

Administration of Barack Obama, 2012

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Miami, Florida

October 11, 2012

The President. Hello, Miami! How's it going, Hurricanes! Can everybody please give Lizzie a big round of applause for that great introduction.

It's good to see your Senator, former astronaut, Bill Nelson in the house. Your outstanding local Congresswomen, Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Frederica Wilson. A good man who's going to join them in Congress, Joe Garcia. Congresswoman Wilson asked me to also acknowledge some outstanding young people, the Miami Northwestern Senior High School 5,000 Role Models of Excellence Project. Proud of you guys.

And it's good to see all of you. All of you! Because we've got some work to do, Miami. We've got an election to win. In just over 2 weeks, on October 27, you get to start voting early. And everything that we fought for in 2008 is on the line in 2012. So I'm going to need you fired up. I'm going to need you ready to go. I need your help to finish what we started.

Think about where we've been and how far we've come. Four years ago, I told you I'd end the war in Iraq, and I did. I said we'd end the war in Afghanistan, and we are. I said we'd refocus on the people who actually attacked us on 9/11, and today, Al Qaida is on the run and Usama bin Laden is dead.

Four years ago, I promised to cut taxes for middle class families, and we have, by \$3,600. I promised to cut taxes for small-business owners, and we have, 18 times. We stabilized the banking system, but we got back every dime we used to rescue the banks—with interest. And we passed a historic law to end taxpayer-funded Wall Street bailouts for good.

We passed health care reform, a.k.a. Obamacare, so your insurance company can't jerk you around anymore and those of you under 26 can stay on your parent's plan. If you—you can't have insurance companies barring you because you've got a preexisting condition, and they can't charge more just because you're a woman.

We repealed "don't ask, don't tell" so nobody is ever kicked out of the military because of who they love.

When Governor Romney said we should let Detroit go bankrupt, we said, no, we're not going to take your business advice. We reinvented a dying auto industry that's come roaring back to the top of the world. And that makes a difference not just to communities across the Midwest; it's vital for our entire economy. It's something every American can be proud of.

Today, 4 years after the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, we are moving forward. After losing 800,000 jobs the month I was sworn in, our businesses have now added more than 5 million new jobs over the past 2½ years. The unemployment rate has fallen from a peak of 10 percent down to 7.8 percent, the lowest level since I took office. So more Americans are getting jobs, and manufacturing is coming back. Home values are on the rise.

Now, we know we're not where we need to be—not yet. That's especially true in places like Florida that were so hard hit. We've still got too many friends and neighbors who are looking for work. We've got too many families who can't pay the bills, too many homes that are still underwater, too many young people still burdened with debt when they graduate from college.

But if there's one thing I know, Florida, it's this: We have come too far to turn back now. The American people have worked too hard to get to this point. After all that we've been through together, after all that we fought through together, why would we go backwards? The last thing we can afford, Florida, right now is 4 years of the very same policies that got us into this mess in the first place. I won't let that happen. We can't let that happen. 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. Florida, I have seen too much pain and too much struggle because of bad economic policies that happened before we got elected to let this country go through another round of top-down economics.

The centerpiece of Governor Romney's economic plan is a new \$5 trillion tax cut that favors the wealthiest Americans.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote. Vote. Vote.

Now, Governor Romney has been pitching this plan for almost a year now. He stood up on the stage in one of his primary debates, proudly promised that his new tax cuts, on top of the Bush tax cuts, would include the top 1 percent.

Now, you wouldn't know this from listening to the new, latest version of Mitt Romney. [*Laughter*] He's trying to go through an extreme makeover. After running for more than a year in which he called himself “severely conservative,” Mitt Romney is trying to convince you that he was severely kidding. [*Laughter*]

Look, what he was selling was not working, because people understood his ideas wouldn't help the middle class. So these days, Mitt Romney's for whatever you're for. [*Laughter*] Suddenly, he loves the middle class—can't stop talking enough about them. He loves Medicare, loves teachers. He even loves the most important parts of Obamacare. What happened? [*Laughter*]

Now, what does he have to say, this new version of Mitt Romney, about all the things he's actually promised to do as President? Tax breaks for outsourcers? Never heard such a thing. Saying we should cut back on teachers? Doesn't ring a bell.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo—

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote.

Kicking 200,000 young Floridians off their parents' insurance plans—who, me? [*Laughter*] And when he's asked about the cost of his tax plan, he just pretends it doesn't exist. What \$5 trillion tax cut? I don't know anything about a \$5 trillion tax cut. Pay no attention to the \$5 trillion tax cut on my web site. [*Laughter*]

Look, Governor Romney thinks we have not been paying attention for the last year and a half. He is going to say whatever it takes to try to close the deal, and he's counting on the fact that you don't remember that what he's selling is exactly what got us into this mess in the first place.

