

world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you, everybody. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. at the Stroh Center at Bowling Green State University. In his remarks, he referred to Seth Melchor, student, Angela Zimmann, instruc-

tor, and Mary E. Mazey, president, Bowling Green State University; Robert B. King, brother of Ms. Mazey; James A. Messina, manager, Obama 2012 reelection campaign; Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney and Vice Presidential nominee Paul D. Ryan; and 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Kent, Ohio September 26, 2012

The President. Hello, Kent State! Hello! Hello, Ohio! Go Flashes! Well, let's begin by giving Bryan a big round of applause for that outstanding introduction. I think Bryan has got some talent. I think he may be going places. He sounded pretty good up here.

I also want to acknowledge your outstanding Congressman, Tim Ryan, who is here. And your mayor, Jerry Fiala, is here. And Mrs. Fiala is here. It's good to see all of you. Thank you. Thank you.

Now, let me say this: Unless you live under a rock or you didn't pay your cable bill—[*laughter*]*—*you probably are aware that there's an election going on right now in Ohio. I was telling the story about my campaign manager who was visiting with a young couple, they had this beautiful young son, 4 years old, his name was Sammy. And there was a picture of me on the wall or something, and they were all excited. They said, "Sammy, who's that?" And Sammy says, "That's Barack Obama." And they said, "Well, what does Barack Obama do?" And he thought about it for a minute, and Sammy says, "He approves this message." [*Laughter*] He approves this message. So you can tell there are too many ads running during election time.

But it's true: I do approve this message. Because, listen, here in Ohio, starting on October 2, just 6 days from now, you get to start voting. You get to have your say. And for all the young people who are here, you can register all the way until October 9, but time is running short if you're not registered. So you've got to register. If you need to know how, go to gottaregister.com. That's not "got to," that's "gotta"—g-o-t-t-a-register.com.

But if you're already registered, you can start voting in 6 days—6 days. It's coming up. And this is important because you've got a very big choice to make.

In fact, those of you who are still standing, feel free to sit down because I'm going to talk for a while here. [*Laughter*] I want you to feel comfortable, because I'm going to see if I can break it down here, what this election is about. That's what I'm going to try to do. [*Applause*] That's what I'm going to try to do.

This is not just a choice between two candidates or two political parties. This is a choice between two fundamentally different visions of our future. My opponent, he favors—he believes in top-down economics. He thinks that if we spend another \$5 trillion on tax cuts that favor the wealthiest Americans, then jobs and prosperity will rain down from the sky, everybody will be better off, we'll all live happily ever after. Now—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Wait, don't boo, vote. [*Laughter*] Vote. Vote.

And the problem with what he's trying to sell is, we just tried that in the last decade. It didn't work then. It won't work now. Top-down economics doesn't work. This country doesn't succeed when just the rich are getting richer. This country succeeds when the middle class is growing, when there are ladders of opportunity for all people, when everybody has the chance to live up to their God-given potential. That's when America grows. That's when everybody does better.

I don't believe we are going to get very far if we've got leaders who write off half the Nation

as a bunch of victims who don't take responsibility for their own lives. Because, let me tell you, I have spent a lot of time in Ohio, and I don't meet a lot of victims. I see a lot of hard-working Ohioans. You know? I see students who are trying to work their way through college. I see single moms, like my mom, putting in overtime to raise their kids right. I see senior citizens who've been saving their entire lives for retirement, veterans who served this country bravely, soldiers who defend our freedom today.

Now, we don't believe that anybody is entitled to success in this country. Everybody's got to work hard. We don't believe government should help people who aren't trying to help themselves. That's not the American way.

But we do believe in something called opportunity. We believe in a country where hard work pays off, where responsibility is rewarded, where everybody gets a fair shot and everybody is doing their fair share and everybody plays by the same rules. We believe in an America where no matter who you are or what you look like or where you come from or who you love, you can make it if you try. That's what I believe. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

Now, I've said this before, and I will say it again, the path I'm offering is not quick or easy. The truth is, we've had problems that have been building up for decades: jobs being shipped overseas, paychecks shrinking even when the cost of everything is going up. So for the last 4 years, we've been working to start restoring that basic bargain that says, if you work hard, you can get ahead. But we've got a lot more to do.

