

Timothy M. Dolan, president, Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation; Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney and his wife Ann; Chris Matthews, host, MSNBC's "Hardball With Chris Matthews" program; Vice President Joe Biden; Republican Vice Presi-

dential nominee Paul D. Ryan; 6-year-old beauty pageant participant Alana Thompson, in her role on TLC's "Here Comes Honey Boo Boo!" program; and David M. Axelrod, communications director, Obama 2012 reelection campaign.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Fairfax, Virginia October 19, 2012

The President. Hello, Virginia! Are you fired up? Are you ready to go? I can't hear you! Well, it's good to be back. Thank you.

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

The President. Can everybody please give Cecile a big round of applause for the great introduction and the work she does? We've got your Congressman here, Gerry Connolly in the house.

Eighteen days. Eighteen days, Virginia. Eighteen days and you're going to step into a voting booth. And you're going to have a very big choice to make, not just a choice between two candidates or two parties, but between two fundamentally different visions for this country that we love.

Governor Romney has got his sales pitch. We heard it the other night in the debate. He's been running around talking about his five-point plan for the economy.

Audience member. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote. [Applause] Vote!

He wants you to believe that somehow he'll create 12 million jobs, cut taxes by \$5 trillion, even though it favors the wealthiest Americans. None of this will add to the deficit.

When folks who don't actually work for Governor Romney start crunching the numbers, it turns out, the tax plan doesn't add up, jobs plan doesn't create jobs, deficit plan doesn't reduce the deficit. An economist at the New York Times put it this morning, "There's no jobs plan; there's just a snow job on the American people." A snow job.

Virginia, you've heard of the New Deal, you've heard of the Square Deal, the Fair

Deal. Mitt Romney is trying to give you a sketchy deal. [Laughter] A sketchy deal.

And it's really just a one-point plan, not a five point plan: one point, folks at the very top play by a different set of rules than all of you.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Listen, don't boo, vote. [Laughter]

If he offered you that deal when he was in corporate finance, you wouldn't give him a dime. So why would you give him his vote?

This same philosophy that's been squeezing the middle class family for more than a decade, the same philosophy that got us into this mess. We can't go back to that.

Audience members. No!

The President. I've met too many good Americans who work so hard, show so much resilience, so much resolve; we have been fighting our way back from some of the same policies he's advocating. We have been there, we have tried it, we can't go back. We are moving forward. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

Now, I believe that the biggest issue in this election is how do we rebuild a strong middle class and provide ladders for opportunity all those who want to get into the middle class, who are willing to work hard, willing to take responsibility. Are we going to make sure that we're a country where everybody gets a fair shot and everybody is doing their fair share and everybody is playing by the same rules?

So the economy is the dominant issue. But I want everybody to understand that that's not the only place where Governor Romney is offering you a sketchy deal. It's bad enough that my opponent wants to take us back to the failed economic policies of the past. But when it comes to issues critical to women—the right

to make your own decision about your health, the right to be treated fairly and equally in the workplace—Governor Romney wants to take us to policies more suited to the 1950s. Even his own running mate said he’s “kind of a throwback to the fifties.” That’s one thing we agree on. [Laughter]

But I—he may not have noticed, we’re in the 21st century. And in the 21st century, a woman deserves equal pay for equal work. This should be a no-brainer. But no matter how many times Governor Romney is asked whether or not he supports a law upholding that idea, he refuses to say. Why should this be hard? Are you for equal pay for equal work? Are you for making sure that laws enforce that basic principle?

He can’t tell you. I can. I support that law. In fact, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was the first law that I signed into office. And this isn’t just a women’s issue. No man should want his wife or his daughters paid less than a man for doing the same job. This is a family issue. This is an economic issue. It’s one that we’ve got to fight for.

When Governor Romney says he’s going to get rid of funding for Planned Parenthood—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don’t boo—

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote.

What he apparently doesn’t understand is that there are millions of women all across the country who rely on Planned Parenthood not just for contraceptive care, but for preventive care. That’s not just a health issue, it’s an economic issue.

When Governor Romney said he’d have supported an extreme measure in Massachusetts that could have outlawed some forms of contraception, when he joined the far right of his party to support a bill that would have allowed any employer to deny contraceptive care to their employees—

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don’t boo—

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote. [Laughter]

What he didn’t get is that making sure your insurance policy covers contraceptive care is an economic issue also. I don’t think your boss should decide what’s best for your health and safety.

Audience members. No!

The President. I don’t think your insurance company gets to decide what care you should get.

Audience members. No!

The President. And I sure don’t think any politician should decide. The only person who should decide about your health care is you.

And by the way, that’s why we fought so hard to pass health care reform, a.k.a. Obamacare. That’s why we pushed for it.

This law has secured new access to preventive care like mammograms and other cancer screenings for more than 20 million women—with no copay, no deductible, no out-of-pocket cost—because I do not believe a working mother should have to put off a mammogram just because money is tight.

