

Administration of Barack Obama, 2012

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Colorado Springs, Colorado

August 9, 2012

The President. Hello, Colorado! Oh, what a beautiful day!

Can everybody please give Christy a big round of applause for the great introduction? And then, I want everybody to acknowledge one of the outstanding alums of Colorado College, an outstanding Senator for this great State of Colorado, an unbelievable Secretary of the Interior, looking after our natural resources: Ken Salazar.

Now——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back. I really do.

Now, I have to say, first of all, this looks like a very smart crowd, which means that you've been spending a lot of time watching our Olympic Games and the unbelievable athletes and all the great training. Right here, we've got—do we have one of our outstanding athletes? Thank you, Colorado, because Colorado Springs has been a training site for all our outstanding athletes. And we're so proud of them. Thank you so much.

And for those of you who are curious, the women are doing pretty good right now in soccer. I know some of you may be—the game is not over, and some of you may have DVR'd it, so I'm not going to say anything more. [*Laughter*] But we're making progress.

Audience member. Moving forward!

The President. Moving forward.

Now, even though we've been spending most of our time, sensibly, watching the Olympics, unless your cable is broken, you've probably also noticed there's this pretty intense campaign going on right now. And the reason it is an intense campaign is because the choice that we face in November could not be bigger. It's not just a choice between two candidates or two political parties. It is a choice between two fundamentally different visions about how we move this country forward. And the direction that we choose—the direction you choose when you walk into that voting booth—is going to have a direct impact not just on us, it will have an impact on our kids and our grandkids for decades to come.

Now, 4 years ago, we came together—and it wasn't just Democrats, we had Independents and even some Republicans come together—because we wanted to restore the basic bargain that made this country great, that built the greatest middle class and the most prosperous economy in the history of the world. And it's a bargain that says very simply, if you work hard, your work will be rewarded. If you work hard, you can get ahead. It's a deal that says if you put in enough effort, if you act responsibly, you can find a job that pays the bills, have a home you call your own. You can count on health care when you get sick. You can retire with dignity and respect. And most importantly, you can provide your kids with the education and opportunity so that they can dream bigger than you ever dreamed and they can achieve things you couldn't even imagine.

That's the American promise. That's the core of who we are as a people. And unfortunately, we had gone through a decade where that dream felt like it was slipping away.

Jobs had gotten shifted overseas. Incomes had gone down, when you account inflation, even though the cost of everything from health care to college had gone up. And it all culminated in the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.

So we knew restoring this dream, reinstating this basic bargain was not going to be easy. And we understood it would take more than one year or one term or maybe even one President. And that was before the middle class got clobbered by this financial crisis. And a lot of our friends and neighbors lost their jobs, lost their homes, lost their savings, and it made that dream seem even further out of reach.

But here's the good news. The American people are tougher than tough times. Not only is there a fundamental goodness and decency to the American people, but there's also grit and resilience. And when we get knocked down, we get back up.

And so for the last 3½ years, we've worked to make sure that we didn't slip into a great depression. And we created 4½ million new jobs. We saved an auto industry on the brink of collapse. And although we are far away from where we need to be—

[At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.]

The President. Okay, we'll be okay. I hear you. What will happen is that the medical services—we've just got somebody who fainted. Which reminds me, everybody, if you've been standing for a long time, bend your knees a little bit. Because this happens every time we have a rally. They'll be okay, just give them some space. And make sure that you drink some water if you've got some.

Now, we know that we've still got a long ways to go—and the medical folks are coming right here. They're on their way. But you know, what hasn't changed as a result of this crisis is our character. What's made us great in the past is going to make us great in the future.

We came together in 2008, understanding that we had an urgent mission to make sure that here in America everybody gets a fair shot, everybody does their fair share, and everybody plays by the same set of rules. We're here to build an economy where hard work pays off, so that no matter who you are or where you come from, you can make it if you try. That's what this campaign is about, Colorado. That's what the choice is in November. 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, here's the good news. Even though there are no quick fixes, there are no easy solutions—some of these problems built up over decades, and they're not going to be solved overnight—we've got everything we need to meet the challenges we face. We've got the best workers in the world. We've got the best entrepreneurs in the world. We've got the best scientists and researchers in the world. We've got the best colleges, and we've got the best universities in the world. We're a young nation. We've got this incredible diversity of talent and ingenuity. People come here from every corner of the globe because they believe in our creed. They believe in our ideas.

