

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Hilliard, Ohio

November 2, 2012

The President. Hello, Ohio! O–H!

Audience members. I–O!

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The President. Oh, it's good to be back. Can everybody give Judy a big round of applause for the great introduction? Judy is an example of all the incredible volunteers who have been involved in this campaign each and every day, knocking on doors, making phone calls. I love all of you, and I'm grateful to all of you for all the great work you guys have done.

Give it up for your former Governor, our great friend, Ted Strickland. Poor Ted's got a cold. He's backstage. He was—he wouldn't shake my hand. [*Laughter*] He's sick, but he's still out campaigning. Tireless.

Audience member. We love you, Barack!

The President. I love you back, and I'm glad to be here.

Audience member. Obama is—[*inaudible*].

Audience member. Settle down so we can see!

The President. I can tell this is kind of a rowdy crowd. Huh? [*Laughter*] All right, all right.

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

The President. [*Laughter*] Thank you. Well, listen, for the past few days, all of us have been focused on one of the worst storms in our lifetimes, in our history. And I just got off the phone with my team, emergency management team, and got an update on what's happening in New Jersey and New York and Connecticut, West Virginia, where there's a whole lot of snow. As a nation, we mourn those who were lost. You can only imagine what so many families are going through right now.

And the message I've sent every time I talk to people back East is, we stand with the people of New York and New Jersey and Connecticut every step of the way in the hard weeks ahead. And there's a lot of work that still remains to be done.

But we've also been inspired these last few days by the heroes who were running into buildings and wading through water and the neighbors who were helping neighbors cope with tragedy; the leaders of different parties working together to fix what's broken; a spirit that says no matter how bad the storm is, no matter how tough times are, we're all in this together. We rise or fall as one Nation and as one people.

And that spirit is what's guided this country for more than two centuries, that idea that we're in this together. It's carried us through the trials and tribulations of the last 200-something years, but also the last 4 years. In 2008, we were in the middle of two wars and the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. And today, our businesses have created nearly 5 ½ million new jobs; and this morning, we learned that companies hired more workers in October than at any time in the last 8 months.

The American auto industry is back on top. Home values and housing construction is on the rise. We're less dependent on foreign oil than any time in 20 years. Because of the service and sacrifice of our brave men and women in uniform, the war in Iraq is over, the war in Afghanistan is ending, Al Qaida has been decimated, Usama bin Laden is dead. We have made real progress.

Audience member. Good job, man! [*Laughter*]

The President. [*Laughter*] This guy had a lot of coffee this morning. You're fired up! Okay.

So listen, hold on a second. We've made real progress, but we are here today because we know we've got more work to do. As long as there's a single American who wants a job and can't find one, as long as there are families working harder, but falling behind, as long as there's a child anywhere in this country who's languishing in poverty and barred from opportunity, our fight goes on. We've got more work to do.

Our fight goes on because this Nation can't succeed without a growing, thriving middle

class. Our fight goes on because America always has done best when everybody has a fair shot, and everybody is doing their fair share and everybody is playing by the same rules. That's what we believe. That's why you elected me in 2008. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States of America.

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

The President. Now, Ohio, in 4 days, you have a choice to make. And by the way, I think you may have noticed that everybody is paying a lot of attention to Ohio. And rightfully so. The—this is a choice not just between two candidates or two parties, it's a choice between two fundamentally different visions of America. It's a choice between going back to the top-down policies that crashed our economy or adapting the kinds of policies that will make sure we've got a strong and growing middle class. That's the choice.

As Americans, we honor the strivers and the dreamers and the risk takers, the entrepreneurs, the small-businesspeople. They're the folks who have always been the driving force behind our free enterprise system, and it's been the greatest engine of growth and prosperity the world has ever known.

But we also believe in this country that people succeed, people start businesses, people work well in businesses when they've got a decent education, when they get a chance to learn new skills, when we support research into medical breakthroughs or new technologies.

We think America is stronger when we can count on affordable health care and Medicare and Social Security, when there are rules to protect our kids from toxic dumping and mercury pollution. We think the market works better when consumers are protected from unscrupulous practices in the credit card industry or from mortgage lenders.

And we believe that no politician in Washington should control health care choices that women can make for themselves. These are the things we believe.

Now, for 8 years, we had a President who shared our beliefs, and his name was Bill Clin-

ton. His economic plan asked the wealthiest Americans to pay a little more so we could reduce our deficit and invest in the skills and ideas of our people. And at the time the Republican Congress and a Senate candidate by the name of Mitt Romney said that Bill Clinton's plan would hurt the economy and kill jobs, it turns out the Governor's math was just as bad back then as it was today.

Because by the end of President Clinton's second term, America had created 23 million new jobs, and incomes were up, and poverty was down, and we had the biggest surplus in our history instead of deficits. So we know the ideas that we believe in work. We know that their ideas don't work.

For most of the last decade, we tried what they want to do: giving big tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans that we couldn't afford. We tried giving insurance companies and oil companies and Wall Street free rein to do whatever they pleased. And you know what we got? Falling incomes, record deficits, the slowest job growth in half a century, and an economic crisis that we've been cleaning up after for the last 4 years.

