

jobs, boost our economy, and strengthen middle class security. These ideas have been around for months. The American people want to see them passed. But apparently, some Members of Congress are more worried about their jobs and their paychecks this campaign season than they are about yours.

Right now, if Congress had done the right thing, we could be on our way to having a veterans jobs corps that helps returning heroes find work as cops and firefighters in communities all across the country. These men and women have made incredible sacrifices for our country. They shouldn't have to worry about finding a job when they get home. But last week, Republicans in Congress voted it down. And then, they left.

Right now, if Congress had gotten its act together, we would have a farm bill to help farmers and ranchers respond to natural disasters like the drought we had this summer. And we'd have made necessary reforms to give our rural communities some long-term certainty. But so far, Republicans in Congress have dragged their feet. And now they're gone.

Right now, if Congress had acted, thousands of responsible homeowners could be saving an extra \$3,000 a year on their mortgages by refinancing at historically low rates. But instead, Republicans in Congress decided that working families could wait. And now they'll have to wait a little longer.

And finally, if Congress had listened to you, they could have given 98 percent of Americans and 97 percent of small-business owners a guarantee that your taxes won't go up next year by a single dime. This is something we all agree on. It should have gotten done a long time ago.

But Republicans in Congress have refused to budge. They're holding tax cuts for 98 percent of Americans hostage until we pass tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans. And now middle class families and small-business owners are left wondering what their tax bill will look like next year.

All of these ideas would strengthen our economy and help the middle class right now. All of them are supported by Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. There's no reason to wait.

That's why, after going home and listening to their constituents for a few weeks, Members of Congress should come back in November and do this work. They should do the right thing for veterans and farmers, for responsible homeowners and small businesses, for Americans everywhere who are just trying to get ahead.

And if you agree with me, I need your help. Tell your Members of Congress you can't afford to wait any longer. If you get an answering machine, leave a message. If you see them campaigning back home, tell them in person. Because there's been enough talk. It's time for action. That's what you deserve, and that's what it's going to take to move this country forward.

Thanks, and have a wonderful weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3 p.m. on September 21 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on September 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 21, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 22.

## Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Milwaukee, Wisconsin September 22, 2012

*The President.* Hello, everybody! Thank you so much. Thank you! It is great to be here. Thank you. All right, everybody have a seat, have a seat.

*Audience member.* I love you!

*The President.* I love you back.

It is good to be in Milwaukee. First of all, it's just good to be this close to my house. [Laughter] Take it straight down an hour and a half, and I'm home. But—although I've got to say that I forgot that late September, it already starts getting a little chilly around here.

[*Laughter*] I've been getting a little spoiled down in DC; it's still 75 degrees down there.

But it's also great to be here because I see a lot of friends who I haven't seen for a long time—first of all, your outstanding mayor, Tom Barrett. And then, to have maybe the best baseball player of all time introduce you, that's not bad either—Hank Aaron in the house. And it's great to see all of you.

*Audience member.* Thank you!

*The President.* Backstage is my campaign manager, Jim Messina. He drove up from Chicago. And he's been telling me a story—he told me a story about he was at some event—I wasn't at it—but he saw this young couple, and they had this adorable 4-year-old boy. And they were talking, and the parents were very proud that the 4-year-old already knew me. And there was a picture up there, and they said, "Who's that?" And the 4-year-old says, "That's Barack Obama." And they said, "So what does Barack Obama do?" And Sammy, the young boy, he thinks for a second, and he says, "He approves this message." [*Laughter*] He approves this message.

So that's what I do. [*Laughter*] I approve this message. It is election season, and the message I approve is important because in the coming weeks, folks here in Wisconsin and all across the country are going to have a very big decision to make, not just between two candidates or two political parties, but two fundamentally different paths for America, two different visions for our future.

My opponent, he believes in top-down economics, thinks that if you spend another \$5 trillion on a tax cut skewed towards the wealthy that prosperity will rain down on everybody else.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* No hissing or booing, just voting; that's what we need. [*Laughter*] Voting.

But the idea is you do that, maybe get rid of some regulations, deficit will disappear, we'll all live happily ever after. Now, the problem, of course, is we just tried this. We tried it during the last decade. It didn't work then. Top-down economics never works. The country doesn't succeed when just those at the very top are do-

ing well. We succeed when the middle class gets bigger, when it feels greater security, when everybody has got a chance to climb into that middle class and everybody has a chance to live up to their God-given potential.

