

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in San Francisco, California  
October 10, 2015

*The President.* Hello, San Francisco! Hello, hello! Hello! It's good to see you. Everybody, have a seat, have a seat. Thank you! Thank you. It's good to be in California! Oh, I am fired up! I'm always fired up when I'm in San Francisco.

Listen, we've got a few folks here to help us kick off the weekend. The mayor of Oakland, Libby Schaaf is here. Where's the mayor? There she is over there. You may know these guys—if you're sitting behind them, it may be a problem—your NBA Champions, the Golden State Warriors in the house! They are wonderful young men, really impressive, and doing great in the community, in addition to doing great stuff on the court.

A little bit later, you're going to hear from a guy who I hear has been talking about launching a potential political career. [Laughter] You may have heard about this. Kanye is thinking about running for Speaker of the House. Couldn't get any stranger. [Laughter] But in case Kanye is serious about this whole POTUS thing—or as he calls it, "Peezy"—[laughter]—I do have some advice for him. Just some stuff that I've picked up on the way. First of all, you've got to spend a lot of time dealing with some strange characters who behave like they're on a reality TV show. [Laughter] So you've got to be cool with that.

*Audience member.* We love you!

*The President.* Love you too!

Second—this is the second important tip—saying that you have a "Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy," that's what's known as "off message" in politics. You can't say something like that. [Laughter] There are a lot of people who have lost their congressional seats saying things like that. [Laughter] So don't do that. That's number two. And number three, do you really think that this country is going to elect a Black guy from the South Side of Chicago with a funny name to be President of the United States? That is crazy. That's cray!

All right. We'll see what Kanye has to say when he gets out here.

So listen. Hold on, I'm going to get serious now. Settle down. I always get a rowdy crowd in San Francisco. Something always happens. [Laughter]

So, 7 years ago, we came together—a lot of people here were involved in that movement—not just to elect a President, but more importantly, to reaffirm our faith in that basic American ideal that in this country, people who love the country can change it. The notion that if things aren't the way they should be, we can work together, put our shoulders to the wheel, and make it better.

And there have been times when that faith has been tested, during wars and recessions and political obstruction. And there are always cynics out there who say you shouldn't believe that you can change things. And they said at the time we were naive to try. But you didn't believe the cynics. And together, we've made extraordinary progress.

When I took office, we were losing 800,000 jobs a month. The unemployment rate was on its way to 10 percent. Right now our businesses have created 13.2 million new jobs over the course of 67 months. It's the longest uninterrupted job growth streak in our history. Unemployment rate down to 5.1. When I took office, more than 15 percent of Americans didn't have health insurance. We've covered 17 million Americans through Obamacare. More than 90 percent of Americans now have health care coverage. For the first time ever, insurance companies can't discriminate against you because you've got a preexisting condition.

When I took office, we were hopelessly addicted to foreign oil. We've cut our oil imports by more than half, tripled the generation of wind power, 20 times more solar power, doubled clean energy, creating jobs that can't be outsourced.

When I took office, our standing in the world was diminished. Today, America is mobilizing the world to deal with the threats of a new age: leading the world to make sure Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon, leading the

world towards action on climate change, leading the world to make sure we've got smarter trade rules for the 21st century, engaging the Cuban people for the first time in my lifetime, bringing our troops home to their families.

We've got more work to do.

*Audience member.* We love you! [Laughter]

*The President.* We've got more work to do, but we told the cynics that they were wrong. We said to them we could make a difference. Marriage equality is now a reality in all 50 States. More job openings today than any time in history. Our high school graduation rate is at an alltime high, and deficits have been cut by two-thirds.

So it's—there's almost no measure by which we're not better off than when I took office and than when we started this process for change. But it does kind of make you wonder, why are so many Republican politicians so down on America? Why are they so grumpy? [Laughter]

I mean, I know it's political season, but you—listening to them—

*Audience member.* [Inaudible]

*The President.* Listening to them, you would think that everything was terrific back in 2008—[laughter]—when we were going through the worst financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression, we were engaged in two wars, hopelessly addicted to foreign oil, bin Laden still at large. [Laughter] Apparently, according to them, those were the good old days. [Laughter] Those were the golden years. And then, I came in and messed it up. I mean, you've got to give credit for chutzpah, for just, like, just saying stuff and—[laughter]. And then, they just keep—the fact checkers can't even keep up. [Laughter] They're, like, wait, he said that? Wait, hold on, what? Huh? [Laughter] I mean, they just say stuff. Do you listen to them?