So we know what we want to do works. We know what they want to do doesn't work. We know what we want to do grows our middle class; what they want to do squeezes the middle class. We know that our strategy makes sure that we bring our deficit down in a balanced way; their strategy ends up shooting the deficit up.

So we know what the right choice is. But let's face it, Governor Romney, he's a very talented salesman. In this campaign he's tried as hard as he can to repackage these same policies and offer them up as change.

But we know what change looks like, and what the Governor is offering ain't it. Giving more power back to the biggest banks, that's not change. Another \$5 trillion tax cut that favors the wealthy, that's not change. Refusing to answer questions about the details of your policies until after the election, that's not change. We've seen that before. [*Laughter*] Right? We've seen that before.

Ruling out compromise by pledging to rubberstamp the Tea Party's agenda in Congress, that's not change. And by the way, when you try to change the facts just because they're inconvenient to your campaign, that's definitely not change.

Trying to massage the facts, that's not change. That's just—[laughter] Look, we've been seeing this out of Governor Romney and his friends over the last few weeks right here in Ohio. You've got folks who work at the Jeep plant who have been calling their employers worried, asking is it true, are our jobs being shipped to China? And the reason they're making these calls is because Governor Romney has been running an ad that says so. Except it's not true. Everybody knows it's not true. The car companies themselves have told Governor Romney to knock it off. GM said, we think creating jobs in the United States should be a source of bipartisan pride. And I couldn't agree more.

And I understand that Governor Romney has had a tough time here in Ohio because he was against saving the auto industry. And it's hard to run away from that position when you're on videotape saying the words, "Let Detroit go bankrupt." And I know we're close to an election. But this isn't a game. These are people's jobs. These are people's lives. These car companies are putting a lot of effort to make great products, but also to make sure that everybody in America knows how committed they are to making cars here in America. And so you don't scare hard-working Americans just to scare up some votes. That's not what being President is all about. That's not leadership.

When I first made the decision to rescue the auto industry, I knew it wasn't popular. And despite the fact that one out of eight jobs in Ohio are connected to the auto industry in some way, it wasn't even popular in Ohio. But I knew it was the right thing to do. I knew betting on American workers was the right thing to do. Betting on American ingenuity and know-how was the right thing to do. That paid off.

It paid off in Lordstown, where GM is investing hundreds of millions of dollars in their auto plant. It paid off in Toledo, where Chrysler is adding more than a thousand new jobs on a second shift, not in China: right here in Ohio, right here in United States of America.

And so one of the things I hope when you're talking to your friends and your neighbors, they're trying to make up their minds these last few days, think about that. Think about the issue of trust; think about do you want a President who is going to actually tell you what he believes and what he thinks or somebody who is going to—

Audience members. Lie!

The President. No, who's going to—well, change the facts.

After 4 years as President, you know me. You may not agree with every decision I've made. You may be frustrated sometimes at the pace of change. But you know what I believe. You know where I stand. You know I tell the truth. And you know that I'll fight for you and your families every single day as hard as I know how. You know that.

And you know that I know what real change looks like, because I've fought for real change. And you've helped me every step of the way. After all we've been through together, we can't give up on real change now.

Change is a country where Americans of every age have the skills and education that are needed for getting a good job. And let me tell you, when I hear folks saying hiring more teachers won't help this economy grow, they are wrong. Because if we've got great teachers in the classroom, that's going to help our kids, and it's going to help our economy.

Don't tell me that students who can't afford college should just borrow more money from their parents. That wasn't an option for me; it wasn't an option for a lot of you. That's why I want to cut the growth of tuition in half over the next 10 years. I want to recruit 100,000 math and science teachers so that our kids don't fall behind the rest of the world. I want to train 2 million Americans at our community colleges with skills that businesses are looking

for right now. That's what we're fighting for in this election. That's what real change is.

Audience member. I've got your back!

The President. Thank you.

Change comes when we live up to this country's legacy of innovation. Today, the great news about the auto industry is we're not just building cars again, we're building better cars, innovative cars, cars that by the middle of the next decade will go twice as far on a gallon of gas.

And by the way, here in Ohio, it's not just cars that we're starting to manufacture again. We're building long-lasting batteries and wind turbines all across Ohio, all across the country.

We've got to keep our cutting-edge technology and research and innovation and investment. And I don't want a Tax Code that subsidizes oil company profits when they're making money hand over fist, I want to support the energy jobs of tomorrow, the new technologies that will help cut our oil imports in half. And I don't want a Tax Code that rewards companies for creating those jobs overseas, I want to reward companies that are creating jobs in manufacturing right here in the United States of America. That's my plan. That's what real change is.

Change is turning the page on a decade of war so we can do some nation-building here at home. As long as I'm Commander in Chief, we will pursue our enemies with the strongest military that the world's ever known. But it's time to use the savings from ending the wars in Iraq and winding down the war in Afghanistan to pay down our debt and rebuild America, repairing roads and bridges and schools all across Ohio, all across America.