We can't get very far if we're just writing off half the country as a bunch of victims, or presume that somehow they want to be dependent on government or don't want to take responsibility for their own lives. Because wherever I travel, folks are working hard. Folks understand everybody has got to take initiative. People understand that we're all responsible for ourselves. But people also understand that we've got obligations to each other.

When I go and meet students who are trying to work through college or single moms putting in overtime to give their child a better future or senior citizens who, after a lifetime of labor, are looking forward to a secure retirement or veterans who have served this country and those in uniform who are fighting to defend our freedom right now, they're not victims. And they sure do take a lot of responsibility. And we don't believe anybody is entitled to success or that government can help people who don't want to help themselves, but we do believe in something called opportunity. We believe in this country hard work should pay off, and responsibility should be rewarded, and everybody should have a fair shot, and everybody should do their fair share, and everybody should play by the same rules. That's the country we believe in. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

Now, I'm not suggesting this is going to be easy. We just went through the worst recession since the Great Depression. We've got big challenges, and some of those challenges have built up over decades. But wherever I travel, one of the things I try to communicate is how much confidence I have in this country, because we are Americans, and we've got so many things going for us. We've got the best workers in the world, and the best businesspeople in the world. We've got the best universities, the best colleges, the best researchers and scientists. We have the most diverse population, full of innovators and risk takers.

There's not a country on Earth that wouldn't trade places with the United States of America. And that's why people continue to travel here from all across the globe in search of opportunity.

So we've got what it takes to succeed. But what's preventing us from realizing all that potential in part is the politics we've been seeing in Washington. And part of what this election is about is giving the American people a voice to break the deadlock and break the gridlock and chart a course that may be harder, but leads to a better place.

What I'm offering is a practical, specific plan to create jobs and grow the middle class, rebuild this economy on a stronger foundation. And that means exporting more products and outsourcing fewer jobs. It starts there. When there were those who said, let's "let Detroit go bankrupt," I said, a million jobs are at stake; we're not going to do that. An iconic American industry is at stake. And 3½ years later, the American auto industry has come roaring back.

We've seen half a million new jobs in manufacturing, the fastest pace since the 1990s. And so the choice now is, do we reverse that progress, or do we move forward?

*Audience members.* Forward!

*The President.* Right answer. Instead of giving tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas, we want to give tax breaks to companies that are investing in new plants and equipment and workers right here in Milwaukee, right here in Wisconsin, right here in the United States of America.

We want to double exports. We could create a million new manufacturing jobs in the next 4 years if we make the right choice in this election.

I want us to control more of our own energy. After 30 years of inaction, we doubled fuel efficiency standards on cars. We have doubled the production of clean energy. Your cars and trucks will go twice as far on a gallon of gas as a consequence of the work that we've done. We've invested in wind and solar, and thousands of jobs have been created all across America in these industries, building wind turbines and long-lasting batteries. The United

States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than it's been in nearly two decades. And now you've got a choice: Do you build on that progress, moving forward, or do we reverse it? Because that's what my opponent is proposing.

I've got a different vision than he does, because I'm not going to let oil companies write our energy policy. I don't want to keep giving them a \$4 billion subsidy when they're making record profits. I want to use that money to invest in wind and solar and clean coal technology and a lot of farmers and scientists to harness new biofuels to power our cars and trucks; put construction workers back to work retrofitting homes and buildings and schools and hospitals to make them more energy efficient; develop a nearly 100-year supply of natural gas that's right beneath our feet. And if we do those things, our plan will cut in half by 2020 our oil imports and create hundreds of thousands of jobs to boot. That's how we move forward.

I want Americans to have the best education system in the world. It was the gateway of opportunity for me and for Michelle and for many of you. And so today, because of the work that we've done over the last 4 years, millions of students are able to go to college because we have taken billions of dollars that were being wasted in the student loan program and made sure that that money was going directly to students. We've seen reforms in 46 of the 50 States as a consequence of our Race to the Top initiative. So we're making progress.

Now we've got a choice, because the other side wants to gut our investment in education to pay for tax breaks for wealthy individuals. And I've got a different vision, because I don't think there's any child that should be deferring their dreams because of an overcrowded classroom or outdated textbooks. I don't think there should be any family who gets a college acceptance letter and has to say, no, we can't do it because we can't afford it. And there shouldn't be a company in America that ends up looking in China for the workers they need because they can't find them right here in the United States of America.

So I'm going to need your help to hire 100,000 new math and science teachers and

improve early childhood education and give 2 million more workers the skills they need—to go to community colleges to train for the jobs that are out there right now, and to work with colleges and universities to cut the growth in tuition. We can meet those goals. We can choose that future. But that's what's at stake over the next several weeks in this election.

