand that as citizens, 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 as one people.

And nobody understands that better than the people of Iowa, because the election 4 years ago wasn't about me. It was about you. The change that started here in Iowa, the change that started here in Iowa City, you were the change.

You're the reason that there's some little girl out there with a heart disorder who is now going to get surgery that she needs because an insurance company can't limit her coverage. You did that.

You're the reason that students right here at the University of Iowa are going to be able to graduate college with the security of knowing that you can stay on your parent's health insurance plan. You did that.

You're the reason there's a young teacher in Boone, who has a little more time to pay back her college loans so that she can start her life doing what she loves without being buried by debt. You made that possible.

You're the reason a young immigrant, who grew up here and went to school here and pledged allegiance to our flag, will no longer be deported from the only country she's ever called home.

You're the reason why we ended "don't ask, don't tell." You're the reason why thousands of

families have been willing—have been able to say to their loved ones who served us so bravely, “Welcome home.” You’re the reason. [*Applause*] You’re the reason.

And so if you turn back now, if you buy into the cynicism that you hear all the time that says somehow the change we fought isn’t possible, well then, of course, change won’t happen. If you stop, change won’t happen. You are what brings it about. If you give up on the idea that your voice makes a difference, then other voices fill the void: the special interests, the lobbyists, the folks who write \$10 million checks to run all those negative ads, the people who are trying to make it harder for you to vote, the politicians who want to decide who you can marry or want to control health care choices that women should be making for themselves. You’ll leave it up to them to make decisions.

Only you can make sure that doesn’t happen. When you see that sign that says “Forward,” we don’t go forward without you. Only you have that power, and I’m depending on you to use that power. I’m asking you to make sure you don’t give up that power. Every—young people here, I need you to register to vote. If you’re not registered, go on [gottaregister.com](http://gottaregister.com); that’s g-o-t-t-a. Sorry, English teachers, this is not “got to,” it’s “gotta”—[gottaregister.com](http://gottaregister.com).

If you need to know how to vote, including early vote here in Iowa, go to [gottavote.com](http://gottavote.com). I’m asking you not only to register and vote. I

need you to go after your friends, talk to your parents, talk to your cousins, aunts, uncles, cousins, whoever you got. Iowa, I need you to make some phone calls with me. I need you to knock on some doors with me. I need you to tell your friends and your neighbors and your coworkers what’s at stake in this election.

And if you do, we will finish what we started. If you use the power that you have, we will create more good jobs in America. We’ll generate more homegrown energy in America. We’ll hire more good teachers in America. And we will send more young people to college right here in America. We’ll bring our troops home, and we’ll take care of more of our veterans. And we’ll open up more doors of opportunity to every American who’s willing to work hard to walk through them.

That’s what we need. We will win Johnson County. We will win Iowa. We will finish what we started in 2008, and we’ll remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you. Let’s get to work. Let’s move forward.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:47 p.m. at the University of Iowa. In his remarks, he referred to 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.

## The President’s Weekly Address *September 8, 2012*

This week, we mark the 11th anniversary of the September 11 attacks. It’s a time to remember the nearly 3,000 innocent men, women, and children we lost and the families that they left behind. It’s a chance to honor the courage of the first-responders who risked their lives on that day and every day since. And it’s an opportunity to give thanks for our men and women in uniform who have served and sacrificed—sometimes far from home—to keep our country safe.

This anniversary is about them. It’s also a time to reflect on just how far we’ve come as a nation these past 11 years.

On that clear September morning, as America watched the towers fall and the Pentagon burn and the wreckage smoldering in a Pennsylvania field, we were filled with questions. Where had the attacks come from, and how would America respond? Would they fundamentally weaken the country we love? Would they change who we are?