Audience member. I love you, Obama!

The President. I love you back, but let me—[*applause*—]but I want especially the young people to understand, you should feel confident about our future because our problems can be solved, our challenges can be met. We've still got the world's best workers, the best businesses, the best scientists, the best researchers, the best colleges and universities. So there's not a country on Earth that wouldn't

trade places with the United States. But we've got more work to do.

And the path I'm offering, even though it's harder, it's going to lead to a better place. And in case some of you missed the convention or only watched Michelle and didn't watch me—[*laughter*]—which I understand, let me repeat the plan that I put forward: practical, specific, five-point plan to grow our middle class, create strong jobs here in Ohio and around the country, and lay a stronger foundation for our economy.

First thing is I want to see us export more jobs—export more products, excuse me. [*Laughter*] I was channeling my opponent there for a second. [*Laughter*] I want to see us export more products and outsource fewer jobs.

My opponent, several years ago, said let's "let Detroit go bankrupt." And when he said that, he was talking about one in eight Ohio jobs, businesses in 82 out of 88 Ohio counties that count on the auto industry. And so we said, no, this may be hard and it may not be popular, but we're going to bet on American workers. We're going to bet on American manufacturing. And you know what? Today, the American auto industry has come roaring back, with nearly 250,000 new jobs.

And so now you've got a choice. We can give more tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote.

Or we can reward companies that are opening new plants here in Ohio, training new workers in—here in America, creating new jobs here in America.

Audience member. I believe in you, Barack!

The President. Because we've been working on it, you believe me. [*Laughter*] We don't just talk the talk.

My opponent's been spending a lot of time in Ohio lately, and he's been talking tough about China. He says he's going to take the fight right to them. He's going to go after the cheaters, he says. Now, I've got to admit that the message he's delivering now is better than the one that he was delivering all those years he was profiting from investing in companies

that were shipping jobs to China. When you hear his newfound outrage, when you see those ads he's running promising to get tough on China, it's sort of like the fox standing up and saying, "You know, we need to keep the chicken coops more secure." [Laughter] It's just not very credible, because that's not where he's been, except during election season.

Now, on the other hand, you can look at what we've done. Ever single day, I'm waking up thinking about how we strengthen the position of American workers, make sure they get a fair shot in the global economy. So we've brought more trade cases against China in one term than the previous administration did in two, and we've been winning.

When Governor Romney said stopping an unfair surge in Chinese tires would be bad for our workers and bad for America, we said, we're going to do it anyway. We didn't take his advice. And we got over 1,000 Americans back to work.

So you can look at what I've done, and you can look at what he's done, and you'll have a sense of who's going to be fighting for American workers. And you can look at his plan, and you can look at my plan, because he wants to keep open these tax loopholes that encourage jobs overseas. I want to make sure that we're providing tax breaks for companies right here in America. I want to help big factories and small businesses double their exports. I want more goods stamped with "Made in America." I want to create 1 million new manufacturing jobs in the next 4 years. That's what's at stake in this election. And that's why I'm running for a second terms as President of the United States.

Second part of the plan is to control more of our own energy. After 30 years of not doing anything, we raised fuel standards so by the next decade, 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 the environment, and it will help the economy.

We've doubled the amount of renewable energy that we're generating from wind and solar. We've got thousands of Americans, includ-

ing folks right here in Ohio, who work today building wind turbines and long-lasting batteries. Today, America is less dependent on foreign oil than in nearly 20 years. Think about that.

So now you've got a choice. Governor Romney wants to reverse that progress, get rid of tax credits for things like wind energy. I've got a different view. Unlike my opponent, I'm not going to let oil companies write this country's energy plan. And I'm sure not going to let them continue to collect \$4 billion every single year in corporate welfare from our taxpayers. They don't need it. [Applause] They don't need it. They're making money every time you go to the pump.

So let's take that \$4 billion, and let's invest it in wind and solar, clean coal technology. Let's help farmers and scientists harness the power of biofuels. Let's put construction workers back to work retrofitting our buildings and our homes so they waste less energy. Let's go after a hundred-year supply of natural gas that's right beneath our feet. We can create hundreds of thousands of new jobs and improve our economy, and we can cut in half our oil imports by 2020. That's the goal that I am setting. That is what we're fighting for. That's why I'm running for a second term.