So, Florida, you've got to let him know we remember. We know full well that if he gets a chance, Governor Romney will rubberstamp the top-down agenda of this Republican Congress the second he takes office, and we cannot afford that future. His plan will not create jobs. It will not help the middle class. It will not speed the recovery. It will slow down the recovery. It will not reduce the deficit. It will not expand opportunity. We can't afford it. We're not going back. We are moving forward. And that's why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States.

Look, America, we know that in this country, jobs and prosperity don't trickle down from the top. They grow from a strong and thriving middle class.

More tax breaks for outsourcers won't create jobs. It didn't over the last decade. You know what does create jobs, is supporting small businesses and manufacturers who make products right here in America, who hire American workers. That's what we're championing.

That's why we need to stop rewarding companies that ship jobs overseas. Start rewarding companies that create jobs right here in Miami, right here in Florida, right here in the United States. That's the choice you face in this election.

I believe we can create more jobs by controlling more of our own energy. After 30 years of inaction, we raised fuel standards so that by the middle of the next decade, your cars and trucks will go twice as far on a gallon of gas. And today, the United States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in two decades.

So now you've got a choice. My plan would cut our oil imports in half and invest in the clean energy that's creating thousands of jobs all across America right now—not just oil and natural gas, but wind and solar and clean coal technologies and fuel-efficient cars and long-lasting batteries. And if you want to know how we're paying for it, one of the things we need to do is not allow oil companies to collect another \$4 billion in taxpayer-funded corporate welfare every single year.

I will not let China or anybody else win the race for clean energy technology. I want to see that technology developed right here in Florida, right here in the United States of America, creating jobs right here. And by the way, yes, my plan will reduce the carbon pollution that's heating our planet, because climate change is not a hoax. More drought and floods and hurricanes and wildfires—that's not a joke. That's a threat to our children's future. And we can do something about it.

Just like I believe that we can make sure that every young person in America gets the education they need to compete. Education is the only reason that I'm standing here today. Education is the gateway to a middle class life.

And now you've got a choice. Governor Romney says hiring more teachers won't grow the economy over the next 4 years. That's not the role of teachers. What about our kids over the next 4 years? What about our economy over the next 40 years? We cannot gut education to pay for \$5 trillion tax cuts. We need to recruit 100,000 new math and science teachers and provide 2 million workers the opportunity to study at community colleges and lower tuition costs for our young people. That's what we're fighting for. That's what's at stake in this election. That's what grows our economy. That's what we can do together. And that's what you can choose for America.

Audience member. I love you, Barack!

The President. I love you back.

I want to use the money that we're saving from ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to pay down our deficit, put our people back to work rebuilding roads and bridges and schools all across America. Governor Romney said it was "tragic" to end the war in Iraq. He said this in a speech just this week—said we should have left troops on the ground in Iraq.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote.

I think bringing our troops home to their families was the right thing to do.

And every brave American who wears the uniform of this country should know, as long as I'm your Commander in Chief, we will sustain the strongest military the world's ever known. And when our troops take off their uniforms, we will serve them as well as they've served us, because nobody who's fought for this country should have to fight for a job or a roof over their heads when they come home.

And finally, yes, we're going to need to cut our deficit by \$4 trillion over the next 10 years. And I've already worked with Republicans and Democrats to cut a trillion dollars in spending; I'm ready to do more. But we're not going to be able to get it done unless we also ask the wealthiest households to pay higher taxes on their incomes over \$250,000, the same rate we had when Bill Clinton was President and our economy created nearly 23 million new jobs. That's what we need to do.

Governor Romney has a different view. He said just a couple weeks ago that it's fair that he pays a lower tax rate than a teacher who is making \$50,000 a year.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote.

He's wrong. I refuse to ask middle class families to give up their deductions for owning a home or raising their kids just to pay for another millionaire's tax cut. I refuse to pay for that tax cut by asking students at "the U" to pay more for college or kicking children out of Head Start programs or eliminating health insurance for millions of Americans who are poor or elderly or disabled. That won't help us grow.

My opponent says over and over that he can cut taxes, increase military spending, close the deficit, but the only thing he's pointed to that he's going to get rid of is Big Bird. [Laughter] This week he said, don't worry, his new tax cuts will pay for themselves. That may not sound familiar to some of you guys because you're young, but we heard that exact same argument back in 2000, back in 2001, back in 2003. That's how we went from surplus to deficit. We have heard this pitch before. We know it doesn't work. We know our plan does.

