

need all of you just as much now, more now, than I needed you in 2008.

But the main message I've got is that if you guys are willing to invest the same kind of blood, sweat, and tears as we invested in 2008, I'm confident we're going to win. And the reason I'm confident is that common vision of ours is one that's shared all across the country. I rose to national prominence by a speech that said there is no red—there are no red States and no blue States; it was the United States of America. Now, sometimes people say, ah, well, you learned, didn't you? [*Laughter*] You go to Washington, and you'll find out.

But that's Washington. That's not America. And when I travel around the country—I don't care whether I'm going to a tiny town or a big city, I don't care whether I'm talking to Black people or White people or Latinos or Native Americans or Asian Americans. Wherever I go, I still hear and see on display that core decency and common sense and confidence in the future and belief in community that I was talking about way back when. Making that real, translating that into policy, getting it through Con-

gress, signing these things into laws, that's tough. It's not easy.

But the animating spirit? That's still there. And I am just as determined as I ever was—more determined with all that I've seen over the last several years—more determined than ever to make sure that we've got a Government that is reflective of those values. That's what we're fighting for.

And if you guys stand with me, if you guys have my back as you guys have had my back for all these years, I guarantee you that we are going to win this election. We will deliver for the American people. And I won't be back here in that house for another 5 years. [*Laughter*]

All right? Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. at the residence of Stuart and Evonne Taylor. In his remarks, he referred to State Sen. Heather Steans of Illinois; and former White House Counsel Abner J. Mikva. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Chicago *January 11, 2012*

It is wonderful to be back home! It is great to see so many friends that I haven't seen in too long, and some folks who visited me in my new residence. But let me begin by just thanking Fred for opening up this extraordinary home to us. And thank everybody else who helped put this together. I particularly want to thank Sonia and Eric for all that they did—[*applause*].

I want to acknowledge some outstanding public servants who are here—my former seat mate in Springfield, the attorney general of Illinois—[*applause*]. My former teacher of the ways of the Senate and one of the finest public servants that we know, Dick Durbin. The outstanding Governor of Illinois, Pat Quinn, is in the house. And finally, we have sort of a carpetbagger here. [*Laughter*] I just love her, so whenever I have an excuse to see her I'm hap-

py, and she is a fellow Midwesterner, the Senator from Missouri, Claire McCaskill.

So I'm going to make my opening remarks very, very brief because—Fred and I were talking, particularly a crowd like this that knows me—I want to spend as much time as possible answering questions.

I was talking about a meeting I had this morning with companies from all across the country, some of them very large corporations, Intel and Siemens, some medium-sized companies, and some very small companies. The common theme was that they were all insourcing. They were bringing jobs back to America. Many of them had located plants in China, located plants in Mexico, and because of the extraordinary growth in productivity in the United States over the last several years, because wages are going up pretty rapidly in places like China, because of energy costs and

transportation costs and a whole range of other factors, we're getting to this point where when you account for everything, that America is fully competitive in manufacturing and more than competitive in services with any other country in the world. Those are a good news story.

But I asked them, what is it that's going to make the biggest difference in accelerating this trend so you start seeing more and more companies decide, let's move back into the United States, let's move our plants back? And some of them mentioned education. They said the single most important reason for us to move back here is because they're more highly skilled workers here, and as long as we're investing in K through 12 and our community colleges and have enough engineers and scientists, then that's going to be a reason for us to locate here.

And a number of them said the fact that we've got the most innovative research taking place in the United States, that's what's going to make a difference. And another one said, well, logistically—I think this was maybe Otis Elevators—he said it's kind of hard to move elevators around—[laughter]—and so making sure we've got the best infrastructure in the world is going to be what is the determining factor in whether or not we locate a plant here in the United States.

And as I listened to each one of these companies, I was reminded that everything we've done over the last 3 years—but more importantly, everything we have to do over the next 5 years—has to be designed to making sure that this economy is once again one that is built on a solid foundation, one that is not done with bubbles, one that is not based on simply shuffling paper, but one that's based on making things and selling things and one in which everybody—business, workers, communities—all feel invested in each other.