I want to make sure that everybody in America gets a great education—everybody. Education was the gateway of opportunity for me. It was the only reason I'm standing here. I wasn't born to wealth or fame, but I got a great education. Same thing for Michelle; same thing for a lot of you. It's the gateway to the middle class. And so, again, we don't just talk the talk, we've walked the walk. We took on a system that was sending billions of dollars to banks and lenders in the student loan system, we said why do we need middlemen? Let's give the loans directly to students. We can help keep interest rates low. We can provide more Pell grants. That's what we've been fighting for.

So again, you've got a choice, because Governor Romney wants to roll back all that stuff we did.

Audience member [Inaudible]—a shame.

The President. It is a shame.

So we can gut education to pay for more tax breaks for the wealthy, or we can decide that in the United States of America, no child should have her dreams deferred because of a overcrowded classroom. No family should have to set aside a college acceptance letter because they don't have the money. No business should have to look for workers in China because they can't find ones with the right skills here in the United States.

So, Ohio, I am asking you to help me recruit 100,000 new math and science teachers. Help me improve early childhood education. Help me give 2 million workers the chance to learn the skills they need at community colleges that will lead directly to a new job. Help us work with colleges and universities to cut the cost of tuition. Help us meet those goals. Help us choose that future for America.

Number four, let's reduce the deficit in a way that doesn't stick it to middle class families. I've already worked with Republicans in Congress to cut \$1 trillion in spending, and I'm willing to do more. I've put forward a plan for a \$4 trillion deficit reduction, but to do that, we can't just cut our way to prosperity. We've got to reform our Tax Code so that it's simple and it's fair, and ask the wealthiest households to pay higher taxes on incomes over \$250,000; to go back to the same rate we had when Bill Clinton was President, when we created nearly 23 million new jobs and the biggest surplus in history and a whole lot of millionaires to boot.

Now, in fairness, my opponent has a plan too, when it comes to taxes. But as President Clinton said, it doesn't have any arithmetic. [Laughter] They're trying to sell the idea that you can somehow lower our deficit by spending trillions of dollars more on tax breaks for the wealthy. And no matter how many times they try to "reboot" their campaign, no matter how many times they try to tell you they're going to start talking specifics really soon, they don't do it. And the reason is because the math doesn't work. They do not—they cannot explain say how \$5 trillion in tax cuts are going to be put on the table without raising taxes on middle class families.

And that's—they don't stop there. They want to spend another \$2 trillion in new military spending that our military hasn't asked for. So the reason they don't explain it is because they can't. The math does not add up.

So if they go around, as they have in Ohio, with some board behind them with the numbers and saying how it's a moral obligation to reduce the deficit, just ask them, well, explain to us how the numbers work. Because they don't. They don't have a deficit reduction plan. They have a deficit expansion plan.

My—Governor Romney may think it's fair that somebody who makes \$20 million a year like he does should pay a lower tax rate than a teacher or an autoworker who makes \$50,000.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo—

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote.

I don't think that's fair. I don't think it helps the economy grow. We cut taxes for middle class families, and we want to keep taxes low for 98 percent of Americans, 97 percent of small businesses. And the reason is, when middle class families have a little money in their pocket, what do they do?

Audience members. Spend it!

The President. Yes, because you've got a lot of needs. The—so you may end up trading in that 10-year-old car, buying a new one. Maybe you buy a new computer for your kid who is going off to college. And what happens when you spend money? That means businesses have more customers; they make more profits; they then hire more workers; the economy grows. That's what we did in the nineties. That's what we can do today. That's the way forward.

So I'm looking forward to working with Republicans to reduce our deficit, but 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. We're not going to do that. I refuse to ask all the students here to pay more for college or to kick children off of Head Start programs so I can take a tax break that we don't need.

We're not going to kick the poor and the elderly and the disabled out of health care to pay

for a tax cut like that that doesn't help us grow. And I will not turn Medicare into a voucher. I will not do that. After a lifetime of labor, no American should have their golden years, their retirement years, spent at the mercy of insurance companies. They should retire with dignity and respect; they've earned it.