And so no matter what the naysayers say, no matter how bad folks try to paint the picture just to sell newspapers or sound sophisticated—*[laughter]*—the truth of the matter is, is that there's not a country on Earth that wouldn't trade places with the United States of America.

We've got what we need to succeed. What is standing in our way right now is our politics in Washington. It's a bunch of folks who think compromise is a dirty word, who think that the

right way forward is to go backwards to the same top-down economic policies that got us into this mess in the first place.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. And look, Mr. Romney, his friends in Congress, their basic economic plan is really simple to describe. It's not complicated. What they say is, on the one hand, they want to eliminate regulations on Wall Street banks, even after this crisis, or regulations on insurance companies or regulations on unscrupulous lenders or regulations that keep our air and water clean. So that's part number one. And then part number two—big part of their plan—is to cut taxes a lot more for the wealthiest Americans.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. And the idea is that somehow, if you combine these two concepts, that this is going to lead to jobs and prosperity for everybody.

That's what they're proposing. I'm not making this stuff up. [*Laughter*] Go to their web sites. Look at what the House Republicans voted on, their budget. That's where they're going to take us if they win. That's their idea. And look, if you believe in that idea, then you're probably not going to be voting for me.

Mr. Romney's—the centerpiece of his entire economic plan is a new \$5 trillion tax cut on top of the Bush tax cuts, a big chunk of it going to the wealthiest Americans. And last week, we found out that he expects you, middle class families, to pay for it.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Governor Romney's tax plan—this is not according to me, this is according to independent analysts—assuming he kept his promise that it wasn't going to add to the deficit, would mean raising taxes on middle class families with children by an average of \$2,000. And keep in mind, this would not be to pay down our deficit. It wouldn't be to grow jobs or invest in education or make college more affordable or invest in science and research or clean energy, because he wants to gut all those things. He wants to cut away that stuff. Your tax increase would be to pay for another \$250,000 tax cut for people making more than \$3 million a year.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. How many people think that's a good idea?

Audience members. No!

The President. How many people honestly believe that that's going to unleash incredible job growth in this country?

Audience members. No!

The President. Look, we have tried this before. They tried to sell us this trickle-down, tax cut fairy dust before. [*Laughter*] And guess what, it didn't work. It didn't work then; it won't work now. It's not a plan to create jobs. It's not a plan to cut the deficit. It's not a plan to move our economy forward.

We don't need more tax cuts for folks like me. We need tax relief for working families. We need tax cuts for folks who are trying to make sure their kids get a good education, trying to keep their kids healthy, trying to keep a roof over their heads, trying to send them to college.

That's the choice in this election. That's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States, because our work is not yet done.

I've got a different idea. Four years ago, I promised to cut taxes for middle class families. I did that. The average, typical family, their income taxes—their tax burden is about \$3,600 lower than it is now. I want to keep taxes exactly where they are for the first \$250,000 of everybody's income. I've already told Congress, let's get it done. We should do it before the election. Now, if your family makes under \$250,000—which, by the way, is 98 percent of American families and 97 percent of small businesses—under my plan, your income taxes would not increase a single dime next year. That's my plan.

But if you're fortunate enough to be in the other 2 percent, if this country has blessed you the way it's blessed me, you still get a tax cut on the first \$250,000 of income. It's just that after that, we're going to ask you to contribute a little bit more so we can pay down our deficit responsibly and invest in things like helping young people go to college, invest in basic science and research, rebuild our roads—all the things that help us grow and make the middle class strong.

And by the way, this doesn't mean that we don't still have more work to do to make Government more efficient. I'm not somebody who believes Government can solve every problem. Government has to do its part by cutting out spending that we don't need. We've already cut a trillion dollars—a trillion—that's with a "t"—out of our budget. And we can do more to make Government more efficient, more customer friendly. But that doesn't do enough to bring down the deficit.

So all I'm asking is that folks like me go back to the rates that we paid under Bill Clinton—which, by the way, you may remember, we created 23 million new jobs, the biggest budget surplus in history, and we created a whole bunch of millionaires to boot. Because what happens is, when a construction worker or a police officer, they've got a little more money to spend, you know what, maybe they go out and buy that new car. And suddenly, the car company has more profits, which means that hire more workers, and everybody does better.