This is the choice that we now face. This is what the election comes down to. This is why I'm running for a second term as President.

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

The President. Over and over, folks like Governor Romney and his allies in Congress tell us that since government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing—sort of a you're-on-your-own philosophy. If you can't afford health insurance, hope you don't get sick. If a company is releasing harmful, toxic pollution into the air that your kids breathe, well, you know, that's the price of progress. If you can't afford to start a business or go to college, borrow money from your parents. [*Laughter*]

That's not how we built this country. That's not what made America great. That's not who we are. That's not what we're about. Here in America, we believe we're all in this together. We understand that America is not about what can be done for us. It's about what can be done by us, together, as one nation and one people.

And that's what we came together to restore back in 2008, that sense of what we can do together. And the American people all across this country responded. You are the reason that Florida seniors right now are saving an average of \$600 every year on prescription drugs—because we passed Obamacare, because we passed health care reform. You did that.

You're the reason there's a working family from Hollywood that was able to save their home from foreclosure. You did that. It's because of you.

You're the reason that students in Gainesville or Tallahassee or here at "the U" have help paying for their college education, why veterans can go to college now on the new GI bill.

You're the reason a young immigrant who grew up here and went to school here and pledged allegiance to our flag will no longer be deported from the only country she's ever called home.

You're the reason why soldiers won't be kicked out of our military because of who they love. You're the reason why thousands of families have been able to say to the loved ones who served them so—served us so bravely, "Welcome home." Welcome home.

And so we can't be tired now. We have to keep going. If you turn away now, if you buy into the cynicism that what we fought for isn't possible, well, of course change won't happen. If you give up on the idea that your voice makes a difference, especially the young people here, then other voices will fill the void: the lobbyists and the special interests, the people with the \$10 million checks who are trying to buy this election, the ones who are trying to make it harder to vote; the Washington politicians who want to control health care choices women can make for themselves. They will fill the void. They will set the agenda. And they will take us backward.

And only you can make sure that doesn't happen. Only you have the power to move us forward. On October 27, you can choose. You can choose. You can choose whether we go back to the policies that got us into this mess, or you can choose to keep moving forward with policies that have been getting us out of this mess. That's the choice.

On October 27, you can choose to go back to a foreign policy that takes us into wars with no plan to get out, or we can say let's keep moving forward; let's end the Afghan war realistically; let's bring our troops home in a responsible fashion.

On October 27, you can agree to turn back the clock 50 years for women and immigrants and gays and lesbians. Or you can stand up and say we want to keep moving forward. I believe that America is a country where you can succeed no matter who you are, no matter what you look like, no matter where you come from, no matter who you love.

That's what's at stake. That's what's at stake in this election. That's why I'm asking for your vote.

Audience members. You got it!

The President. You know, on—back in 2008, I won, but 47 percent of the country didn't vote for me. But I didn't just dismiss 47 percent of the country. What I said was, you may not have voted for me, but I heard your voices, and I'll fight just as hard for you as I will for everybody else.

And I've kept that promise. I have been fighting for every American to make sure they get a fair shot. And I have been willing to do it and able to do it because every single day the American people have inspired me.

I still believe in you, and I need you to keep believing in me. I need you to help me finish the job. And if you're willing to stand with me and work with me and knock on some doors with me and make some phone calls for me, we'll win Florida again. We'll win this election. We'll finish what we started. And we'll remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:26 p.m. at the University of Miami. In his remarks, he referred to Elizabeth Cooke, student, University of Miami; and Democratic congressional candidate Jose Antonio Garcia, Jr.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign rallies : Miami, FL.

Locations: Miami, FL.

Names: Clinton, William J.; Garcia, Jose Antonio, Jr.; Nelson, C. William; Romney, W. Mitt; Wasserman Schultz, Deborah; Wilson, Frederica S.

Subjects: Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Economy, national : Economic concerns; Economy, national : Improvement; Education : Global competitiveness; Education : Science and math programs; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Energy : Alternative and renewable sources and technologies :: Promotion efforts; Energy : Domestic sources; Energy : Fuel efficiency standards, strengthening efforts; Energy : National energy policy; Florida : Democratic Party events; Florida : President's visits; Health and Human Services, Department of : Head Start programs; Health and medical care : Health insurance reforms; Health and medical care : Seniors, prescription drug benefits; Iraq : U.S. and coalition forces, withdrawal; Taxation : Tax relief; Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist group.

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