So we're going to—we'll reform and strengthen Medicare for the long haul, but we'll do it the right way, by actually reducing costs, not by dumping those costs onto seniors. Same thing with Social Security: We'll take responsible steps to strengthen it, but we're not going to turn it over to Wall Street.

Now, obviously, we've been talking a lot about what happens here at home, but that's connected to what happens abroad. In 2008, I said I'd end the war in Iraq, and I did. I said that we'd wind down the war in Afghanistan in a responsible way, and we are. Because of the incredible service and sacrifice of our troops, a new tower is rising above the New York skyline, Al Qaida is on the path to defeat, Usama bin Laden is dead.

But we still face serious threats in the world. And that's why, so long as I am Commander in Chief, we are going to maintain the strongest military the world's ever known. And when our troops come home and they take off that uniform, we're going to serve them as well as they've served us, because they shouldn't have to fight for a job or a roof over their head when they come home. We deserve—they deserve our honor and our respect, and we've got to do what we need to do to make sure they have opportunity in this country.

But even on foreign policy, my opponent has a different view. He said it was "tragic" the way I ended the war in Iraq. He still hasn't explained how he'd end the war in Afghanistan. I have, and I will. And what I've also said is, I'm going to use some of the 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 right here at home. That's what we're going to start fighting for.

So, Kent State, that's the choice we now face. That's what this election comes down to. The other side, they like to tell you—and they're going to spend a whole lot of money; they get these \$10 million checks from these people who can afford to write \$10 million. And they're going to run ad after ad, telling you that bigger tax cuts, fewer regulations, that's the only way to go. They're going to tell you that since government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing. Their basic theory is if you can't afford health care, hope you don't get sick. [Laughter] If some company is polluting the air your children are breathing, well, that's the price of progress. If you can't afford to go to college, borrow money from your parents. [Laughter]

That's not who we are. That's not what we're about. Government can't solve every problem, but it's not the source of all our problems either. Just like—we have this kind of politics where we pretend that somebody out there is to blame: welfare recipients or corporations or unions or immigrants or gays. That's not how this country works.

Here in America, we believe we're all in this together. We believe that America only works where we accept responsibility for ourselves, but we accept responsibility for the country and for each other. That's how we create opportunity. That's how we create possibility. We understand America is not about what can be done for us, but what can be done by us, together, as one Nation and as one people.

And we've got proof that this works. Four years ago, I said this isn't about me, I said it was about you.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. That's what I said. [Laughter] So you're the reason that some mother in Cleveland doesn't have to worry about her kid not getting health insurance because of a pre-existing condition. You made that happen.

You're the reason that factory worker in Toledo or Lordstown is back on the line building the best cars in the world.

You're the reason some student in Akron or Columbus or at Kent State can pay for a

college education or some veteran can go to college on the new GI bill.

You're the reason some young immigrant who was brought here as a kid and has been raised here and pledged allegiance to our flag is not suddenly going to be deported to a country she's never known. You're the reason why some outstanding soldier won't be kicked out of the military because of who they are or who they love.

You're the reason why thousands of families have finally been able to say to the loved ones who served us so bravely, "Welcome home." [Applause] Welcome home. You're the reason. You made that happen.

I was talking about this down in Florida the other day. I said, one thing I've learned is, you can't just change Washington from the inside, you've got to change it from the outside. You change it with the help of ordinary Americans who are making their voices heard. And my opponent got real excited about this. He rewrote his speech. He said, the President has admitted defeat; he's waved the white flag; I'm going to get the job done from the inside.

And I'm thinking, what kind of inside job is he talking about? [Laughter] Is he talking about an inside job of rubberstamping a top-down agenda from this Republican Congress? Because if he is, we don't want it. Is he talking about the inside job of having oil companies write our energy policies or our insurance companies writing our health care plans or folks who are outsourcing jobs writing our Tax Code? Because if that's what he's talking about, we don't want it.

Is he talking about the inside job of having politicians control health care choices that women are perfectly capable of making themselves? Because if he is, we don't want it. We don't need that. We don't need that inside job. [Applause] We don't need that.

See, I believe in you. [Applause] I believe in you. I believe in your voices. From the beginning of this campaign, we've always said change takes more than one term, one year, one President, takes more than one party. It

certainly doesn't happen if you write off half the Nation before you even take office.

