

Letter to Congressional Leaders on an Implementation Plan for the Whole-of-Government Vision Prescribed in the 2010 National Security Strategy September 27, 2012

Dear _____:

Pursuant to section 1072 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81), I hereby submit the enclosed implementation plan for the whole-of-government vision prescribed in the 2010 National Security Strategy.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Daniel K. Inouye, chairman, and W. Thad Cochran, vice chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Carl M. Levin, chairman, and John S. McCain III, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; G. Kent Conrad, chairman, and Jefferson B. Sessions III, ranking member, Senate Committee on the Budget; John F. Kerry, chairman, and Richard G. Lugar, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Joseph I. Lieberman, chairman, and Susan M. Collins, ranking member, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; Dianne Feinstein, chair,

and C. Saxby Chambliss, vice chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; Patrick J. Leahy, chairman, and Charles E. Grassley, ranking member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Harold D. Rogers, chairman, and Norman D. Dicks, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, chairman, and Adam Smith, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services; Paul D. Ryan, chairman, and Chris Van Hollen, ranking member, House Committee on the Budget; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chair, and Howard L. Berman, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Peter T. King, chairman, and Bennie G. Thompson, ranking member, House Committee on Homeland Security; Michael J. Rogers, chairman, and C.A. “Dutch” Ruppertsberger, ranking member, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; Lamar S. Smith, chairman, and John J. Conyers, Jr., ranking member, House Committee on the Judiciary; and Darrell E. Issa, chairman, and Elijah E. Cummings, ranking member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser September 28, 2012

The President. Hello, everybody! How’s everybody doing? Well—

Audience member. Fired up!

The President. You’re still fired up?

Audience members. Fired up!

The President. You’re still ready to go?

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Well, I am too.

I gather I don’t have to tell you guys there’s an election going on. There are so many political ads on these days. I was with Jim Messina, my campaign manager, and he told me a story about meeting with this young couple, really nice people, and they’re big supporters. And

they had this 4-year-old son named Sammy with them. And so, during the meeting, there’s a picture of me on the wall, and the parents, proud as they are of their son, they say, “Sammy, who’s that?” And he said, “That’s Barack Obama.” [*Laughter*] And they say, “What does Barack Obama do?” And he said—he thought for a second, and he said, “He approves this message.” [*Laughter*] That’s what he said. True story. That’s a true story.

So there are a lot of ads out there. And I do approve this message. First of all, I approve the message of Chris Van Hollen, one of the finest

Congressmen that we have, and I'm so grateful to him.

And I approve this message because in the coming weeks, we, as Americans, have a really big choice to make, not just between two candidates or two political parties, but between two different visions of where we need to take this country.

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 work to do—a lot of folks unemployed, housing market's still weak in some places—a lot of work to do to make the middle class more secure. But the question right now is, whose plan is going to keep us moving forward?

Audience members. Your plan!

The President. That's the right answer. You guys are a little biased. [*Laughter*]

My opponent's plan basically reflects his belief in top-down economics. He thinks that if we just spend another \$5 trillion on tax cuts that favor the wealthiest Americans, we get rid of Wall Street regulations, all problems will be solved and jobs and prosperity will rain down on everybody's head and we'll all live happily ever after. [*Laughter*]

Now, the problem, as you are aware, is that we tried that. We tried that in the last decade. It did not work then; it will not work now. Top-down economics does not work. Instead of doubling down on the same trickle-down economics that got us into this mess in the first place, we need to keep moving forward with an economy in which the middle class is getting more secure, the middle class is growing. We succeed when the middle class sees greater opportunity and everybody who wants to work their way into the middle class see ladders of opportunity, where everybody can live up to their God-given potential. We certainly can't go very far with a leader who writes off half the Nation as a bunch of victims.

When I travel this country, I don't meet victims. I meet students who are trying to work their way through college. I meet—[*ap- plause*—]—case in point. I meet single moms, like my mom, who are putting in overtime to raise their kids right. I meet senior citizens

who worked all their lives and have been saving for retirement. I meet veterans who served this country bravely. I meet soldiers who are defending our freedom every single day. They don't think and I don't think that anybody is entitled to success in this country.

We don't believe that government should be helping people who refuse to help themselves. But we do believe in opportunity. We do believe that hard work should pay off. We do believe everyone should get a fair shot and everybody does their fair share and everybody plays by the same rules.

We believe in an America where no matter what you look like or where you come from or who you love, you can make it if you try. That's the country we believe in. That's what we're fighting for. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

I believe in what we're calling a new economic patriotism, rooted in that belief that a strong economy starts with a strong middle class. And I don't pretend that the path that we need to be on is going to be quick or easy. It took more than a few years to get to where we are, and it's going to take more time to get us out of this mess that was created by some of the same policies that my opponent's now proposing.