And that's what we've been trying to do over the last 3 years as we've dug ourselves out of the worst recession since the Great Depression. That's why it's been so important for us to invest in education like never before, and that's why it's been so important for us to make sure,

with the help of folks like Claire and Dick, that we continue to invest in research. That's why we pushed so hard to make sure that we're rebuilding not just our roads and our bridges, but also high-speed rail lines and a faster Internet all across the country.

And I make this point because as important as 2008 was, I actually think 2012 is more important, because what we're seeing developing, what we're seeing over the last 2 years—but I think what we're going to see this year in a pretty decisive way is a decision about contrasting visions about where the country should go.

You've got one theory that says if we slash our education, our research, and our infrastructure budgets and weaken our social safety net and make sure that unions aren't out there operating and we essentially eliminate EPA—and I'm not exaggerating, there are candidates and Members of Congress who've called for that—that somehow we're going to be able to win this competition in the 21st century. And that's one vision, and it is being starkly stated.

And I have a different vision. Most of the people in this room have a fundamentally different vision about how this country was formed. Our vision is based on the notion that everybody deserves a fair shot, everybody has to do their fair share, and everybody has got to play by the same set of rules, and America succeeds best when we're all in it together, we're all rising together. And that big, inclusive, generous, bold, ambitious vision of America is what's at stake, is what we're fighting for.

But I guess in these initial remarks, what I just want to say is that many of you got involved in my campaign back in 2008, many of you got involved in my Senate campaign back in 2004, some of you got involved in my State senate campaign back in—[laughter]—I don't remember when that was. [Laughter] I think that the reason we were successful was not because I was a flawless candidate or I ran a flawless campaign, but it was because together we were able to give voice to this shared vision of what America should be. And I want you to know that I have kept faith with that vision all these years, and that's not wavered.

And whether it's making a decision about getting all of our troops out of Iraq or it was making a decision about ending "don't ask, don't tell" or it was making a decision about expanding Pell grants so more people have access to college or it's trying to present a balanced approach to deficit reduction, what animates me continues to be the same vision that you guys helped me realize way back when.

This will be my last campaign. A friend of many of us, Ab Mikva, used to say that being friends with a politician is like permanently having a child in college. [Laughter] Every year there's another tuition check. [Laughter] But I'm finally graduating. [Laughter] And I'm confident that as difficult as these last 3 years have been, as challenging as they've been—not so much for me, but for Americans all across the country who lost their jobs or have seen

their home values decline or been worrying about their retirement and their 401(k)s—I absolutely believe that the American people still have confidence and faith in this country and there's a core decency and strength and resilience to be tapped and that most of the time the better angels of our nature win out. I think that's what's going to happen this time as well. But we're going to have to work hard to get it done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the residence of Fred Eychaner. In his remarks, he referred to State Attorney General Lisa Madigan of Illinois; and former White House Counsel Abner J. Mikva. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 12. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Certifying the Public Debt Limit Increase *January 12, 2012*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Sincerely,

Pursuant to section 3101A(a)(2)(A) of title 31, United States Code, I hereby certify that the debt subject to limit is within \$100,000,000,000 of the limit in 31 U.S.C. 3101(b) and that further borrowing is required to meet existing commitments.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John A. Boehner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks on Government Reform *January 13, 2012*

Good morning, everybody. Please have a seat.

Welcome to the White House. I see all sorts of small-businesspeople here, and I am thrilled to have you here. As small-business owners, you know as well as anybody that if we're going to rebuild an economy that lasts—an economy that creates good, middle class jobs—then we're all going to have to up our game.

The other day, I met with business leaders who are doing their part by insourcing, by bringing jobs back to the United States. And I told them that if you are willing to keep asking

yourselves what you can do to bring jobs back, then I'll make sure that you've got a Government that helps you succeed.

And that's why we're here today. I ran for office pledging to make our Government leaner and smarter and more consumer friendly. And from the moment I got here, I saw up close what many of you know to be true: The Government we have is not the Government that we need.

We live in a 21st-century economy, but we've still got a Government organized for the 20th century. Our economy has fundamentally