We need to reduce our deficit, but we need to do it right. I've put forward a \$4 billion—a \$4 trillion deficit reduction package without sticking it to the middle class. And I've already worked with Republicans to cut a trillion in spending. I'm willing to do more. I'm willing to work with them.

We need a Tax Code that is fair and simple. But we're not just going to cut our way to prosperity. My opponent, his basic proposal is we give a \$5 trillion tax cut so that somebody making \$3 million a year would get a \$250,000 tax break. And every independent analyst who's looked at it says the only way you pay for that is to ask middle class families to pay even more in taxes than they're doing right now.

Now, I've just got a different vision. What I've said is folks who can afford it—like me—can pay a little more. We can keep taxes low for your first \$250,000 worth of income, but after that, we can go back to the rates that Bill Clinton had in place when he was President, when we created 23 million new jobs and went from deficit to surplus, and we created a whole lot of millionaires to boot. Because what happens is when middle class families are doing well, business has more customers, they make more profits, they hire more workers, and we're on a virtuous path.

My opponent's plan, the math just doesn't add up. Bill Clinton pointed that out: You need some arithmetic to present a budget and to reduce the deficit. And you can't reduce a deficit if you're spending trillions of dollars more on tax cuts for folks who don't need them and weren't even asking for them. And that's the reason they haven't been able to explain how it adds up, because it doesn't add up.

I've been very clear. One thing I'm not going to do, I am not going to slash investments in education and make young people pay more

for college just to pay for a tax cut for millionaires and billionaires. I'm not going to kick them off of Head Start, I'm not going to short-change our investment in basic research that could help us find cures for Alzheimer's and cancer, we're not going to turn Medicare into a voucher program in order to pay for tax cuts for the very wealthy. We're not going to eliminate health care for millions of poor and elderly and disabled Americans.

When it comes to Medicare, we need to reduce health care costs. We don't need to shift them onto seniors, asking them to pay thousands of dollars more. And that's what the voucher program that Governor Romney and Mr. Ryan are proposing. Social Security we need to strengthen, but we don't need to turn it over to Wall Street.

And what we also understand is that our prosperity at home is connected to our policies abroad. And so, 4 years ago, I promised many of you that I'd end the war in Iraq, and we did. I said we'd wind down the war in Afghanistan, and we are. And as a new tower rises in New York, we have gone after Al Qaida and we got bin Laden.

But as we were reminded this past week, this is a world still full of serious threats. We're going to have to work to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. We're going to have to make sure that not only our diplomatic posts are safe, but we go after folks who threaten or try to kill Americans. And that's why as long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will sustain the strongest military the world has ever known. And when our troops come home, we'll make sure we're serving them as well as they've served us, because if you fought for this country you shouldn't have to fight for a job when you come home.

My opponent, he's got a different view. He said ending the war in Iraq the way we did was "tragic," doesn't have a plan to wind down the war in Afghanistan. And I've just got a different perspective. I think after a decade of war, it's time for us to do some nation-building here at home. Let's put Americans back to work, using the savings that we obtain, to rebuild our roads and our bridges and our schools and lay

broadband lines into rural communities. Let's do some nation-building right here.

So that's the choice we face. That's what the election is coming down to. The other side, they keep on saying that tax cuts and fewer regulations is the only way. They say that because government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing. We've got a different view. We don't believe in you're-on-your-own economics, what these guys basically argue: If you can't afford health insurance, hope you don't get sick. If a company is polluting the air your children breathe, that's the price of progress. If you can't afford to go to college, borrow some money from your parents. [Laughter]

That's not who we are. We don't think government can solve every problem, but it's not the source of every problem, any more than all the folks that you hear are to blame out of Washington: gays or immigrants or unions or corporations, for that matter. We don't think that anybody is solely to blame for the challenges that we face, but we do believe we're all responsible to solve those problems, that we're all in this together, that as citizens we accept certain responsibilities not only for ourselves, but also to our communities and our Nation, to make sure that the country creates more opportunity for more people.

We understand that America is not just about what can be done for us, but also what's done by us together, as one Nation and as one people.

The election 4 years ago—I said in Charlotte when we were down there—some of you went to the convention—I said it was not about me, it was about you. You were the change. You're the reason that there's a mother in Madison or Green Bay that doesn't have to worry about her son being denied medical coverage because of a congenital condition. You made that happen.

