

And when I see your grandparents, I see my grandparents. And I have kept that promise.

And as long as I have the privilege of being your President, I will keep that promise. Because I still believe in you. And if you still believe in me, and if you're willing to stand with me and knock on some doors with me and make some phone calls with me, we will finish what we started in 2008, and we will grow this middle class, and we will strengthen America, and we'll remind the world just why it is that we live in the greatest nation on Earth.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Poland, Ohio July 6, 2012

The President. Hello, Ohio! How's it going, Poland? Well, it is good to be here. Everybody have a seat. It is good to be here in Poland.

A couple of people I just want to acknowledge. First of all, give Dan a big round of applause; he was outstanding. Your Congressman, Tim Ryan, is in the house—doing outstanding work. One of my favorite people, former Congressman John Bocchieri, is here. Give him a round of applause. And Youngstown Mayor Chuck Sammarone is here. Where's Chuck? There he is, right here. And all of you are here, and I'm excited about that.

Audience member. Obama! [Laughter]

The President. Hey! So I hope everybody had a good Fourth of July.

Audience member. Yes, how about you?

The President. I had a great Fourth of July. [Laughter] We had some folks over to the house. [Laughter] Had a little grilling going on in the backyard. [Laughter] A few fireworks. It gave us a chance to say thank you to the incredible men and women in uniform. We invited a whole bunch of military families over. They do such a great job preserving our freedom.

It was Malia's birthday on the Fourth of July, and she's now 14. And it used to be I could get away with telling her the fireworks were all for her. [Laughter] But she's a little old for that now. She doesn't believe me. But she says hi. Michelle says hi. Sasha, Bo, everybody says hi. I think Malia has got some friends over, and

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:13 p.m. at James Day Park. In his remarks, he referred to Wendy Pitts, technician, General Motors Parma Metal Center; Jack T. DeGeeter, son of Mayor Timothy J. DeGeeter of Parma, OH; and Connie Schultz, wife of Sen. Sherrod C. Brown. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng, mother-in-law Marian Robinson, and brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson.

Michelle decided unsupervised 14-year-olds was not a good idea. [Laughter]

But—now, as you may have heard, we're on the bus here in Ohio. We've been traveling through. We went to Parma and Sandusky and Maumee, and now we're here, and Oak Harbor, Akron. And I've been eating a lot. [Laughter] And people have been commenting I need to gain some weight, so the—

Audience member. Yes!

The President. Wait—[laughter]—who said that “yes”? [Laughter] Well, you'll be happy to know that I've been eating. And in between the eating, we've been talking a little bit about politics. Now, you guys are getting bombarded with all kinds of nonsense on TV. So I know that sometimes politics can be discouraging, and especially, Washington politics can be discouraging, and it can seem small, and it can seem petty. But the choice in this election could not be bigger and the stakes could not be higher. This year is going to be about more than just two candidates or even two political parties. What's at stake this time is two fundamentally different visions about how America moves forward, two ways of thinking about this country.

When I think about America, I think about my family, and I think about my grandfather, who fought in World War II, and my grandmother, who, even with a baby, was working on a bomber assembly line. And when my grandfather came back home, he got the opportunity

to go to college because of the GI bill. And I think about my mom, a single mom, because my dad left when I was a baby. So she had to raise me and my sister with the help of my grandparents, and it was tough sometimes, but she was able to do it and get her own education and then ensure I got a great education because she was able to get student loans and grants.

And then, I think about Michelle's parents. Her dad worked at the water filtration plant, a blue-collar worker in Chicago. And mom stayed at home looking after the kids, and then when the kids got older, she went to work as a secretary at a bank, and she worked there most of her life.

And when I think about both Michelle's family and my family, what I am reminded of is, what made America great was this basic idea, this basic bargain, that all of you experienced in your own families: your parents, your grandparents, your great-grandparents, maybe some of them emigrated here from someplace else. But the idea was, here in America, you could make it if you try; that it doesn't matter what you look like, where you come from, what church you worship in. The idea is that if you are willing to put in the work and take responsibility for your family—just like Dan was talking about—if you're willing to stick with it and tough it out when times got tough sometimes, that ultimately, hard work was rewarded and responsibility was respected, and you didn't just look out for yourself, but you looked out for your community as well as your family and your country.

And you know, nobody expected to get fabulously rich, although it was great if people got rich. But when I think about my family or Michelle's family, what made us rich was spending time together. And the idea was that if our families were of good character and had good values and you were willing to work hard, then you could find a job that paid a decent wage, and eventually, saving up, you could own a home. And you knew that you wouldn't go bankrupt when you got sick because you had some health insurance, and maybe you took a vacation every once in a while, and it wasn't

necessarily some fancy vacation at some fancy resort.

The best vacation I had when I was a kid was we—my grandmother and my mom and my sister—we traveled around the country on Greyhound buses and on trains, and we stayed at Howard Johnsons. [Laughter] And I was 11, and so if there was any kind of swimming pool—it didn't matter how big it was, right—you'd spend the whole day there, and then you're real excited to go to where the vending machine was and the ice machine and get the ice, and that was like a big deal. [Laughter] And you would just see the sights and stop by a diner someplace. So you'd have that chance to take a little bit of time off to spend with your family, and then when you retire, you were able to retire with dignity and respect. And you were part of a community.

And that basic bargain is what built this country. That's what made us an economic superpower. That's what made us the envy of the world, not the fact that we had the most millionaires or billionaires, but the fact that our economy grew from the middle out and there were ladders of opportunity for people to get into the middle class, even if they were born poor.

And the reason I ran for President—the reason I ran the first time for a State senate seat on the South Side of Chicago—was because for too many people that bargain, that dream, felt like it was slipping away for too many people.

We had gone through a decade where people were working harder and harder, but they didn't see any increase in income. And profits were going sky high for a lot of companies, but jobs weren't growing fast enough. And the cost of everything from health care to college tuition to groceries to gas kept going up faster than people's incomes. So a lot of folks felt like that idea that we not only could live a good middle class life, but more importantly, we could pass it on to our kids and they could succeed the way we might not have imagined—they could go to college and do some things that we couldn't imagine doing—that felt like it was slipping away for too many people.

That's why I got into politics. That's why I ran for President. That's why in 2008 a lot of you came together and helped support us.

And we didn't even realize then that we were going to be getting hit with the worst economic crisis, the worst financial crisis, in our lifetimes. And obviously, the hardship that occurred because of that made that dream even a little bit further out of reach for too many people.

We came together. And it wasn't just Democrats, by the way, it was Independents and Republicans who wanted to figure out how do we put that basic bargain back together to grow the middle class not from the top down, but from the middle and from the bottom up. That was our idea.

Now, we knew from the start in 2008 that turning that around wasn't going to happen overnight. It didn't happen overnight, and so we weren't going to reverse it overnight. But we've been steady. We've worked hard, and I know all of you have worked hard. And Dan's story is typical of so many people I meet who had to make adjustments and deal with some disappointments, but came back stronger and came back tougher. And that's what America and that's what Ohio has been doing.

So over the last several years, what we've seen are people who go out and retrain for new jobs. And small businesses have to adapt, and sometimes, the owner doesn't take a salary just to keep folks on the payroll. And I met a woman yesterday in Parma who I had met a year earlier. She had been out of work for 2 years and had gone back to community college at the age of 55 and retrained. And I saw her in the rope line after my speech. She had just been certified and was starting her new job on Tuesday and after having done 2 years at a community college.

So those stories are duplicating themselves all across Ohio and all across the country. But it's still tough out there. We learned this morning that our businesses created 84,000 new jobs last month, and that overall means that businesses have created 4.4 million new jobs over the past 28 months, including 500,000 new manufacturing jobs. That's a step in the

right direction. [Applause] That's a step in the right direction.

But we can't be satisfied, because our goal was never to just keep on working to get back to where we were back in 2007. I want to get back to a time when middle class families and those working to get into the middle class have some basic security. That's our goal. So we've got to grow the economy even faster, and we've got to put even more people back to work.

And we've got to tap into the basic character of this country, because our character has not changed, even though we've gone through some tough times these last few years. It hasn't changed our character. It hasn't changed what made us great. It hasn't changed why we came together in 2008.

So again, our mission is not just to get back to where we were before the crisis. We've got to deal with what's been happening over the last decade, the last 15 years—manufacturing leaving our shores, incomes flatlining—all those things are what we've got to struggle and fight for. And that's the reason that I'm running for a second term as President of the United States. I want to move this country forward. [Applause] I want to move this country forward.

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

The President. Thank you. Now, here's the thing. Remember, I told you this was a choice that we've got to make, because what's holding us back right now is not that we don't have good answers for how we could grow the economy faster or put more people back to work. The problem is we've got a stalemate in Washington. We've got two fundamentally different ideas about where we should take the country. And this—

Audience member. Put Congress to work! [Laughter]

The President. We're trying to put Congress to work. [Laughter] And this election is about how we break that stalemate. And the good news is it's in your power to break this stalemate. It's in the power of everybody who lives in Ohio, everybody who lives in Poland, every-

body who lives all across the Midwest. All those folks out there, whether you're punching a clock or starting a business, you've got a chance to move this country forward. But you're going to have to make a choice about which direction we go in.

Now, my opponent and his allies in Congress—and the special interests that support them—they've got a particular idea of how you grow an economy. It's actually a pretty simple idea. [Laughter] Their basic idea is that if we spend trillions of dollars more on tax cuts, most of the benefits going to some of the wealthiest individuals in the country so the average millionaire gets a \$250,000 tax break, even if we've got to gut education to do it, even if we've got to cut job training programs to do it, even if we've got to increase middle class taxes to do it; if we cut trillions of dollars in taxes and we eliminate regulations, all kinds of regulations, the regulations we just put in place to make sure that Wall Street doesn't engage in reckless behavior that we have to bail out later or regulations that prevent insurance companies from excluding people with preexisting conditions from coverage or regulations that protect consumers from being taken advantage of by credit card companies; if we eliminate all those regulations and we combine those with the tax cuts, then wealthy investors and companies will do very well and the benefits then will spread to everybody else.

Now, that's the idea. I'm not making this up. I'm sure that they would say it differently, they'd describe it differently, but that's their basic theory. And you can go to Mr. Romney's website, or you can look at the plan that the Republicans in the House of Representatives voted for, and you'll see that that's basically their plan. That's their vision. Their basic idea is if everybody is just on their own, doing what they do, everything is going to turn out just fine.

Now, it's a theory. [Laughter] But I think it's wrong. I think it's wrong. [Applause] I think it's wrong. And the reason I think it's wrong is we just tried it. We tried it in the decade before I took office. And let's look at what happened. We saw us fighting two wars on a credit card.

The tax cuts turned a surplus into a deficit. And the lack of regulation resulted in what happened on Wall Street, and we ended up with the biggest crisis that we've ever seen.

Audience member. That ain't right.

The President. It ain't right. [Laughter] It's not a smart theory. I mean, if we hadn't tried it before, you might say, okay, let's give that a shot. [Laughter] But we just tried it, and it didn't work. And you know, if you look throughout our history, that kind of top-down economics has never worked.

So we've got to have somebody who's fighting for you, somebody who's thinking about how to grow the economy from the middle out, from the bottom up, not from the top down. That's why I'm running for a second term as President. I've got a different idea. I've got a different theory.

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

The President. Just like their theory has been tested, let's talk about my theory, my vision.

When the American auto industry was on the brink of collapse, and more than 1 million jobs were on the line, and 1 in 8 jobs in Ohio depends on the auto industry—not just the folks in the auto plants, not just the union workers, but all those suppliers up and down the chain, every restaurant outside the plant, every store, every school depends on those jobs and that industry—and you had some folks saying, let's let Detroit go bankrupt, and they weren't just talking about Detroit, by the way, we said, you know what, we're going to bet on the American worker. We're going to bet on American industry. And now Chrysler is back, and GM is the number-one company in the world, and Ford is on the move. That's my theory: betting on the American worker and American businesses. That's why I want to move us forward.

And I believe that what happened in the auto industry can happen in a lot of other industries, because I believe in American manufacturing. The future of American manufacturing can still be forged in places like Youngstown and Cleveland and Pittsburgh. And I'm going

to run to make sure that that happens. I want to sell more goods stamped with three proud words: Made in America. [Applause] Made in America.

And that starts with us changing our Tax Code so we stop giving tax breaks to companies that are shipping jobs overseas. I want to give tax breaks to companies that are investing right here in Poland, Ohio; in Parma, Ohio; in Cincinnati, Ohio; in the United States of America.

Now, you look at the success of Dan's company. I just went over and visited and took some sauce—[laughter]—that I am going to use this weekend. Those are the kinds of companies that started as a family business and are now growing and growing and expanding, and suddenly, they become medium-sized businesses, then they become big businesses. And America has got the most competitive workers on Earth, the most productive. But we've got to make sure that our laws are encouraging investment here in the United States.

Now, this is a different idea than the other guy. Now, Mr. Romney's experience—because he always says, I've got a lot of business experience, I know how to create jobs. [Laughter] Well, look, his company that he started were called the "pioneers" of business outsourcing—the "pioneers" of outsourcing. So that's his experience.

My experience is working with workers and management to save the auto industry. That's your choice, because I'm going to fight for your job here in the United States.

But that's not enough, that's not the whole vision, because we've also got to continue to improve our own competitiveness, which means that I'm running to make sure that once again, our kids are getting the best education in the world.

I want us to hire new teachers, not lay more teachers off, especially in math and science. I want to extend the tuition tax credit that we put in place that's already saved millions of families thousands of dollars. I want to extend that.

We just won the fight to stop Congress from letting student loan rates double for 7 million students. Now I want to work with colleges and

universities to bring tuition down once and for all. I want to give 2 million more Americans the chance to go to community colleges and learn the skills like that woman I saw yesterday had learned, because there are jobs out there right now that aren't matched up with the skills people have. And if we get those companies to come in and help design the training programs, those folks can go back to work. I want 2 million more of those folks benefiting from that kind of partnership between businesses and community colleges.

I want to do more in the area of housing. My administration has already helped more than a million responsible homeowners refinance their mortgages. But that's only a few of the potential families that could take advantage of historically low rates. So what we've said to Congress is, let's get to work. Give everybody the chance to refinance, including folks whose homes are underwater. That will save the average family \$3,000 a year. Who can use \$3,000 a year?

Put that money in your pockets, and that allows you—that's like a huge tax cut for you, which you could then spend at restaurants and at stores and helping to pay that college tuition for that kid who is going off to college. It could make all the difference in the world. That's my theory of how you grow an economy.

I'm running because I continue to be convinced that in a country like ours, the greatest country on Earth, nobody should go bankrupt just because they get sick. I am proud of the work we did to get that health care law passed. It was the right thing to do. John Bocchieri knows it was the right thing to do.

Over in Parma yesterday, I saw a woman John and I both know named Natoma Canfield. I've got a letter that she wrote, hung up in the Oval Office, that talks about her fears when she got cancer and the fact that she wasn't sure she'd ever be able to get insurance again. And she kept on trying to hang onto it because she was worried she'd get that cancer back. And finally, she had to let her insurance go, and she didn't know what was going to happen. And because of this bill, she is able to get the treatment she needs.

And you know what, I'll work with anybody who wants to continue to work—whether it's the State level or the Federal level—to continue to improve this law. But it was the right thing to do, to make sure that if you've got a preexisting condition, you can still get health insurance. It was the right thing to do.

For those of you who already have health insurance, the only thing this does is make your health insurance more secure, because it means insurance companies can't impose lifetime limits or use fine print, so when you really need it, suddenly, the insurance isn't there. It's what's allowing your kids to potentially stay on your health insurance policy up to 26 years old. It's helping seniors get a better deal on their prescription drugs. And it will help people who don't have health insurance for the first time be able to get it at affordable prices. It's the right thing to do.

And by the way, when you hear all these folks saying, oh, no, no, this is a tax, this is a burden on middle class families, let me tell you, we know because the guy I'm running against tried this in Massachusetts and it's working just fine—[laughter]—even though now he denies it. Basically, what we say is, you know what, if you have health insurance, you're all good; if you don't have health insurance, we'll help you get it. If you can afford to buy health insurance and you don't get it, so that you force us to pay for your health care when you get sick or you get in an accident, that ain't right.

So what we're going to do is, we're going to charge you a penalty to make sure that you're not unloading those costs on everybody else. It will affect less than 1 percent of the population, because most Americans are responsible and do the right thing. I make no apologies for it. We're going to keep it moving forward. It was the right thing to do 2 years ago, it's the right thing to do now, and we're going to keep moving.

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

The President. And you know what, the—I'm going to embarrass him a little bit, but John Bocchieri, he may have lost his congressional seat because he voted for health care, but

that's the kind of person he is. And that's the kind of responsibility you want from your Representatives, and I couldn't be prouder of him for it. That's a class act right there.

I'm running because after a decade of war, I promised to end the war in Iraq, and I did. We're transitioning out of Afghanistan. We took the fight to Al Qaida, and we have decimated their leadership ranks, including Usama bin Laden. And so now I think it's time for us to take half the money we were spending on war, use it to pay down the deficit; let's take the other half and do some nation-building here at home. Let's put some folks back to work here in Ohio rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our schools. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

And speaking of deficits, I had a trillion-dollar deficit sitting on my doorstep when I walked into the Oval Office. [Laughter] And all of us agree we've got to pay down our debt. We've got to make sure that we're living within our means, but we've got to do it in a responsible way.

I want to make sure that after a decade of irresponsible decisions that we deal with this in a way that is smart and helps grow our economy. We're not going to balance our budget on the backs of the poor. We're not going to do it by turning Medicare into a voucher program. We're not going to ask middle class families to pay more so wealthy families can pay less. We'll cut spending we can't afford. We should.

I was telling you stories about my family; my family didn't believe in handouts. They didn't get to where they were because they were always relying on some government program. They understood you got to work hard to make it in America, and you can't always help somebody who is not willing to help themselves.

But I tell you what, even as we cut out programs that don't work, we've got to make sure that those of us who can afford to do a little bit more because we've been so blessed by this country, that the wealthiest among us can pay a little bit more to help close this deficit.

Folks like me can afford to do it. I promise you. I know. I've talked to my accountant.

[*Laughter*] He said, you can do a little more. [*Laughter*] And I sure know Mr. Romney can do a little more. [*Laughter*] It's not going to—and you know what, a lot of successful people around the country, I talk to them, they're willing to do more, because they believe in this country. And they understand that if you've been given all these blessings, you've got to make sure that you're giving a little something back. You've got to make sure that the next generation has the same opportunities that we did.

And by the way, this theory I just described—of making investments in education and rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our broadband lines and our wireless networks and getting more teachers in the classroom and making sure that we're taking care of our veterans and balancing our budget in a responsible way and having strong regulations in place so that consumers aren't taken advantage of and our air and water doesn't get dirty—that's been tried too. It was tried by a guy named Bill Clinton.

And during that time, we created 23 million new jobs, we had a budget surplus, and guess what, we created a lot of millionaires and billionaires too. It was good for everybody. Businesses do well when middle class families can afford to buy their products. When middle class families can afford to take a vacation, when middle class families can afford to send their kids to college, everybody does well. That's my vision for America.

See, all these things are tied together. All these things are tied together because they describe how we strengthen the fabric of our communities so that everybody can participate: so that everybody gets a fair shot, everybody does their fair share, everybody is playing by the same set of rules. That's what America is about. That's the big, diverse, optimistic, hopeful, generous America that we love. And that's the vision that we've got to fight for. Because our parents and our grandparents, they passed that on, understanding that each generation has to fulfill its own responsibilities and that it's not always easy.

Remember, my grandparents, they were—they came out of the Depression, had it a lot worse than we did, and they understood what it meant to struggle, but they were willing to struggle because they knew it would be good for not only their own families, but for the country.

We've got that same responsibility. And we—a lot of us understood that in 2008 when we ran. And over the next 4 months, you will be bombarded with more negative ads. You've got these super PACs, millionaires, billionaires writing \$10 million checks, just pouring—raining down on my head.

Audience member. It's all right.

The President. Oh, no, it is all right, because I'm tough. [*Laughter*] I'm skinny, but I'm tough. I am.

But the main reason it's going to be okay is because of you. What I learned in 2008 was that when ordinary Americans decide what's right, when they commit to working together to bring about a better day, they can't be stopped. You can't be stopped. And that has given me confidence through all the ups and downs of these last 3½ years. It's what I think about in the morning and what I'm thinking about when I go to bed at night. I think about you.

I made a promise in 2008. I said, look, I'm not a perfect man—ask Michelle—[*laughter*]—I'm not going to be a perfect President, but I'll always tell you what I think, I'll always tell you where I stand, and most importantly, I will wake up every single day fighting as hard as I can for you. I'm thinking about you. Because I see myself in you. I see my grandfather in your grandfather. I see my kids in your kids. I have kept that promise, Ohio. And if you're willing to continue to stand with me and work with me and make those phone calls and knock on those doors, we will finish what we started in 2008, and we will remind the world why America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. at Dobbins Elementary School. In his remarks,

he referred to Daniel Potkanowicz, mechanic, Summer Garden Food Manufacturing in Boardman, OH; Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massa-

chusetts; and former President William J. Clinton. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng, mother-in-law Marian Robinson, and brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania July 6, 2012

The President. Hello, Pittsburgh! It is good to be back in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A couple of people I want to acknowledge. First of all, one of my favorite people, one of our finest United States Senators, give it up for Bob Casey. I think we've got in the house as well your mayor, Luke Ravenstahl. Congressman Mike Doyle is in the house. Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald is here. The Pennsylvania Democratic State Party chair, Jim Burn, is here. And we want to thank Sheryl Sesay and Monte Reid for the preprogram. Great job. Great job.

Now, I—first of all, before we do anything else—

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back.

But let's also be clear that a very important situation has arisen: The White Sox and the Pirates are in first place. So we may be in the World Series together. We love each other, we can root for each other—until we get to the World Series. [*Laughter*] Then it's every man for himself. [*Laughter*]

I know it's hot. I know you guys have been waiting a while. So I just—so I want to, first of all, just say thank you to everybody for taking the time to be here.

Audience members. Thank you!

The President. I hope everybody had a great Fourth of July. We had some folks over for a barbecue in my backyard—[*laughter*]—had some fireworks. It was also Malia's birthday on the Fourth. She is now 14 years old. It goes by too quick. I used to be able to convince her that all these fireworks were for her, but she no longer believes me. [*Laughter*] But she sends her love, and Michelle and Sasha and Bo all say hi.

Now, some of you may know that we've been on the bus tour for the last couple of days. I've been traveling through Ohio. We

came—just came from Beaver, Pennsylvania. And everywhere I go, people have said, Mr. President, you're getting too skinny, you need to eat. [*Laughter*] And so we've been eating a lot. And I've had a chance to talk to folks everywhere I go, and people are aware of the fact that we're now in full campaign swing.

And I know that sometimes modern campaigns aren't pretty to watch, because basically, so much of it involves millions of dollars on television. Most of the ads are negative, and at a certain point, people get discouraged and start feeling like nobody in Washington's listening to what's going on to ordinary folks all across the country.

But I've got to tell you, despite the cynicism and the negativism, what I'm—what I think about is my first race. And what—

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

The President. What I think about is my first race. And this is when I was first running for State senate; I couldn't afford television commercials. And Michelle and I, we used to go door to door and pass out flyers that we had printed out in Kinko's. And we had our friends and our family members, and we'd march in Fourth of July parades. And it was hard work. And I didn't have Air Force One back then. [*Laughter*]

But when I think about my first race, I think about why I got into politics. And the reason I got into politics was because this country has blessed me so much. And I thought about my own family, how my grandfather fought in Patton's army in World War II while my grandmother was back home working on a bomber assembly line. And when my grandfather came back, he was able to go to college on the GI bill, and they were able to buy a home through the FHA.