But our problems can be solved. Our challenges can be met. We've still got the best workers in the world, the best universities, the best scientists, the best—we've got the best stuff; we just got to bring it together. And listen, if you doubt it, just understand there's not a country on Earth that wouldn't trade places us—with us right now. That's why people from all around the world want to come here.

So the path I'm offering may be harder, but it leads to a better place. And some of you have seen we've been putting forward a longer ad explaining exactly how we're going to grow the middle class, create jobs, rebuild an economy on a stronger foundation. It starts with exporting more products, outsourcing fewer jobs.

I don't think we should have let Detroit go bankrupt. We reinvented an auto industry that's back on top of the world. We're creating more manufacturing jobs than any time since

the 1990s, and so now people have a choice: Should we give more tax breaks to companies that are shipping jobs overseas, or do we start rewarding companies that are opening new plants and creating jobs right here in the United States of America?

I want to help businesses double their exports in this country. I want to create a million new manufacturing jobs over the next 4 years, and you can make that happen by the choice we make in this election.

I want greater control of our energy. After 30 years of doing nothing, we raised fuel efficiency standards on cars so by the middle of the next decade, your car or truck will go twice as far on a gallon of gas. We have doubled the amount of renewable energy from wind and solar; we're creating thousands of jobs all across the country as a result. And today, the United States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in nearly two decades.

So the choice is, do we build on this progress, or do we go with a plan that would reverse it, like my opponent's proposing? I do not believe in letting oil companies write this country's energy plan. I don't believe in endangering our coastlines or having them continue to collect another \$4 billion in corporate welfare from our taxpayers.

So we've got a better plan that keeps investing in wind and solar and clean coal technology and allows farmers and scientists to harness new biofuels that power our cars and trucks. And we're putting construction workers back to work retrofitting buildings so they use less energy, and developing a hundred-year supply of natural gas. If we do all that, we can cut our oil imports in half by 2020. It's good for the environment, it's good for the economy, it's good for our national security. That's what I mean when I say we need to go forward. That's what we're going to need to do.

We need to give every American the chance to compete by making sure we've got the best education system in the world. That was—that's the reason I'm standing here today. That's the gateway of opportunity and the gateway into the middle class. And because of the

work we've already done, millions of young people are better able to afford college already. And now we've got to do more by hiring a 100,000 new math and science teachers; by making sure that we're providing millions of new slots for folks to retrain at community colleges for the jobs that exist right now; continue to lower tuition costs for students so they're not loaded up with debt once they graduate.

My opponent thinks that it makes sense for us to gut our investment in education in order to give a tax break to the wealthy. I disagree. I think what the United States of America means is that no child should be deprived of a good education. It means that no family should have to set aside a college acceptance letter just because they don't have the money. And no employer should have to look for workers with the right skills in China instead of the United States of America. I want us to focus on education. That's what we've been doing. That's what we're going to keep on doing in a second term when I'm President of the United States.

I want to make sure that we're lowering our deficit in a way that doesn't stick it to the middle class. Now, I put forward a \$4 trillion deficit reduction package; a trillion dollars of cuts we've already made working with this Congress. We can do more, but we're not going to just cut our way to prosperity. We've got to reform our Tax Code so it's simple and it's fair and so that the wealthiest are doing a little bit more, going back to the same rates we had when Bill Clinton was President and our economy created nearly 23 million new jobs, the biggest surplus in history, and a whole lot of millionaires to boot.

So, in fairness, my opponent has a plan too. But as Bill Clinton pointed out, it's missing arithmetic. [*Laughter*] You've got a \$5 trillion tax cut skewed towards the wealthy, \$2 trillion in additional defense spending that our military says we don't need, and no identifiable way to pay for it. Either that blows up our deficit or, as independent analysts have said, that's going to end up meaning middle class families end up paying higher taxes. That's not the way to grow an economy.

We cut taxes for middle class families because what do you do when you've got a little extra money? You spend it. Which means businesses have more customers, they make higher profits, they in turn hire more workers. That's how you grow an economy.

My opponent thinks it's fair that somebody who makes \$20 million a year like he does pays a lower tax rate than a cop or a teacher who makes \$50,000. I don't think that's fair. I don't think that helps grow our economy.

Audience members. No!

The President. 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. We're not going to do that. We're not going to ask students to pay more for college or kick kids off of Head Start or eliminate health insurance for millions of Americans who are elderly or disabled or poor, just to pay for a tax cut for me or my opponent.

And we will not turn Medicare into a voucher program. Because that's something seniors, after a lifetime of labor, have earned. And we don't want them spending their golden years at the mercy of insurance companies. They should retire with the dignity and the care that they have earned.

So—and by the way, just like we're not turning Medicare into a voucher, we're not going to turn over Social Security to Wall Street. We'll strengthen those systems, but we'll do it in a responsible way to make sure it's there for future generations.