When a teacher or a receptionist has a little bit more money to spend, maybe they go to that local restaurant. Maybe they buy a computer for their kid for school. And now, suddenly, all businesses are doing better.

That's the history of America. When we grow from the middle class out, when we provide ladders of opportunity for those who want to get into the middle class and are willing to work hard to do it, everybody does well: top, middle, bottom.

We are in this thing together. That's the choice in this election. And that's why I'm running for President of the United States of America.

This difference in vision, it shows up on all sorts of issues. When the American auto industry was on the brink of collapse, 1 million jobs at stake, Mr. Romney said, "let Detroit go bankrupt." I said, let's bet on America's workers. And we got management and workers to come together, making better cars than ever. And now GM is number one again, and the American auto industry has come roaring back.

So now I want to say what we did with the auto industry, we can do it in manufacturing across America. Let's make sure advanced, high-tech manufacturing jobs take root here, not in China. Let's have them here in Colorado. And that means supporting investment here.

Governor Romney talks about his private sector experience. But he invested in companies that were called "pioneers" of outsourcing. I don't want to outsource, I want to insource. Let's reform our Tax Code, and let's make it simpler. And let's make sure that we're providing tax breaks to companies that are investing here in Colorado Springs, here in Colorado, not overseas. They're the ones who need tax breaks. Let's give tax breaks to companies that are investing here. It's the right thing to do.

At a moment when homegrown energy is creating new jobs in States like Colorado and Iowa, my opponent wants to end tax credits for wind producers.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. The wind industry supports about 5,000 jobs across this **technologies** State. Without those tax credits, jobs would be at risk; 37,000 jobs across this country would be at risk. Why would we want to stop promoting clean, renewable energy that can make our environment better, put people back to work, free our dependence from foreign oil? We should stop spending billions of taxpayer subsidies on the oil industry that is very profitable. Let's keep investing in a clean energy industry that's never been more promising. That's the choice in this election.

Here's another choice. I promised in 2008 I'd end the war in Iraq. We ended it. I said we'd go after bin Laden and Al Qaida. We did. We're transitioning in Afghanistan and starting to bring our troops home.

And so none of this could have been accomplished had it not been for our outstanding men and women in uniform. We are safer and more respected because of them.

But now we've got to make sure that the country they come back to is going on all cylinders. So what I've said is, let's set up a veterans jobs corps that helps returning veterans get jobs as firefighters and police officers in communities that need them. Let's make sure that they are getting the training that they need. And let's make sure that we take some of those savings that we are spending after a decade of war, let's do some nation-building here at home. Let's put people back to work rebuilding our roads and our bridges, laying broadband lines, rebuilding our schools, putting in new science labs.

I was just down in Pueblo, and we were talking about a water project that John F. Kennedy had signed, authorizing 60 years ago—50 years ago. It has never been funded. You know what, under my administration, it's getting funded.

There are projects like that all across America. And we can put people back to work right now. That's good for the economy right now—lower unemployment right now—but it also lays the foundation for economic growth for decades to come. That's a choice in this election.

I believe that we, once again, should be leading the world in educating our kids. So I've said, let's make sure that we're helping local school districts hire the best teachers, especially in math and science. Let's help to provide millions of new slots at community colleges so people can train for the jobs that businesses are hiring for right now. And I want to make college and university tuitions lower so young people aren't burdened with tens of thousands of dollars' worth of debt. We can do it. Because higher education is not a luxury, it's an economic necessity in the 21st century.

My opponent doesn't have a plan for higher education. He doesn't have a plan for homeownership. He was asked, what should we do about the housing crisis. He says, well, we'll just let foreclosures bottom out. That's not a plan. What I've said is let's help all families take

advantage of historically low rates, refinance your homes, get an extra \$3,000 a year, which you will then spend and will make the economy stronger and the housing market stronger. That's a choice in this election: doing nothing or putting \$3,000 in your pocket.

I'm running because I believe nobody in America should go broke because they get sick. Mr. Romney says he wants to repeal Obamacare.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Let me tell you, I'll work with anybody to keep improving our health care system. But the Supreme Court has spoken. Six-and-a-half million young people are able to stay on their parent's plans now. Seniors are getting discounts on their prescription drugs. Insurance companies can't prevent you from getting health insurance if you've got a preexisting condition. Folks are getting free preventive care.

