

didn't say much; just was doing a great job. At the end, as I was signing the check—and yes, I do still have a credit card. I mean, I—[*laughter*—sometimes, it takes me a while to find it. [*Laughter*] At the end, I handed him over the credit card, and he said, “Mr. President, I hope you don't mind, I hope I'm not being obtrusive, but I just want you to know that you saved my mom's life.” And I said, “Well, of course I don't mind, but what do you mean?” And he said: “Well, my mother had a stroke. She didn't yet qualify for Medicare. And because of the health care law, she was able to get insurance and can pay for her medications. And so I just want you to know that that meant a lot to me, and I hope you didn't mind me saying that.”

And as he went out, I told Michelle that probably once a day I get something like that, maybe not always as dramatic. But every time I have a conversation like that, it reminds me that what we do is not sport. It's not simply about who's up and who's down and polls and how much money is raised and so forth. Ultimately, it's about that young man and his mom and the belief that in this great country of ours, we're going to make sure that every single person is treated with dignity and with respect and that they're going to have a chance, if they're willing to work hard and take responsibility, to live a full and fruitful life. That's why we do this. That's what these events are about. It's in service of this larger goal.

And sometimes, we lose sight of that. But with 29 days left in this campaign, I hope none of you lose sight of it, because we've got a lot more work to do. We've got a lot more work to

do to win the election, and then we have a lot more work to do to actually deliver on the promise.

When we were in Grant Park in 2008, I explained this is not the end point; this is simply the end of the beginning. And now we've got to get started to really deliver on the incredible possibilities and promise of this country if we make good decisions and we keep the future of our kids and our grandkids in mind in everything that we do.

Now, having said all that, Pam is right that I am pretty competitive, and I very much intend to win this election. But we're only going to do it if everybody is almost obsessive for the next 29 days. So most of you have contributed to the campaign, but there is more than you can do over the next 29 days. There's a phone call you can make. There's an e-mail you can send. There is a trip into Nevada you can do to knock on doors. There are cousins and uncles and friends in battleground States all across the country.

You need to mobilize every resource that you've got to make sure that we bring this home. And I'm confident we will, but we can't take anything for granted.

So with that, let me just open it up to some questions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:07 p.m. at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Pamela Hamamoto, a former classmate from the Punahou School in Honolulu, HI. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks at a Campaign Rally in San Francisco October 8, 2012

*The President.* Hello, San Francisco! Thank you! I love you back! Thank you, everybody.

Now, there are a couple of people I want to acknowledge who are here tonight. First of all, give it up for your mayor, Ed Lee, in the house. Your attorney general, Kamala Harris, is here. Got a couple of outstanding Members of Congress: Barbara Lee and Pete Stark. It appears that John Legend and Mi-

chael Franti did a pretty good job firing you up.

And we've got two San Francisco 49ers: Alex Smith—your quarterback, Alex Smith; that tight end, Vernon Davis. I've had a chance to meet them. They seem like wonderful young men and just so impressive and poised. So I can't help but wish them the best of luck, until they play my Bears in week 11.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* What happened? What happened? Come on. [*Laughter*]

Now, I know that was quite a show. You guys have been having fun. But now we've got to get down to business. We're here because we've got some work to do. We're here because we've got an election to win. We're here because everything we fought for in 2008 is on the line in 2012. And I'm going to need your help to finish what we started.

Now, 4 years ago, I made a few commitments to you. I told you I'd end the war in Iraq, and I did. I said I'd end the war in Afghanistan, and we are. I said we'd refocus on the people who actually attacked us on 9/11. And today, Al Qaida is on its heels, and Usama bin Laden is no more.

Four years ago, I promised to cut taxes for middle class families, and we have by \$3,600. I promised to cut taxes for small-business owners, and we have 18 times. We got back every dime used to rescue the banks, and we passed a law to end taxpayer-funded Wall Street bailouts for good.

We passed health care reform, also known as, a.k.a. Obamacare. And we did so because I do care. I care that folks with preexisting conditions can still get insurance. I care that your insurance companies don't jerk you around. I care that we make sure that being a woman is not considered a preexisting condition and an excuse to pay people more.

I told you that we would make sure that nobody who serves this country so bravely will ever be kicked out of the military because of who they are or who they love. We ended "don't ask, don't tell."

When Governor Romney said, we should "let Detroit go bankrupt," we said, I don't think we're going to take your business advice. We reinvented a dying auto industry that's now back on top of the world.

Three years—three years—after the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, our businesses have created more than 5 million new jobs. This past Friday, we found out that the unem-

ployment rate had fallen from a height of 10 percent down to 7.8 [percent],<sup>o</sup> the lowest level since I took office. Manufacturers are coming back to America. Home values are on the rise.

We are not there yet. We're not where we need to be yet. There are still too many Americans looking for work, too many families who are having trouble paying the bills, too many homes underwater, too many young people burdened with debt from going to school. But if there's one thing I know, it is this: We have come too far to turn back now.