Now, that's not all that's at stake in this election. Obviously, our prosperity at home is linked to what we do abroad. Four years ago, I promised we'd end the war in Iraq, and I did. I said we'd wind down the war in Afghanistan in a responsible way, and we are. We've got a new tower rising above the New York skyline, Al Qaida is on the run, and bin Laden is dead. We have delivered on our promise.

But as we've seen just in the last few weeks, we still face serious threats in the world. That's why as long as I'm Commander in Chief, we'll continue to have the strongest military the world has ever known. That's why when our young—when our men and women come

home after serving us, we're going to make sure that we serve them just as good. Because nobody should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they have fought on behalf of this country. That's a solemn pledge that I make.

Now, my opponent, he thought ending the war in Iraq was "tragic." He doesn't have a plan to wind down the war in Afghanistan. I have, and I will. And I'm also going to use the money that we're saving as we wind down these wars to do some nation-building here at home, put people back to work rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our runways. After a decade of war, it's time to do some nation-building here. It really is. So that's the choice we face. That's what's at stake. It's about how we think about this country.

The other side keeps telling us through all these advertising—and they're going to be running a lot more over the next 5, 6 weeks—that bigger tax cuts, fewer regulations, that's the only way to go; that because government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing. Their basic philosophy is, if you don't have health insurance, hope you don't get sick. *[Laughter]* If you can't afford college, borrow money from your parents. *[Laughter]*

That's not who we are. We don't think government can solve all our problems, but we also don't think it's the source of all our problems. We actually think that, just as we all have to take individual initiative, all have to take personal responsibility, we also think that as citizens, we've got obligations to each other and to future generations.

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 that's why I've said before and I will say again, the election 4 years ago wasn't about me, it was about you. You're the reason there's a little girl with a heart disorder who is going to be able to get the surgery she needs because insurance companies can't discriminate against kids with preexisting conditions. You're the reason why some single mom in Ohio is able to help her son go to college now. You did that.

You're the reason why we're able to make sure that somebody who grew up here, pledged allegiance to their flag, that they're not going to be suddenly deported from the only nation that they've ever called home.

You're the reason why we ended "don't ask, don't tell." You're the reason why our troops are coming home. You did that.

So we can take confidence in the fact that we can make change, but it's going to take you guys continuing to step up. Change is going to take more than one term or one President or one party. It's not going to happen if you write off half the Nation.

Election day, 47 percent of the people did not vote for me. But I said, I may not have your vote, but I hear your voices, I need your help, and I will be your President too. And I don't know how many folks will vote for me this time around, but I say the same to—thing to them. I will be your President too.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser September 28, 2012

Thank you so much, everybody, for being here. Let me say thank you to Jay and Sharon who have just been extraordinary friends. This is probably the fourth or fifth event that I've had here, and they have been with me every step of the way. And as Jay points out, being the beloved Senator from West Virginia, where my vote totals don't always match my aspirations—[laughter]—for Jay to have been such a great friend all these years means the world to me.

And Sharon, who does so much to keep Jay in line—[laughter]—but also just a powerhouse in her own right, you guys have just both been extraordinary friends, and I'm very, very grateful. So give them a big round of applause.

I am so thankful to all of you. As I look around the room, I see people who have been with me since I was running for Senate and a lot of people in this space who supported me when nobody could pronounce my name. We've traveled a long road.

I'm not fighting to create Democrat or Republican jobs, I'm fighting to create American jobs. I'm not fighting to improve schools in blue States or red States, I'm fighting to improve schools in the United States of America. I'm not fighting on behalf of rich values or poor values or 47 percent values or 53 percent values, I'm fighting for American values.

I still believe in you. I still believe we're not as divided as the pundits make it seem. And if you are willing to work with me and knock on some doors and make some phone calls and go out there and get busy over the next 6 weeks, we will win this election, finish what we started, and remind the world why the United States is the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m. at the Capital Hilton hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney.

A friend of mine, Abner Mikva, used to say that being friends with a politician is like perpetually having a kid in college. [Laughter] Every few months you have to write a check. [Laughter] And it just keeps on going and going, and you're wondering when is it going to stop. The good news is, I'm about to graduate. [Laughter] This is about to be my last semester when it comes to political races. Obviously, we couldn't have come this far without your support and friendship, and I'm grateful for that.

We are in the midst of political season. My campaign manager, Jim Messina, tells a story from a couple of months ago. This is a true story. He was with a couple who—big supporters of mine. They had brought their 4-year-old son Sammy, and they were meeting with Jim and there was a picture of me. And they said, "Sammy, who's that?" And he said, "That's Barack Obama." And they said, "And what does Barack Obama do?" And Sammy thought about it for a second, and he says, "He ap-