I think it was the right thing to do. We're not going backwards, we're going forwards. That's the choice in this election.

We're not going back to "don't ask, don't tell". Everybody should be able to serve the country they love. That's a choice in this election. Helping out the "DREAM Act" kids, that was the right thing to do. We're not going backwards, we're going forwards. That's a choice in this election.

All these things tie together. Because my vision is one in which—whether we're talking about housing or education or rebuilding America—the idea is you've got to show individual initiative. Government can't solve all your problems. Government can't help folks who won't help themselves. But there are things we can do to make sure that everybody has got a chance, everybody has got opportunity. If everybody is willing to work hard, they've got those rungs on the ladder to have a secure middle class life.

That's the promise our parents passed down to us. That's why I'm standing here today, because somebody helped me along the way. That's the promise I want to pass on to the next generation. That's why I'm running for another term as President of the United States of America.

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

The President. Now, over the next 3 months, the other side will spend more money than we've ever seen on ads that tell you the same thing we've been hearing for 4 years now, which is the economy is not good enough and it's Obama's fault. Basically, they should just have one commercial and they can just run it over and over again, because they don't say anything new. *[Laughter]*

And the reason that's their argument is because they don't have a plan, and the plan they've got they can't sell. So they will do their best, like they've been trying to do for the last 3 years, to just run me down. The problem is they don't have a plan to create jobs. They don't have a plan to strengthen the economy. And they don't have a plan to revive the middle class. And I do. But in order to implement that plan, I'm going to have to have your help.

This election is going to be close. Colorado is going to be close. So I've got to make sure your friends are registered. I've got to make sure you're registered. In Colorado, you can register online. So you got to go to gottaregister.com—that's "gotta," G-O-T-T-A. *[Laughter]*

But we're going to have to work hard. Here is the good news. Here is the good news. I've been outspent before. I've been counted out before. But you know what we learned in 2008?

When the American people decide that they want to see change, they make it happen. When the American people come together and focus on those values that have made us strong, they cut through all the nonsense. It doesn't matter how much the other side spends, change happens.

Colorado, we've come too far to turn back now. We've got too many good jobs we still have to create. We've got too many teachers we've got to hire. We've got too many schools we've got to rebuild, too many students we want to send to college. We've got too much homegrown energy we still have to generate, too many troops we've still got to bring home. We've got too many doors of opportunity we still have to open up for everybody who is willing to work hard and walk through those doors.

That's what's at stake right now. That's why I'm running. That's why I need your help. In 2008, I said to you I am not a perfect man and I won't be a perfect President. But I promised you that I would spend every single day fighting as hard as I knew how for you. And I have kept that promise. Because I still believe in you. And, Colorado, if you still believe in me, if you're willing to work with me and stand with me and knock on doors with me and make phone calls with me, we will win Colorado, and we will win this election. And we will finish what we started. And we will remind the world why America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:58 p.m. on the Cutler Quad at Colorado College. In his remarks, he referred to Christy Howard, teacher, Taylor Elementary School; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign rallies :: Colorado Springs, CO.

Locations: Colorado Springs, CO.

Names: Clinton, William J.; Howard, Christy; Romney, W. Mitt; Salazar, Kenneth L.

Subjects: Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Armed Forces, U.S. : "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, repeal; Budget, Federal : Government programs, spending reductions; Business and industry : Automobile industry :: Strengthening efforts; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; Colorado : Democratic Party events; Colorado : Energy, alternative and renewable sources and technologies; Colorado : President's visits; Communications : Infrastructure, national, improvement efforts; Economy, national : Economic concerns; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education : Global competitiveness; Education : Postsecondary education :: Affordability; Education : School improvement and renovation; Energy : Alternative and renewable sources and technologies :: Promotion efforts; Health and medical care : Health insurance reforms; Housing : Mortgage refinancing programs; Immigration and naturalization : Reform; Interior, Department of the : Secretary; Iraq : U.S. and coalition forces, withdrawal; Sports : Olympic Games; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Taxation : Tax cuts, budgetary effects; Taxation : Tax relief; Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist group; Transportation : Infrastructure, national, improvement efforts; United Kingdom : 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London; Veterans : Job training and education assistance.

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