This law means that most health plans are now beginning to cover the cost of contraceptive care, because I don’t think a college student in Charlottesville or Blacksburg or Fairfax should have to choose between textbooks or the preventive care that she needs.

And by the way, for all the young people out here, Obamacare has already allowed nearly 7 million young adults under the age of 26 to sign up to stay on their parents’ plans.

For all those who are young at heart, but not young in years, it’s already saved millions of seniors on Medicare hundreds of dollars on their prescription medicine.

Insurance companies can no longer put lifetime limits on your care or discriminate against children with preexisting conditions. And soon, they’ll no longer be able to charge women more for the same care just because they’re women. That’s what change looks like.

Audience member. We love you, Obama!

The President. Thank you.

Now, anybody who thinks that this election doesn’t matter, know this: My opponent has promised to repeal all of the things we just talked about as soon as he takes office, says

he'd do it on day one. We know full well that if he gets the chance, he'll rubberstamp the agenda of this Republican Congress the second he takes office. Virginia, we can't give him that chance.

Audience members. No!

The President. I know he's called him severely—he's called himself "severely conservative," but there's nothing conservative about a government that prevents a woman from making her own health care decisions.

He talks about freedom, but freedom is the ability to choose the care you need when you need it. Freedom is the ability to change jobs or start your own business without the fear of losing your health insurance. Freedom is the knowledge that you'll no longer be charged more than men for the same health care or denied affordable coverage just because you beat cancer.

When the next President and Congress could tip the balance of the highest court in the land in a way that turns back the clock for women and families for decades to come, you don't want someone who needs to ask for binders of women. You don't want that guy. You want a President who has already appointed two unbelievable women to the Supreme Court of the United States.

So, Virginia, the choice——

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. The choice between going backward and moving forward has never been so clear. But now that we're 18 days out from the election, Mr. Severely Conservative—[laughter]—wants you to think he was severely kidding about everything he said over the last year. [Laughter] He told folks he was "the ideal candidate" for the Tea Party. Now suddenly, he's saying, "What, who, me?" [Laughter] He's forgetting what his own positions are, and he's betting that you will too.

I mean, he's changing up so much and backtracking and sidestepping—[laughter]—we've got to name this condition that he's going through. I think it's called "Romnesia." [Laughter] That's what it's called. [Applause] I think that's what he's going through.

Now, I'm not a medical doctor, but I do want to go over some of the symptoms with you because I want to make sure nobody else catches it. [Laughter] If you say you're for equal pay for equal work, but you keep refusing to say whether or not you'd sign a bill that protects equal pay for equal work, you might have Romnesia. [Laughter]

If you say women should have access to contraceptive care, but you support legislation that would let your employer deny you contraceptive care, you might have a case of Romnesia.

If you say you'll protect a woman's right to choose, but you stand up at a primary debate and said that you'd be delighted to sign a law outlying—outlawing that right to choose in all cases, man, you've definitely got Romnesia.

Now, this extends to other issues. If you say earlier in the year, I'm going to give a tax cut to the top 1 percent and then in a debate you say, I don't know anything about giving tax cuts to rich folks, you need to get a thermometer, take your temperature, because you've probably got Romnesia.

If you say that you're a champion of the coal industry when, while you were Governor you stood in front of a coal plant and said, this plant will kill you—[laughter]——

Audience members. Romnesia!

The President. ——that's some Romnesia.

So I think you're being able—you're beginning to be able to identify these symptoms. And if you come down with a case of Romnesia and you can't seem to remember the policies that are still on your website—[laughter]—or the promises you've made over the 6 years you've been running for President, here's the good news: Obamacare covers preexisting conditions. [Laughter] We can fix you up. We've got a cure. We can make you well, Virginia. This is a curable disease. [Laughter]

Women, men—all of you—these are family issues. These are economic issues. I want my daughters to have the same opportunities as anybody's sons. I believe America does better—the economy grows more, we create more jobs—when everybody participates, when everyone is getting a fair shot, everybody is getting a fair shake, everybody is playing by the

same rules, everybody is doing their fair share. That's why I'm running for a second term for President of the United States. I need you to help me finish the job.

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

The President. Four years ago, I told you we'd end the war in Iraq, and we did. I said we'd end the war in Afghanistan; we are. I said we'd refocus on the terrorists who actually attacked us on 9/11, and we have. Al Qaida is on the path to defeat. Usama bin Laden is dead.

Four years ago, I promised to cut taxes for middle class families, and I have. I promised to cut taxes for small-business owners; we have 18 times.

We got every dime back from the banks that we used for—to rescue those banks. We passed laws to end taxpayer-funded Wall Street bailouts for good.

We repealed “don't ask, don't tell” to make sure that nobody who wants to serve our country gets kicked out because of who they love.