You're the reason some student at Marquette or University of Wisconsin has help paying for her college. You're the reason a veteran can go to school on the new GI bill. You did that. You're the reason that families here in Wisconsin have gotten a tax cut, money they

use to buy groceries and put gas in the car, pay their bills. That's all because of you.

You're the reason why some young immigrant who has gone to school here and played with our kids and sworn allegiance to our flag is not going to suddenly be deported from the only country she's ever known. You're the reason that some outstanding soldier can still serve regardless of who they love because we ended "don't ask, don't tell." You're the reason that families across America are able to say to their loved ones who served us so bravely, "Welcome home." You're the reason.

I made this point down in Florida a couple days ago, saying that you can't change Washington just from the inside. You've got to mobilize the American people. You change it with the help of Americans who are willing to make their voices heard.

My opponent got really excited. He thought, oh, you know—he quickly rewrote his speech. [Laughter] He said, I'll get the job done from the inside. What kind of inside job is he talking about? [Laughter] Inside job rubberstamping a top-down agenda from this Republican Congress? We don't want that.

We don't want an inside job where the energy policies are written by the oil companies and health care policies are written by insurance companies and our Tax Code is written by outsourcers. We don't need an inside job where a politician in Washington is telling women they can't make their own health care decisions. We don't need that kind of inside job.

We want to bring change to Washington. And from the day we began this campaign, but more importantly, from the day I ran for this office last year—or 4 years ago—[laughter]. Seems like just last year. I've always said that change is going to take more than one term and one—more than one President, and it takes more than one party.

It doesn't happen if you write off half the nation before you take office. It happens because you get everybody involved, everybody included—Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, able, disabled—everybody gets involved.

In 2008, 47 percent of the country didn't vote for me. But on election night, I said to those Americans, I may not have won your vote, but I heard your voices, and I'll be your President too. And I don't know how many folks will vote for me in Wisconsin this time around, but I want everybody in Wisconsin to know that, no matter what, I'll be fighting for you.

Because I'm not fighting to create Democratic or Republican jobs, I'm fighting to create American jobs. I'm not fighting to improve schools in red States or blue States, I'm improving schools in the United States of America. I don't believe in just looking out for workers or businesses, or rich or poor, or 53 percent or 47 percent; I'm going to look out for everybody.

## Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Milwaukee September 22, 2012

*The President.* Hello, Wisconsin! Oh, you guys sound like you're fired up already! It is good to be back in Milwaukee! First of all, it's good to be back because this is the closest I've been to home in a couple of months. I was thinking about hopping on the freeway and just driving on down. [Laughter] Hour and a half, maybe a little shorter with the motorcade. [Laughter]

I am also glad to be in Milwaukee because before I came out here, I was able to have an outstanding sampling of bratwurst from Milwaukee.

I'm also glad to be here because I get to see some great friends like your mayor, Tom Barrett, who's in the house; your outstanding Senator Herb Kohl; and your next United States Senator, Tammy Baldwin.

And, just to prove that I am determined to bring everyone together in moving this country forward, I am proud to have a couple of Green Bay Packers in the house. We've got your Jeremichael Finley. We've got Desmond Bishop. And they were pointing out the results of the most recent Bears-Packers game. All I could say to them is, it's a long season. [Laughter] We're going to play you a couple more times.

That's why I'm running for a second term. That's why I need your vote. And if I get it, and if you're willing to work hard these next 6½ weeks, we will win Wisconsin. We will win this election. We will finish what we started, and remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:21 p.m. at the Milwaukee Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Henry L. Aaron, member, Baseball Hall of Fame; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney and Vice Presidential nominee Paul D. Ryan. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

But we're so glad that they are here. And it just goes to show you, we are not as divided as some people think. We are not Bears fans first or Packers fans first, we are Americans first.

Now, unless you've been hiding under a rock or your television is busted, you probably know that we've got an election going on. I was telling folks about a story recently I heard—my campaign manager was talking to this couple; they had this 4-year-old with them. And they saw a picture of me, and the parents said, "Who's that, Sammy?" And the little boy says, "That's Barack Obama." And then they asked, "What does Barack Obama do?" And he thinks for a second, and he says, "He approves that message." [Laughter]

So that's what I do: I approve this message. [Laughter] And that's because, when you heard Mark up here talking—and give Mark a big round of applause for the great job he did—what you heard from Mark is that we've got a very big choice to make in this election. And it's not just between two candidates or two parties, it's a choice between two different paths for America, two different visions for our future.