And let's especially focus on putting our veterans back to work as they come home. We need to serve them as well as they've served us. Nobody who fights for this country should have to fight for a job when they come home. That's what's at stake in this election. That's my commitment.

Change is a future where we do reduce our deficit, but we do it in a balanced, responsible way. I've already signed a trillion dollars' worth of spending cuts; I intend to do more. But if

we're serious about the deficit, we also have to ask the wealthiest Americans to go back to the rates that they paid when Bill Clinton was in office. Because if I'm not paying a little bit more, and Governor Romney is not paying a little bit more, then the choice is to start cutting out help for young people trying to go to school. It's to hurt folks who are vulnerable and depend on things like Medicaid. As long as I'm President, I will never turn Medicare into a voucher just to pay for another millionaire's tax cut.

I'm not going to make it more expensive for some young person who is working hard trying to go to school. I'm not going to make them pay more just so I get a tax break that I don't need. I'm not going to cut out some research grant to some outstanding young scientist that could have the next discovery for cancer just because I want a tax cut that I don't need. That's not who we are. That's not what change is.

We know what the future requires, and we know it won't be easy. Back in 2008, I told some of you, I said, look, I'm not just talking about changing Presidents or changing political parties in Washington. I said to—if we're going to talk about real change, we're talking about changing how our politics works.

I ran because the voices of the American people—your voices—had been shut out of our democracy for way too long: by lobbyists and special interests, politicians who will do whatever it takes to keep things just the way they are. And over the last 4 years, you've seen it: The status quo in Washington has fought us every step of the way. They've spent millions trying to stop us from reforming the health care system. They've spent millions trying to keep us from reforming Wall Street. They engineered a strategy of gridlock in Congress, refusing to compromise on ideas that both Democrats and Republicans in the past have supported.

What they're counting on now is that you're going to be so worn down by all the squabbling, so worn down by all the dysfunction that you'll just give up, walk away, put them back into power.

Audience members. No!

The President. In other words, Ohio, their bet is on cynicism. My bet is on you. My fight is for you.

When the other party has been with me in that fight, I've worked with them. Look, there have been times when Republicans cooperated on tax cuts for middle class families and small businesses. They were Republicans who helped us repeal "don't ask, don't tell". When they're about broadening opportunity and helping the middle class, we can work together. But as long as I'm President, I've said I will work with anybody of any party to move this country forward. If you want to break the gridlock in Congress, you'll vote for leaders who feel the same way whether they're Democrat, Republican, or Independents.

But I'm not just going to cut a deal that kicks students off of financial aid or gets rid of funding for Planned Parenthood or let's insurance companies discriminate against people with preexisting conditions or eliminate health care for millions on Medicaid who are poor or elderly or disabled. If that's the price of peace, then I'm not going to pay that price. That's not bipartisanship. That's not change. That's surrender to the same status quo that has hurt the middle class and all those families who are trying to get into the middle class for way too long.

And, Ohio, I'm not ready to give up on the fight. I'm not ready to give up on the fight to make sure that the middle class is growing. I'm not ready to give up on the fight to make sure every child has opportunity. I hope you aren't either, Ohio. *[Applause]* I hope you aren't either.

The folks at the very top in this country, they don't need another champion in Washington. They already have a seat at the table. They'll always have access and influence. The people who need a champion are the Americans whose letters I read late at night, the men and women I meet on the campaign trail every day. The laid-off worker who has gone back to a community college to retrain for the jobs of the future, she needs a champion. The restaurant owner who needs a loan to expand after the bank turned him down, he needs a champion. The cooks and the waiters and the cleaning

staff at a hotel, trying to buy a first home or send their kid to college, they need a champion.

The autoworker who had lost his job, wasn't sure the plant would ever reopen, and now is back in that plant building a car and feeling the dignity and pride of doing a great job, he needs a champion. Those kids in inner cities and small farm towns and the valleys of Ohio, rolling Virginia hills, right here in Hilliard, kids dreaming of becoming scientists or doctors or engineers or entrepreneurs and diplomats or even a President, they need a champion in Washington.

The future will never have as many lobbyists as the past does, as the status quo does, as the vested interests do. But it's the dreams of those children that will be our saving grace. It's the dreams of those children that move us forward. That's what we have to champion.

That's why I need you, Ohio: to make sure their voices are heard, to make sure your voices are heard. We've come too far to turn back now. We've come too far to grow fainthearted. It's time to keep pushing forward: to educate all our kids and train all our workers, create new jobs, rebuild our infrastructure, discover new sources of energy, broaden opportunity, grow our middle class, restore our democracy to make sure that no matter who you are or where you come from, you can make it in America. That's what we're fighting for.

Ohio, I'm asking for your vote. And if you're willing to work with me again and knock on some doors with me and make some phone calls for me and turn out for me, grab your friends and neighbors and coworkers, we'll win Ohio. We'll win this election. We'll reaffirm the bonds that tie us together. We'll reaffirm the spirit that makes the United States of America the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless America. Hey!

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:47 a.m. at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. In his remarks, he referred to Judith Kamalay, volunteer, Obama 2012 reelection campaign; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney.