

undiminished. I believe we're on the right track. And Jane is right: I believe I'm going to get there. More importantly, I believe America is going to get there with your help.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:04 p.m. at the Sheraton Burlington hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Jane Stetson, national

finance chair, Democratic National Committee, and her husband E. William Stetson III; Charles F. Kireker, cofounder and senior adviser, Fresh Tracks Capital, L.P., and his wife Marie Kireker; and Sen. John S. McCain III, in his capacity as the 2008 Republican Presidential nominee. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Burlington March 30, 2012

The President. Hello, Vermont! Oh, thank you! Oh, this is a good crowd here in Vermont! It is good to be at UVM. Go Catamounts! It is good to be in Vermont.

Now, out of all 50 States, Vermont has gone the longest without a Presidential visit. The last time a President stopped by was President Clinton in 1995. So we decided that today we are going to reset the clock.

I—couple of acknowledgements I want to make. First of all, give Jeanne a big round of applause for their introduction. You've got one of the best Governors in the country. And when flooding came and disaster struck, he was here every single day working on your behalf. And we couldn't be prouder of him—Peter Shumlin. We got two outstanding Senators, Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders. You've got an outstanding mayor-elect, Miro Weinberger.

Give it up for Grace Potter and the Nocturnals. I also want to thank Carolyn Dwyer and the entire host committee for helping to organize this unbelievable event.

And one last thing I want to do, I want to express my condolences to everybody who knew and loved Melissa Jenkins, because I know that some of the elected officials are going on to that funeral. This is a woman, by all accounts, who devoted her life to her community and helping to shape young minds. And I know that Vermont's heartbroken, so all we can do is live our lives in a way that pays tribute to hers, by looking out for her students and her son. And Michelle and I want to express our thoughts and prayers to everybody who knew her. So I know that's a tough situation.

Now, I'm here—[*applause*—you know, maybe I should just quit while I'm ahead here. It's—[*laughter*—I am going to take off my jacket, though. It's a little warm. The—I'm here not just because I need your help. I'm here because the country needs your help.

There were a lot of reasons that so many of you worked your hearts out for our campaign in 2008. It wasn't because it was going to be easy. It wasn't because it was a sure thing. When you decided to support a candidate named Barack Hussein Obama, that's not a guarantee of success. [*Laughter*] You didn't need a poll to know that might be some heavy sledding there. [*Laughter*]

The point is, you didn't join the campaign because of me. You joined it because we had a shared vision for America. It wasn't a vision where everybody is left to fend for themselves. It wasn't a vision where the rules are made just for the powerful. It was a vision of an America where everybody who works hard has a chance to get ahead—everybody.

That's the vision that we shared. That's the change that we believed in. And we knew it wasn't going to come easy; we knew it wouldn't come quickly. But we had confidence, we had faith in each other. We believed that when Americans make commitments to each other about a bold, generous vision for the country, that we can achieve it. There's no challenge we can't overcome.

And here's what I want to report: that in 3 years, because of what so many of you did in 2008, we've begun to see what change looks

like. We've begun to see what change looks like.

Change is the first bill I signed into law, a law that says women deserve an equal day's pay for an equal day's work, because I want our daughters treated just like our sons.

Change is the decision we made to rescue an auto industry that was on the verge of collapse, even when some said let's let Detroit go bankrupt. One million jobs were at stake, so we weren't going to let that happen. And today, GM is back on top as the world's number-one automaker, reported the highest profits in a hundred years; 200,000 new jobs over the last 2½ years. The American auto industry is back, and it's making cars that are more fuel efficient. So that's helping the environment, even as we're putting people to work.

Change is the decision we made to stop waiting for Congress to do something about our oil addiction. That's why we finally raised our fuel efficiency standards. By the middle of the next decade, we will be driving American-made cars that get almost 55 miles to a gallon. Saves the typical family more than \$8,000 at the pump. That's what change is.