The last thing we can afford, California, right now is 4 years of the very same policies that led us into the mess in the first place. We've spent 4 years cleaning it up. We don't want another mess. We can't allow that to happen. I won't allow it to happen. And that's why I'm running for a second term for President of the United States of America.

I've seen too much pain and too much struggle to let this country get hit with another round of top-down economics. The centerpiece of my opponent Governor Romney's economic plan is a \$5 trillion tax cut skewed towards the wealthy. He's been pitching this plan for almost 2 years now.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* No, no, don't boo, vote!

He stood up on stage during one of the primary debates, proudly promised that he—that his tax cuts would include the top 1 percent. He promised this. But most of the economists who crunched the numbers said Governor Romney's plan would either blow up the deficit or raise taxes on the middle class. It's one or the other. That's how arithmetic works. [*Laughter*]

So, a few weeks ago, you can start seeing he's figuring out, well, this isn't maybe selling that well. [*Laughter*] And then, a few nights ago, suddenly, a guy pretending to be Mitt Romney stood on a stage next to me—[*laughter*]—and said he's changing his plan. He is just going to pretend it doesn't exist. What \$5 trillion tax cut? [*Laughter*] I don't know

<sup>o</sup> White House correction.

anything about a \$5 trillion tax cut. Don't pay any attention to that tax cut behind the curtain. [Laughter] During the debate he said, "There is no economist who can say Mitt Romney's tax plan adds \$5 trillion to the deficit if I say I will not add to the deficit with my tax plan."

Thanks for clearing that up. [Laughter] We'll take your word for it. This was almost as believable as when he said he'd bring down our deficit by going after what has been the biggest driver of our debt and deficits over the last decade: public television, PBS. [Laughter] You didn't know this, but for all you moms and kids out there, you should have confidence that finally somebody is cracking down on Big Bird. [Laughter] Elmo is—has been seen in a white Suburban. He's driving for the border. [Laughter] Oscar is hiding out in his trash can. [Laughter] We're cracking down on them. Governor Romney's plan is to let Wall Street run wild again, but he's going to bring the hammer down on Sesame Street. [Laughter]

Listen, after the debate, I had a bunch of folks come to me: Don't be so polite, don't be so nice. [Laughter] But I want everybody to understand something: What was being presented wasn't leadership, that's salesmanship. And we cannot afford another round of tax cuts for the wealthy. We can't afford to gut investments in education or clean energy or research and technology. We can't afford to roll back regulations on Wall Street banks or major polluters or insurance companies. That is not a jobs plan. That's not a plan to grow the economy. That's not change we can believe in. That's a relapse. We have been there. We have tried that. We are not going back, we are moving forward. That's why you're here. That's why I'm here. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States. Look—

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

*The President.* We have a different vision about how you create jobs and prosperity in America. We have to change our Tax Code so it stops rewarding companies that are shipping jobs overseas. I want to reward small businesses and manufacturers who are investing and

taking root right here in the United States of America.

We can create more jobs controlling 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's good for our economy. It's good for our national security. It's good for our environment. And today, the United States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in the last two decades.

So we don't want to reverse that progress. We've got to build on it. My plan would cut our oil imports in half. And we can invest in the clean energy that's creating thousands of jobs all across America right now: wind power and solar power and clean coal, fuel-efficient cars, long-lasting batteries. We're producing oil and natural gas at record rates. But we have to make sure that we're also grabbing for the future. We can't cede that to somebody else.

And unlike my opponent, I will not allow oil companies to collect another \$4 billion every single year in taxpayer-funded corporate welfare. I'm not going to let China win the race for clean energy technologies. I want to see those technologies developed right here in California, right here in the United States of America. And as I said at the convention, yes, my plan will continue to reduce carbon pollution because climate change is not a hoax. Drought, floods, wildfires, they're not a joke. They're a threat to our kids' future. That's what we're fighting for.

I believe we've got to have the best education system in the world. That will create jobs. That's good for business: making sure that everybody has the skills they need to compete and to be good citizens. Education is the reason I'm standing here today. It's why Michelle was able to do everything she's done in her life. It's true for so many of all the folks here.

So now we've got a choice. We can gut education to pay for tax breaks that we don't need. Or we can recruit 100,000 new math and science teachers, focus on early childhood education, provide job training for 2 million more workers in our community colleges, help to

lower tuition costs for our students going to college. We can meet those goals. That's what we're fighting for. That's what's at stake in the next 29 days. That's why I'm running for a second term as President.

I want to use some of the money we're saving from ending the wars in Iraq and winding down our efforts in Afghanistan to pay down our deficit, put people back to work all across America rebuilding roads and bridges, airports and schools. Infrastructure, that's what I'm talking about. [Laughter] I'm pitching, you're catching.

Governor Romney, he has a different view. He said it was "tragic" to end the war in Iraq. In a speech today, he doubled down on that belief. He said ending the war was a mistake. I disagree. Bringing our troops home was the right thing to do.

And every brave American who wears the uniform of this country should know that as long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will sustain the strongest military the world has ever known. And when our troops take off their uniforms, we will serve them as well as they served us, because nobody who has fought for us should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they come home.

And, yes, we need to cut our deficit and reduce our debt. And—

*Audience member.* I love you!

*The President.* I love you back!

But we do have to reduce our debt and our deficits, and I've put forward a \$4 trillion plan to get it done over the next 10 years. We've already worked with Democrats and Republicans to cut a trillion dollars in spending. I am ready to do more. But we cannot just cut our way to prosperity. We cannot get this done unless we ask the wealthiest households to pay higher taxes on incomes over \$250,000, the same rate we had when Bill Clinton was President. We created 23 million new jobs, went from deficit to surplus, created a whole lot of millionaires and successful small businesses as well.

Governor Romney says it's fair that he pays a lower tax rate than a teacher or an autoworker who makes \$50,000.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* Don't boo, vote!

You know what, I refuse to ask middle class families to give up their deductions for owning a home or raising their kids to pay for a tax cut we don't need. I refuse to pay for a tax cut for millionaires and billionaires by asking those students who are here today to pay more for college or kicking kids off of Head Start or eliminating health insurance for millions of Americans who are poor or elderly or disabled. That is not what has built this country. That is not what we believe. That is not what's going to happen. We are going to go forward, not backwards. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

So, San Francisco, California, this is the choice we now face. It's what the election comes down to. Over and over, we are told by opponents that since government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing. Basic philosophy is, you're on your own. If you can't afford health insurance, hope you don't get sick. Companies are releasing pollution that our kids are breathing. Well, that's just the price of progress. You can't afford to start a business or go to college? Just borrow money from your parents. [Laughter]

That's not who we are. That's not what this country is about. Here in America, we believe in individual initiative. We believe that we can't help folks who don't want to try to help themselves, but we also believe in opportunity. We also believe we're all in this together. We also understand that America is not about what can be done for us. It's about what can be done by us, together, as one Nation, as one people. That's what you all understood in 2008. That's what change was about: you—all of us—coming together.

You're the reason there's a little girl somewhere here in California who is going to get the care she needs because an insurance company can't impose some sort of lifetime limit on her coverage. You're the reason a factory worker who lost his job in Toledo or Lordstown, Ohio, is back on the line building some of the best cars in the world. You're the reason that a student right here has help paying for a college education or a veteran can go to school

on the new GI bill. You're the reason a young immigrant who grew up here and went to school here, pledged allegiance to our flag, will no longer be deported from the only country she's ever called home. You're the reason why a soldier who has served us so bravely will not be kicked out of the military because of who they love. You made that happen. You're the reason that soldier can come home to his loved ones and hear those words, "Welcome home." You made that happen.

And so I need you in this election. The next 29 days, we cannot afford to be complacent, and we cannot afford to be cynical. We've got to look back at the progress we've made, and that should give us confidence. But we have to understand, we've got a lot more to do. And if we don't do it, then change won't happen.

Your voice will make a difference. And if you don't make that difference, then other people will fill the void. Lobbyists and special interests and the folks who write the \$10 million checks to try to win this race and the ones who are trying to make it harder for people to vote, the politicians in Washington who somehow think that they've got a better idea than women about women's health care choices—those are the folks that are going to be making decisions if you are not making those decisions.

Only you can make sure those things don't happen. Only you've got the power to move us forward. I will be there with you, but this is a team, people.

From the day we began this campaign, I always said that change takes time. We always said that it would take more than one term or even one President. We said it would take more than one party. And by the way, no, it doesn't just take me. That's not the

deal. The deal is it takes all of us. That's the deal.

It won't happen if you've got somebody who writes off half the Nation even before he takes office. But it also won't happen if half the Nation writes off itself by not participating or doesn't vote.

In 2008, 47 percent of the country didn't vote for me. But on the night of the election, I said to all those Americans, I may not have won your vote, but I hear your voices. I need your help. I'll be your President too.

I don't know how many of you will be with me this time around, but I'll be with you. I'll be there fighting for you because 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. I'm not fighting for red values or White values or Black values or Latino values or gay or straight values. I'm fighting for American values. They belong to all of us.

San Francisco, we are not as divided as our politics would suggest. We've got more in common than our pundits believe. I still believe in you. I'm asking you to keep believing in me. I'm asking for your vote. I'm asking you to knock on doors. I'm asking you to make phone calls. And if you do, we will win this election. We'll finish what we started, and we'll remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:29 p.m. at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to musicians John Legend and Michael Franti; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney.

## Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Columbus, Ohio

October 9, 2012

*The President.* Hello, Buckeyes! O–H!

*Audience members.* I–O!

*The President.* O–H!

*Audience members.* I–O!

*The President.* O–H!

*Audience members.* I–O!