When Governor Romney said we'd let—he'd let Detroit go bankrupt, we said, we're not going to take your advice. We reinvented a dying auto industry; it's come roaring back to the top of the world.

Four years after the worst economic crisis of our lifetime, we're moving. After losing 800,000 jobs a month when I took office, businesses have now added over 5 million new jobs. Unemployment has fallen from 10 percent to 7.8 percent. Home values are back on the rise. The stock market has nearly doubled, 401(k)s are starting to recover, manufacturing is coming home, assembly lines are humming again. We've got to keep moving forward. We've got to keep moving forward.

We've got more work to do. I've got a plan—and it's a real plan, not a sales pitch—to grow the economy and create jobs and build more security for the middle class.

I want to send fewer jobs overseas and sell more products overseas. I want to invest in manufacturers and small businesses that create jobs right here in Virginia, right here in America.

I want us to control more of our own energy, cut oil imports in half, create thousands of clean energy jobs.

I want every child to have the same chance at a great education that Michelle and I received. I want to hire more teachers in math and science, train 2 million workers at community colleges, bring down the cost of college tuition.

I want to use the savings from ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to pay down our deficit, put our people back to work right here, doing some nation-building here at home.

That's the agenda you need. That's the agenda we need. That's how we strengthen the middle class. That's how we'll keep moving forward. And in 18 days, you're going to have a chance to say whether we keep moving forward.

In 18 days, you can choose between top-down economic policies that got us into this mess or the middle-class-out policies that are getting us out of this mess.

In 18 days, you can choose a foreign policy that gets us into wars with no plan to get out, or you can say let's end the Afghan war responsibly, let's bring our troops home. Let's focus on making sure that we're building America.

In 18 days, you can let them turn back the clock 50 years for immigrants and gays and women, or we can stand up and say we are a country in which everybody has a place. A country where no matter where you are, no matter what you look like, no matter where you come from—Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, young, old, gay, straight, able, disabled—we have a place for everybody. Everybody has got a chance to make it if you try.

That's what's at stake, Virginia. That's why I'm asking you for your vote. I believe in you. I need you to keep believing in me. I want to finish the job. And if you're willing to stand with me and make some phone calls with me and knock on some doors with me, get your friends to vote for me, we will win Fairfax County again. We will win Virginia again. 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. Hey!

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at George Mason University. In his remarks, he

The President's Weekly Address *October 20, 2012*

Hi, everybody. In recent weeks, you might have noticed something or maybe even heard the sound of it if you live close enough. New homes are going up. In fact, construction workers are breaking ground on new homes in America at the fastest pace in more than 4 years.

At the same time, more homes are being sold. Home values are back on the rise. And foreclosure filings are at their lowest point in the 5 years since the housing bubble burst and left millions of responsible families holding the bag.

Now, we're not where we need to be yet. Too many homes are still underwater. Too many families are still having a hard time making the mortgage on their piece of the American Dream. But one of the heaviest drags on our recovery is getting lighter. Now we have to build on the progress we've made and keep moving forward.

I never believed that the best way to deal with the housing market was to just sit back, do nothing, and simply wait for things to hit bottom. That would have been a disaster for all the responsible families who—through no fault of their own—are struggling to make ends meet.

Instead, I've made helping those homeowners a priority. Since I took office, my administration has taken action to help millions of families stay in their homes. We teamed up with attorneys general in almost every State to investigate and crack down on the practices that caused this mess. And in the end, we secured a \$25 billion settlement from the biggest banks—one of the biggest settlements in history—and used it to provide relief to families all across America.

referred to Cecile Richards, president, Planned Parenthood Federation of America; Paul Krugman, columnist, *New York Times*; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney and Vice Presidential nominee Paul D. Ryan.

We've taken action to help responsible homeowners refinance their mortgages. As a result, just this year, hundreds of thousands of Americans who were stuck in high-interest loans have been able to take advantage of historically low rates and are saving thousands of dollars every year.

And now I want every homeowner in America to have that chance. I just wish it didn't require an act of Congress. But it does. So, back in February, I sent Congress a plan to give every responsible homeowner the chance to save about \$3,000 a year on their mortgage by refinancing at historically low rates. That's the equivalent of a \$3,000 tax cut.

It's a plan that we know will work. It has the support of independent, nonpartisan economists and leaders across the housing industry. It's a no-brainer that should have passed easily.

But Republicans in Congress banded together and kept this plan from even coming to a vote. They banded together and prevented millions of Americans—including many of you listening today—from saving \$3,000 a year. That's money that could have gone back into the value of your home or your kid's college savings account. That's money that could have gone into your local businesses so they could hire and create more jobs in your town.

But Republicans in Congress still won't let that happen. And that's only held back the economy, when we should be doing everything we can to accelerate our economic engine.

Let's be honest. Republicans in Congress won't act on this plan before the election. But maybe they'll come to their senses afterward if you give them a push. So contact your Repre-