Change is the fight we won to stop handing \$60 billion in taxpayer giveaways to the banks who were processing student loans. We decided let's give those student loans directly to students, which meant we could make college more affordable to young people who need it. That's what change is. That happened because of you.

And yes, change is the health care reform that we passed after over a century of trying, reform that will finally ensure that in the United States of America, no one will go broke just because they get sick. Already, 2.5 million young people now have health insurance who didn't have it before because this law lets them stay on their parent's plan. Already, millions of seniors are paying less for their prescription drugs because of this law. Already, Americans can't be denied or dropped by their insurance companies when they need care the most. Already, they're getting preventive care that they didn't have before. That's happening right now.

Change is the fact that for the first time in history, you don't have to hide who you love in order to serve the country you love, because we ended "don't ask, don't tell."

Change is the fact that for the first time in 9 years, there are no Americans fighting in Iraq. We refocused our efforts on the terrorists who actually attacked us on 9/11. And thanks to the brave men and women in uniform, Al Qaida is weaker than it's ever been. Usama bin Laden is no more. We've begun to transition in Afghanistan to put them in the lead and start bringing our troops home from Afghanistan. That's what change is.

Now, none of this has been easy. We've had a little resistance from the other side. [Laughter] We've got more work to do. There are still too many Americans who are out there looking for work. There are still too many families who can barely afford to pay the bills or make the mortgage. We're still recovering from the worst economic storm in generations.

Audience member. Love you!

The President. Love you back!

But over the past 2 years, businesses have added nearly 4 million new jobs. Our manufacturers are creating jobs for the first time since the 1990s. Our economy is getting stronger. The recovery is accelerating. All of which means the last thing we can afford to do is to go back to the same policies that got us into the mess in the first place.

That's what the other side wants to do. They make no secret about it. They want to go back to the days where Wall Street played by its own rules. They want to go back to the day when insurance companies could do whatever they wanted to you. They want to go back to the days where—they want to continue to spend trillions of dollars on tax breaks for the wealthiest individuals in America, even if it means adding to the deficit or gutting education or gutting investments in clean energy or hurting Medicare.

Their philosophy is simple: You are on your own. You're on your own. If you are out of work, can't find a job, tough luck, you're on your own. If you don't have health care, that's your problem. You're on your own. If you're

born into poverty, lift yourself up out of your own—with your own bootstraps, even if you don't have boots. You're on your own. They believe—that's their—that's how America has advanced. That's the cramped, narrow conception they have of liberty. And they are wrong. They are wrong.

In the United States of America, we are greater together than we are on our own. This country advances when we keep that basic American promise: If you work hard, you can do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college, put a little away for retirement. And it doesn't matter who you are, where you come from, what you look like. That's what has created this extraordinary country of ours. That's what we're fighting for. That's the choice in this election.

This is not just your usual, run-of-the-mill political debate. This is the defining issue of our time, a make-or-break moment for the middle class. That's what we got to fight for.

We can go back to an economy that was built on outsourcing and bad debt and phony financial profits. Or we can build an economy that's built to last. An economy that's built on American manufacturing and American innovation and American energy and American workers who are trained and skilled and the values that make this country great: hard work and fair play and shared responsibility. That's the vision I believe in. That's what I'm fighting for.

We've got to make sure that the next generation of manufacturing takes root not in Asia, not in Europe, but in factories of Detroit and Pittsburgh and Cleveland. I don't want this Nation just to be known for buying and consuming things. I want us to build and sell things all around the world. I want us to stop rewarding businesses that ship jobs overseas, reward companies that are investing right here in the United States of America.

I want to make our schools the envy of the world. And by the way, that starts with the man or woman at the front of the classroom. A good teacher can increase the lifetime earnings of a classroom by over \$250,000. A great teacher can help a child trapped in poverty dream and

then live beyond their circumstances. So I don't want folks in Washington to be bashing teachers. I don't want them to defend the status quo. I want us to give schools the resources they need to hire good teachers, reward great teachers. I want us to grant schools the flexibility to teach with creativity and passion and stop teaching to the test and replace teachers who aren't helping kids learn. That's what I want to see happen.

