

that if the price of peace in Washington is cutting deals that are going to kick students off of financial aid or get rid of funding for Planned Parenthood or let insurance companies discriminate against people with preexisting conditions or eliminate health care for millions on Medicaid who are poor or elderly or disabled, that's not a price I'm willing to pay. That's not bipartisanship. That is not change. That's surrender to the same status quo that's hurt middle class families for way too long.

And, Ohio, I'm not ready to give up on the fight. I've got a whole lot of fight left in me, and I hope you do too. [Applause] I hope you do too.

The folks at the very top in this country, they don't need another champion in Washington. They'll always have a seat at the table. They'll always have access and influence. That's the way things are. We understand that. 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 is having to go back and retrain at the age of 55 at a community college, she needs a champion. The restaurant owner who has got some great food, but needs a loan to expand after the bank turned him down, he needs a champion. The cooks and waiters and cleaning staff working overtime at a Columbus hotel, trying to save enough to buy a first home or send their kids to college, they need a champion.

The autoworker who is back on the job, filled with pride and dignity of building a great car, he needs a champion. The teacher in an overcrowded classroom, having to dig into her own pocket to buy school supplies, but shows up every day believing in those students, she needs a champion.

All those kids in inner cities and small farm towns, in these Ohio valleys or the rolling hills of Virginia, somewhere in Jersey, somewhere

in Brooklyn, maybe even a kid in Hawaii—kids dreaming of becoming scientists or doctors, engineers or entrepreneurs, diplomats or musicians, maybe even a President—they need a champion in Washington. Because the future is what we're fighting for. The future never has lobbyists like the status quo does, but the dreams of those children will be our saving grace.

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 let our hearts grow faint. Now is the time to keep pushing forward: to educate all our kids, to train all our workers, to create new jobs, rebuild our infrastructure, bring our troops home, care for our veterans, broaden opportunity, restore our democracy, build the middle class, make sure that in this country, no matter who you are, no matter where you come from, no matter how you got started here in America, you can make it if you try.

That's why I'm asking for your vote. And if you're willing to work with me again, knock on some doors with me and make some phone calls and turn out, we will win Ohio. We'll win this election. We'll finish what we started. We'll renew those ties that bind us together and reaffirm the spirit that makes the United States of America the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you, Ohio. God bless the United States of America. Let's go vote. Let's go do this.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:37 p.m. at Nationwide Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Blue Ivy Carter, daughter, and Beyonce G. Knowles-Carter, wife, of musician Shawn C. "Jay-Z" Carter; former State Rep. Joyce H. Beatty of Ohio; and Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Des Moines, Iowa November 5, 2012

The President. Hello, Iowa! Tomorrow. Tomorrow, Iowa. Tomorrow, from the granite of

New Hampshire to the Rockies of Colorado, from the coastlines of Florida to Virginia's roll-

ing hills, from the valleys of Ohio to these Iowa fields, we will keep America moving forward.

I've come back to Iowa one more time to ask for your vote. I came back to ask you to help us finish what we've started. Because this is where our movement for change began. Right here. Right here.

Right behind these bleachers is the building that was home to our Iowa headquarters in 2008. I was just inside, and it brought back a whole lot of memories. This was where some of the first young people who joined our campaign set up shop, willing to work for little pay and less sleep because they believed that people who love their country can change it.

This was where so many of you who shared that belief came to help. When the heat didn't work for the first week or so—[laughter]—some of you brought hats and gloves for the staff. These poor kids, they weren't prepared. [Laughter] When the walls inside were bare, one of you painted a mural to lift everybody's spirits. When we had a steak fry to march to, when we had a J-J dinner to fire up, you brought your neighbors and you made homemade signs. When we had calls to make, teachers and nurses showed up after work, already bone tired, but staying anyway, late into the night.

And you welcomed me and Michelle into your homes. And you picked us up when we needed a lift. And your faces gave me new hope for this country's future, and your stories filled me with resolve to fight for you every single day I set foot in the Oval Office.

You inspired us. I want to take this opportunity to say one thing to all the young people and not-so-young people who've given so much to this campaign over the years, those of you who haven't done this just for me, but for each other—for a laid-off family member, for a sick child, for a fallen friend—to all of you who've lived and breathed the hard work of change: I want to thank you.

You took this campaign and you made it your own. And you organized yourselves, block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood, county by county, starting a movement that spread across the country; a movement made

up of young and old, and rich and poor, and Black and White, Latino, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, Democrats, Republicans, who believe we've all got something to contribute, that we all deserve a shot at our own American Dream.

And when the cynics said we couldn't, you said, "Yes, we can."

Audience members. Yes, we can!

The President. You said, "Yes, we can," and we did. Against all odds, we did. We didn't know what challenges would come when we began this journey. We didn't know how deep the crisis would turn out. But we knew we would get through those challenges the same way this Nation always has, with that determined, unconquerable American spirit that says no matter how bad the storm gets, no matter how tough times are, we're all in this together. We rise or fall as one Nation and as one people.

That's the spirit that's carried us through the trials and tribulations of 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 5½ million new jobs. The American auto industry is back. Home values are on the rise. We're less dependent on foreign oil than any time in the last 20 years. We've doubled the production of clean energy. 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 is on the run. Usama bin Laden is dead.

We've made real progress these past 4 years. But, Iowa, we're here tonight because we've got more work to do. We're not done yet on this journey. We've got more road to travel. As long as there's a single American who wants a job but can't find one, as long as there are families working harder but still falling behind, as long as there's a child anywhere in Des Moines, anywhere in Iowa, anywhere in this country languishing in poverty, barred from opportunity, our work isn't done. Our fight for change goes on.

Because we know this Nation cannot succeed without a growing, thriving middle class

and sturdy ladders for everybody who's willing to work to get into that middle class. Our fight goes on because America's always done best when everybody's got a fair shot and everybody's doing their fair share and everybody plays by the same rules. The people of Iowa understand that. That's what we believe. That's why you elected me in 2008. And, Iowa, that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

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

The President. Now, the choice you make tomorrow—and you understand this; Iowans, you guys pay attention—[laughter]—the choice you make is not just between two candidates or parties. It's a choice between two different visions of America; who we are, what we believe, what we care about. It's a choice between going back to the top-down policies that caused the mess we've been fighting our way out of for 4 years, or moving forward to a future that's built on a strong and growing middle class.

And, Iowa, you know me as well as anybody. You've seen a lot of me these last 6 years. [Laughter] And you know what, you may not agree with every decision I've made; Michelle doesn't. [Laughter] There may be times where you've been frustrated at the pace of change. I promise you, so have I. But I tell you what, you know what I believe. You know where I stand. You know I tell the truth. You know I'll fight for you and your families every single day as hard as I know how.

And that's why, when we talk about change, we know what real change looks like because we've fought for it. We've got the scars to prove it. I've got the gray hair to show it. [Laughter] I wasn't this gray when I first showed up in Iowa. And sometimes it's been hard. Sometimes it's been frustrating. We understand that. But what we also know is that when we decide to make a difference, when Americans come together, determined to bring about change, nobody can stop us. We cannot be stopped.

And after all we've been through together, after all that we fought through together, we cannot give up on change now.

We know what real change looks like. Change is a country where every American has a shot at a great education, where we recruit new teachers, train new workers, bring down tuition so that no one in this country is forced to give up the dream of a college education.

Change comes when we live up to this country's legacy of innovation by investing in the next generation of technology and manufacturing. Instead of subsidizing oil company profits, I want to support energy jobs of tomorrow. And Iowa knows about clean energy and biodiesel and wind turbines that will free this country from the grip of foreign oil.

I don't want a Tax Code that rewards companies for creating jobs overseas, I want to reward companies that create jobs right here in America. That's what change is, Iowa.

Change is turning the page on a decade of war so we can do some nation-building here at home, repairing our roads and our bridges, making our schools state of the art, putting our veterans back to work, because nobody who fights for this country's freedom should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they come home. That's what we're fighting for. That's why we're not done.

Change is a future where we reduce our deficit by asking the wealthiest Americans to go back to the tax rates they paid when Bill Clinton was in office. We'll cut out spending we don't need. But as long as I'm President, we're not going to turn Medicare into a voucher just to pay for another millionaire's tax cut. We're not going to kick a kid off of Head Start just to pay for a millionaire's tax cut.

Because our budget reflects our priorities and our values. And we know what our future requires. We know what real change is. You've—you helped teach me that, here in Iowa. And what you also know is, is that change isn't easy. Remember, a lot of you showed up to town hall meetings back in 2007, 2008, and I used to talk about change. But I also said, I'm not just talking about changing Presidents. I'm

not just talking about changing parties. I'm talking about changing our politics.

I told you I ran because your voices had been shut out of our democracy for way too long by special interests and politicians who will do whatever it takes to keep things just the way they are. And we've seen over the last 4 years, the status quo in Washington, they are powerful and they have fought us every step of the way.

When we tried and succeeded in reforming our health care system, they spent millions trying to stop us. When we tried and succeeded in reforming Wall Street, they spent millions to push us back. And we kept on going. But those were tough fights.

And what the protectors of the status quo in Washington are counting on now is that you'll get worn down by all the squabbling. You'll get fed up with the dysfunction. You'll give up on the change we've fought for. You'll walk away and leave them to make decisions that affect every American. In other words, their bet is on cynicism. But, Iowa, you taught me to bet on you. You taught me to bet on hope.

I'll work with anybody, of any party, to move this country forward. And if you want to break the gridlock in Congress, you'll vote for leaders who say—who feel the same way, whether they're Democrats or Republicans or Independents, the kind of Iowa leaders you've always had: Tom and Christie Vilsack and Tom Harkin and Leonard Boswell and Bruce Braley and my great friends Tom Miller and Mike Fitzgerald.

But there are some principles you've got to fight for. There are times where you've got to take a stand. If the price of peace in Washington is cutting deals to kick students off of financial aid or get rid of funding for Planned Parenthood or let insurance companies discriminate against kids with preexisting conditions or eliminate health care for millions on Medicaid who are poor or elderly or disabled, I won't pay that price. That's not a deal I will make. That's not bipartisanship. That's not change. That's surrender to the same forces of the status quo that has squeezed middle class families for way too long.

And, Iowa, I'm not ready to give up on the fight. I've got a lot more fight left in me. But to wage that fight on behalf of American families, I need you to still have some fight in you too.

The folks at the top in this country, turns out they don't need another champion in Washington. They'll always 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 after a long day in the office, the men and women I meet on the campaign trail every day.

The laid-off furniture worker who's retraining at the age of 55 for a new career at a community college, she needs a champion. The restaurant owner who needs a loan to expand—he's got great food but the bank turned him down—he needs help. He needs a champion. The cooks and the waiters and cleaning staff, working overtime in a hotel in Des Moines or Vegas, trying to save enough to buy a first home or send their kid to college, they need a champion.

The autoworker who was laid off, thought the plant would never reopen, and is now back on the job, filled with pride and dignity, building a great car, building America, he needs a champion. The teacher in an overcrowded classroom with outdated schoolbooks, digging into her own pocket to buy school supplies, not always feeling like she's got the support she needs, but showing up every day because she knows that this might be the day that she's got a breakthrough and she makes a difference in one child's life, she needs a champion.

All those kids in inner cities, small farm towns, kids dreaming of becoming scientists or doctors, engineers or entrepreneurs, diplomats or even a President, they need a champion in Washington. Because the future will never have as many lobbyists as the status quo. Children don't have lobbyists the way oil companies or banks do. But it's the dreams of those children that will be our saving grace.

That's what we fight for. That's why I need you, Iowa: to make sure their voices are heard, to make sure your voices are heard. And that's why we've come too far to turn back now. We've come too far to let our hearts grow faint.

Now is the time to keep pushing forward, to educate all our kids and train all our workers and to create new jobs and rebuild our roads and bring back our troops and care for our veterans and broaden opportunity and grow our middle class and restore our democracy and make sure that no matter who you are or where you come from or how you started out, what you look like, who you love, what your last name is, here in America, you can make it if you try. That's what we're fighting for.

And, Iowa, after all the months of campaigning, after all the rallies, after the millions of dollars of ads, it all comes down to you. It's out of my hands now. It's in yours. All of it depends on what you do when you step into that voting booth tomorrow. It's just a remarkable thing, the way our democracy works. And at a certain point, all this effort and all these campaign rallies, and then it just comes down to each of us, as citizens. All of it depends on you bringing your friend or your neighbor, your co-worker, your mom, your dad, your wife, your husband to the polls.

That's how our democracy is supposed to be. The single most powerful force in our democracy is you. Moving this country forward begins with you. Don't ever let anybody tell you your vote doesn't matter. Don't let anybody tell you your voice can't make a difference. It makes a difference.

I got a powerful reminder of this myself on our last campaign. Folks in Iowa, I know you may have heard this story, but it was early in the primaries, and we were still way down in the polls, and I think this just—this office had just finally gotten the heat turned on. [Laughter] And at the time, I was still competing in South Carolina; it was one of the early primary States. And I really wanted the endorsement of a State representative down there. I'd met her at some function where I was—nobody knew me, nobody could pronounce my name. They're wondering, what's he thinking? [Laughter]

So I asked her for her endorsement. And she said, "I tell you what, Obama, I will give you my endorsement if you come to my hometown of Greenwood, South Carolina." And I

think I had a little bit of wine during dinner, because right away I said, "Okay." [Laughter]

So it's about a month later, and I'm traveling back to South Carolina. And we flew in late at night. I think we were coming from Iowa. We had been campaigning nonstop, traveling all through towns and having town hall meetings and shaking hands. And I'm—in between, I'm making phone calls, asking people for support. And so we land in Greenville, South Carolina, at around midnight. We get to the hotel about 1 o'clock in the morning. I am wiped out. I'm exhausted. And I'm dragging my bags to my room. Back then, we didn't fly on Air Force One, and—[laughter]—the accommodations were a little different. [Laughter]

And just as I'm about to walk into the room, one of my staff taps me on the shoulder, and they say, "Excuse me, Senator"—I was a Senator back then. "We're going to have to wake up and be on the road at 6:30 in the morning." And I said, "What?" [Laughter] "Why?" "Well, you made this promise to go to Greenwood, and it's several hours away." [Laughter]

And you know, Iowa, I try to keep my promises. So a few hours later, I wake up, and I'm feeling terrible. I think a cold's coming on. And I open up the curtains to try to get some light to wake me up, but it's pouring down rain, terrible storm. And I take a shower and get some coffee, and I open up the newspaper and there's a bad story about me in the New York Times. [Laughter] I was much more sensitive at that time to bad stories. [Laughter] I've become more accustomed to these now.

And finally, I get dressed, I go downstairs, and I'm walking out to the car, and my umbrella blows open, and I'm soaked. So by the time I'm in the car, I'm wet and I'm mad and I'm still kind of sleepy. And it turns out that Greenwood is several hours away from everywhere else. [Laughter]

So we drive and we drive and we drive and we drive. And finally, we get to Greenwood, although you don't know you're in Greenwood right away because there are not a lot of tall buildings around. And we pull up to a small field house, and I walk in, and I'm looking around. I don't hear a lot going on. And the

State representative said she was going to organize a little meeting for us, and we walk in, and there are about 20 people there. And they're all kind of wet too, and they don't look very excited to see me. [*Laughter*]

But I'm running for President, so I do what I'm supposed to do, and I'm shaking hands; I say: "How do you do? Nice to meet you." And I'm making my way around the room, and suddenly, I hear this voice cry out behind me: "Fired up!"

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. And I'm startled, and I don't know what's going on. But everybody in the room—this is a small room—they act like this is normal. [*Laughter*] And when the voice says, "Fired up," they all say, "Ready to go."

And so, once again, I hear the voice: "Fired up!" They say, "Fired up!" They say, "Ready to go!" "Ready to go!"

I look around, I turn behind me, there's this small woman. She's about 60 years old. Looks like she just came from church; she got a big church hat. [*Laughter*] And she's looking at me, kind of peering at me, and she's grinning, smiling, looking happy. Turns out she's a city councilwoman from Greenwood who also moonlights as a private detective. I'm not making this up. [*Laughter*] This is true. And it turns out she's famous throughout the area. When she goes to football games and when she goes to rallies and she goes to community events, she does this chant of hers. She does it wherever she goes. So for the next few minutes, she just keeps on saying, "Fired up!"

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. And everybody says, "Fired up!" And she says, "Ready to go!" And everybody says, "Ready to go!"

And I'm thinking, this woman is showing me up. [*Laughter*] This is my meeting, I'm running for President. [*Laughter*] And she's dominating the room. And I look at my staff, and they just shrug their shoulders. They don't know what to do.

So this goes on for a few minutes. Now, here's the thing, Iowa. After a few minutes, I'm feeling kind of fired up. [*Laughter*] I'm feeling like I'm ready to go. [*Laughter*] So I start join-

ing in the chant, and my staff starts joining in the chant. And suddenly, I feel pretty good.

And we go on to talk about the lives of the people in the room and their families and their struggles and their hopes for their kids and their grandkids. And we drive out, and it's still raining, but it doesn't seem so bad. And we go to our next stop, and for the rest of the day, even after we left Greenwood, even though we still weren't getting any big crowds anywhere, even though people still couldn't pronounce my name, I felt good. [*Laughter*]

And I'd see my staff, and I'd say, "Are you fired up?" They'd say, "We're fired up." I'd say, "Are you ready to go?" And they'd say, "We're ready to go."

And we brought that to Iowa. And during our rallies, this became a chant, and we'd have signs saying: "Fired up! Ready to go!" And the woman—her name was Edith Childs—she became a celebrity, and she was written up in the *Wall Street Journal*—[*laughter*]—and folks did news stories on her. And this became one of the anthems of our campaign back in 2008.

Now, here's the end of the story, though. We knew we were coming back to Des Moines for the last campaign rally I'll ever do for me. And so we were getting kind of sentimental. And we called up Edith Childs. And we said, why don't you come on up? [*Applause*] No, no, no, listen to this. We said, why don't you come on up? We'll fly you up from South Carolina, and you can do this chant one more time, just for old, good times' sake. It's like getting the band back together again. We're—[*laughter*].

And you know what Edith said? She said: "I'd love to see you, but I think we can still win North Carolina, so I'm taking a crew into North Carolina to knock on doors on election day. I don't have time just to be talking about it. I've got to knock on some doors. I've got to turn out the vote. I'm still fired up, but I've got work to do."

And that shows you what one voice can do. One voice can change a room. And if it can change a room, it can change a city. And if it can change a city, it can change a State. And if it can change a State, it can change a nation.

And if it can change a nation, it can change the world.

And, Iowa, in 2008, your voice changed the world. And Edith Childs asked me to ask you that if you're willing to still stand with me tomorrow, if you're willing to get your friends and your neighbors and your coworkers to the polls tomorrow, if you're willing to make sure we finish what we started, she's pretty sure we'll win Iowa. She's pretty sure we'll win this election. And she just had one question for you, and that is: Are you fired up?

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Are you fired up?

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Are you fired up?

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Are you fired up?

Audience members. Ready to go!

Remarks at an Election Victory Celebration in Chicago, Illinois November 7, 2012

Thank you so much. Tonight, more than 200 years after a former colony won the right to determine its own destiny, the task of perfecting our Union moves forward.

It moves forward because of you. It moves forward because you reaffirmed the spirit that has triumphed over war and Depression; the spirit that has lifted this country from the depths of despair to the great heights of hope; the belief that while each of us will pursue our own individual dreams, we are an American family, and we rise or fall together, as one Nation and as one people.

Tonight, in this election, you, the American people, reminded us that while our road has been hard, while our journey has been long, we have picked ourselves up, we have fought our way back, and we know in our hearts that for the United States of America, the best is yet to come.

I want to thank every American who participated in this election. Whether you voted for the very first time or waited in line for a very long time—by the way, we have to fix that. Whether you pounded the pavement or picked

The President. Iowa, tomorrow let's remind the world just why it is the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

I love you. Let's go vote. Let's keep moving forward. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 p.m. at the intersection of East 4th and East Locust Streets. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Congressional candidate Christie Vilsack, wife of Secretary of Agriculture Thomas J. Vilsack; State Attorney General Thomas J. Miller and State Treasurer Michael L. Fitzgerald of Iowa; and State Rep. J. Anne Parks of South Carolina. He also referred to the Jefferson-Jackson dinner, a Democratic Party fundraising event. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

up the phone, whether you held an Obama sign or a Romney sign, you made your voice heard, and you made a difference.

I just spoke with Governor Romney, and I congratulated him and Paul Ryan on a hard-fought campaign. We may have battled fiercely, but it's only because we love this country deeply, and we care so strongly about its future. From George to Lenore, to their son Mitt, the Romney family has chosen to give back to America through public service, and that is a legacy that we honor and applaud tonight.

In the weeks ahead, I also look forward to sitting down with Governor Romney to talk about where we can work together to move this country forward.

I want to thank my friend and partner of the last 4 years, America's happy warrior, the best Vice President anybody could ever hope for, Joe Biden.

And I wouldn't be the man I am today without the woman who agreed to marry me 20 years ago. Let me say this publicly: Michelle, I have never loved you more. I have never been