*Audience members.* No!

*The President.* I mean, you should listen to them a little bit just to hear what they're saying. And the problem is that part of the reason that they have to make stuff up is because they're running on the very same policies that caused all the problems in the first place: want-

ing to give more tax breaks to the folks at the very top; wanting to cut funding for education; wanting to repeal the Affordable Care Act and kick millions off their health care; gutting the health—the Wall Street reform that we put in place to make sure that we don't have another one of these financial crises; denying that the planet is getting warmer and trying to unravel the rules we're putting in place on power plants to protect the air that our kids breathe. That doesn't move us forward. That doesn't help Americans get ahead.

I—just on this climate change thing, I've just got to say something. [Laughter] I really do. If 99 percent of doctors said, "You've got diabetes"—[laughter]—what would you do? Would you say, this is a hoax? [Laughter] Would you say, this is a socialist plot? [Laughter] Or would you say, let me get some medicine and eat different and try to deal with this diabetes? Right?

*Audience members.* Right!

*The President.* Well, with climate change, 99 percent of scientists have said if we do not do something now, then we may not be able to deal with rising oceans, we may not be able to deal with increased drought, we may not be able to adapt fast enough so that our children and our grandchildren are able to enjoy this beautiful planet the same way we did. Ninety-nine percent of them!

And meanwhile, we've got the chairman of the Senate energy and environment committee holding up a snowball in the Senate—[laughter]—in the middle of winter, saying, see, it's not warming because there's a snowball that he found—[laughter]—I'm not making this up. Am I making this up?

*Audience members.* No!

*The President.* No, I am not. [Laughter] I mean, it would be funny if it wasn't, like, this big, existential problem.

The point is, there is so much to feel good about in this country. And it's a shame when politicians are spending all their time not just trying to make people feel bad to score political points, but to try to spark fear, to make people scared. Especially when we've got so much work to do. Would don't have time to be

scared; we've got to get to work. And we can solve our problems if we have serious leaders who are willing to look at the facts, look at the evidence, be practical, exercise common sense, embrace our responsibilities as citizens.

We know what it takes to create more jobs and grow the economy for everybody. Right now in Washington, they're talking about shutting down the Government over Planned Parenthood.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* We should be talking about opening up new opportunities, to invest in schools that educate our kids and rebuild our roads and our bridges and our ports. Invest in research that alleviates hunger and cures diseases. That's what we should be doing.

We know we've got to protect our kids from climate change. We can't leave the planet to the point where it's beyond the capacity to repair. So we're going to have to do something about it. We can, but we've got to start now.

We know we've got to do something to prevent the kind of gun massacre that we see with growing frequency in this country. It's not normal. This is not how it has to be. This is a choice that we are making. We don't have to have young boys in Oakland getting shot every day. We don't have to have kids in classrooms feeling threatened because somebody has got an AK-47. We don't need to have that. That's a choice we make. We've got to make a different choice. We've got to make a different choice. These things aren't inevitable. These are things under our control. There are ways we can do that to protect our children and, yes, preserve the Constitution. I know a little bit about this; the Constitution, I used to teach it.

We know we have to reform our criminal justice system so that the punishment fits the crime and we're not just perpetuating a pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails. And we know we've got to update our immigration system so that it is fair and orderly and lawful. Anti-immigrant sentiment doesn't solve a problem. It's just designed to tap into some of our worst impulses and score political points. Fanning intolerance isn't going to solve a problem. America's greatness doesn't come

from building walls. It comes from building opportunity.

And when I say—when I hear folks talking sometimes the way they talk about our new wave of immigrants, I just want to remind everybody, there is a long history of anti-immigrant sentiment in this country. Unless you're one of the First Americans, unless you're Native American, your parents or grandparents or great-grandparents—how many folks here got some Irish in them? Yes, well, they used to talk about Irish folks just the way they talk about folks coming over the borders today. Same thing.