You know, on election night, 2008, we were in Grant Park; 47 percent of the American people didn't vote for me. They voted for——

Audience member. We've got your back.

The President. But no, no—47 percent of the country did not vote for me. But you know, I said to those Americans specifically, I looked at the camera, and I said, I may not have won your vote, but I hear your voices. I need your help. I will be your President too.

And so I'd say to the whole State of Ohio, I don't know how many of you will be with me this time around, but it doesn't matter, because I'm running to be your President, to represent everybody. I'm not fighting to create Democratic jobs 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 fighting to improve schools in the United States of America.

The values of hard work and personal responsibility and looking out for one another, those values aren't worker values or business values or rich or poor values or 1 percent values or 99 percent values, they're American values. They belong to all of us.

I still believe we are not as divided as our politics suggest. I still believe we've got more in common than the pundits tell us. I still believe in you. And if you keep on believing in me, I want you to register to vote by October 9. I want you to start voting next Tuesday, October 2.

And if you do, if you stand with me, if you're knocking on some doors with me and making some phone calls with me, we'll win Portage County. We will win Ohio. We will finish what we started. And we'll remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you, Ohio. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:40 p.m. at the Memorial Athletic and Convocation Center at Kent State University. In his remarks, he re-

ferred to Bryan Staul, student, Kent State University; Carol Sue Fiala, wife of Mayor Jerry T. Fiala of Kent, OH; James A. Messina, manag-

er, Obama 2012 reelection campaign; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Virginia Beach, Virginia September 27, 2012

The President. Jim Webb!

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

The President. Thank you! How's it going, Virginia Beach? It—[laughter].

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

The President. Thank you. It is good to be back. It is good to have all kinds of friends here today. I want to acknowledge a couple of people. First of all, outstanding Congressman Bobby Scott. A good man who's running to join him in Congress, Paul Hirschbiel. And I could not be prouder of a man who has served this country his entire life—as a marine, as Secretary of the Navy, as an advocate for veterans, as a United States Senator, somebody who is responsible for successfully passing the post-9/11 GI bill—my friend and a true patriot, Senator Jim Webb.

And it's good to see all of you.

Now, unless you've been living under a rock or you didn't pay your cable bill—[laughter]—you may be aware that there's an election going on here in Virginia. I was talking to my campaign manager. He was meeting with a young couple; they had a 4-year-old son with them, Sammy. And they're strong supporters, and so they were excited; they saw a picture of me on the wall, and they said, "Sammy, Sammy, who's that?" And the 4-year-old says, "That's Barack Obama." And then they said, "And what does Barack Obama do?" And Sammy thought about it for a second, and then he said, "He approves this message." [Laughter] He approves this message. There's a true story.

So you know you're in campaign season, and I approve this message. And I've got to tell you, the reason is, in the coming weeks, you're going to have a very big choice to make. I mean, Jim could not have been more eloquent about what's at stake. This is not just a choice be-

tween two candidates or two parties, it's a choice between two fundamentally different visions about how we move forward, two different ideas about our future.

See, today, I believe that as a nation, we're moving forward again. We're not where we need to be, not yet. We've got a lot more folks who have to get back to work. We've got a lot more work to do to make the middle class secure again. But the question is, whose plan is better for you?

Audience members. Yours!

The President. No, well, I know some in the crowd may be a little biased, but—[laughter]—but I also want to speak to the audience who may be seeing this over the television.

Look, my opponent's a big believer in top-down economics. He thinks that if you just spend another \$5 trillion on tax cuts that favor the wealthiest Americans, if you get rid of more regulations on Wall Street, that jobs and prosperity will rain down on everybody. The deficit will magically disappear. We'll live happily ever after.

But there's a problem with this. We just tried this. We tried it in the last decade, before I was elected President. It didn't work then, and it won't work now. Because top-down economics doesn't work. We don't need to double down on the same trickle-down policies that got us into this mess in the first place.

This country doesn't succeed when only the rich get richer. We succeed when the middle class gets bigger, when there are ladders of opportunity for all who strive to get into the middle class, when everybody who's willing to work hard has a chance to get ahead and live up to their God-given potential.

I don't think we can get very far with leaders who write off half the Nation as a bunch of victims who never take responsibility for their own lives. I know I travel around a lot in