I know that sometimes it feels like our politics doesn't reflect the decency that we see in our friends, our neighbors, our communities. And I know that gets frustrating. We've got a system that seems to reward division and polarization and short-term thinking. And we've got a media that likes to concentrate on conflict, and you get attention, you can cash in by saying the most outrageous things—a system that rewards people trying to score political points rather than actually get things done.

But it's not enough just to be cynical and say Washington doesn't work and throw up your hands and be done with it. We can't afford that. We've got too much work to do. Our system only works when we recognize that the government isn't something separate from us, it is us. Our democracy is us. The most important office in a democracy is citizens. It's you. When I ran for office back in 2007, some of you could not pronounce my name—[laughter]—and then, things started rolling, and folks were getting excited—I said don't just leave it to me—or any politician. I didn't say, "Yes, I can." I said, "Yes, we can." And so our unfinished business doesn't just depend on me or Congress or the next President we elect, it depends on all of us, what we do together, all of us.

So, if you care about the things we talked about, you're going to have to stay active and you're going to have to stay involved. Not just at events like this where Kanye is playing. [Laughter] Not just when the Warriors show up. You've got to be out there organizing and mobilizing around issues you care about. And

you've got to care about the referendums and ballot initiatives that move this country forward at the State and local level. You've got to get your friends informed and involved. You've got to make that they vote. You've got to follow the issues. You've got to make sure that they know where their leaders stand and if they are not doing the right thing, that they are hearing from you and potentially being voted out by you.

You have to have the tenacity and the focus to make sure this system works. You can't just sit back——

*Audience member.* Four more years!

*The President.* Well, that we can't do because Michelle is not going to let that happen. [Laughter] And the Constitution forbids it. But I will be a citizen again, and I am going to be working alongside you to make sure. I'm just going to be an ordinary citizen. I will not have elected office, but it doesn't mean I stop working on these issues. I'm just getting started. We're going to be working side-by-side to make sure the system is responsive.

And you know, we can't just be the party that's against things. We've got to be for things. We can't be the party that blames certain groups; we've got to say to everybody, let's join together, make this democracy work. We are at our best when we assume the best in others, not the worst; when we try to recognize in other people our own struggles and our fears and our hopes. So that that kid who is struggling to pay for college, that's our kid. The immigrant hoping to contribute, that's our grandparent or

great-grandparent. The African American denied the right to vote, that is diminishing your democracy. A worker denied a living wage or equal pay for her equal effort, that hurts all of us. Their stories may not be our own, but we can make their fight our own.

That's what makes me proud to be a Democrat. I think we are right on most policy issues. I think our arguments are the right ones. But what I am really proud of is the fact that this is the party that stands for the idea that everybody deserves an equal shot. It's not just something to say, it's an obligation and a responsibility we have to uphold: to fight for everybody so that nobody gets left out. So that, no matter who you are, no matter where you were born, no matter what you look like, what your last name is, no matter who you love, if you work hard in this country, you can make it; and that we, as a society, are willing to hold hands and lift you up and give you the opportunity to succeed.

That's what we stand for as Democrats. That's what I believe this country stands for. That's what's at stake in this upcoming election and in the elections to come. And that's why I need you to be part of this process and part of this team.

I love you, San Francisco! Let's get to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. at the Warfield theater. In his remarks, he referred to musician Kanye O. West; and Sen. James M. Inhofe.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Los Angeles, California

October 10, 2015

*The President.* Hello, everybody! Hello, Los Angeles! Everybody, have a seat. Relax a little bit. It's hot out here; we don't want to get you overheated. [Laughter]

*Audience member.* Welcome home!

*The President.* It is good to be back in L.A. And let me begin by thanking Robin and Ed and their parents and their really good-looking sons

for hosting us all here today. Give them a big round of applause. Now, it's bad enough having Secret Service in your house and then having a whole bunch of folks come too, trampling on your grass. [Laughter] It's an ordeal. But it is so sweet of them to do it. We really appreciate them.

I have a couple of other people I want to acknowledge. We have one of our finest Mem-