And when kids do graduate, the most daunting challenge can be the cost of college. When Americans owe more tuition debt than they do credit card debt, you know we've got a problem. Now, the first thing we got to do: Congress has to stop interest rates that are currently scheduled to go up in July on student loans, which will be a huge problem for a lot of young people. I've already asked Congress to do it. They haven't done it—shocking enough—they haven't done it so far. *[Laughter]* And colleges and universities have to do their part too to keep tuition from going up, because higher education cannot be a luxury. It is an economic imperative that every family in America should be able to afford.

An economy built to last is one that supports scientists and researchers and science. Whether we're talking about stem cell research or climate change, we don't need science deniers. We need people to understand that America has always succeeded because of our belief in science, our investment in research.

We've got to make sure the next great breakthrough in clean energy happens right here in the United States of America. We have been subsidizing oil companies for a hundred years now through taxpayer giveaways. I think it's time—I just talked about this yesterday—it's time to stop taxpayer giveaways to an oil industry that has been rarely more profitable. Let's double down on clean energy that has never been more promising: solar and wind and biofuels and energy efficiency, electric batteries. That's what we need to be investing in.

We've got to rebuild America. I want a—our businesses and our people to have access to the best roads and the best airports, faster high-speed

rail, and Internet access. It's time for us to take the money we were spending at war, use half of it to pay down our debt, use the rest of it to start doing some nation-building right here at home.

And we've got to make sure that we've got a tax system that is actually fair. Part of that is something I call the Buffett rule. It's very simple: If you pay—if you are making more than a million dollars a year—not—I'm not saying you have a million dollars, I'm saying you're making a million dollars every year—then you shouldn't pay a lower rate than your secretary. That's a pretty simple proposition.

Now, if you make less than \$250,000 a year, like 98 percent of American families, your taxes shouldn't go up, because right now folks are struggling still to dig themselves out of this incredible recession. But if you're making more than a million dollars a year, you can do a little more. This is not class envy. This is not class warfare. This is basic math. That's what this is.

Look, if somebody like me gets a tax break that they don't need and that the country can't afford, then one of two things are going to happen: Either it adds to our deficit, or we're taking something away from somebody else. That student now has to pay a higher interest rate on their student loan because we've got to make up the money somewhere. Or that senior has to start paying more for their Medicare because the money has to be made up somewhere. Or that veteran doesn't get the PTSD care that they needed after serving our country. Or a family that's struggling to get by maybe is getting less home heating oil assistance.

Look, there's no way of getting around that. Either folks like me are doing more, or somebody who can't afford it is getting less. And that's not right. That's not who we are. That's not what America is about.

I hear politicians talking about values in an election year. I hear a lot about that. Let me tell you about values. Hard work, personal responsibility, those are values. But looking out for one another, that's a value. The idea we're all in this together, I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper, that's a value. The idea that we think about the next generation and we're taking care of our planet, that's a value.

Each of us is only here because somebody, somewhere, felt responsibility, yes, to their families, but also to their fellow citizens, also to our country's future. That's the American story. The American story is not just about what we do on our own. Yes, we're rugged individualists, and we expect personal responsibility, and everybody out there has got to work hard and carry their weight. But we also have always understood that we wouldn't win the race for new jobs and businesses and middle class security if we were just applying some you're-on-your-own economics. It's been tried in our history, and it hasn't worked. It didn't work when we tried it in the decade before the Great Depression. It didn't work when we tried it in the last decade. We just tried this. What they're peddling has been tried. It did not work.

We know this from our own lives. If we attract some outstanding young person to become a teacher by giving them the pay and the support that they deserve, and that teacher goes on to educate the next Steve Jobs, well, we all benefit. We all do better. America rises. If we're providing faster Internet to rural America so that some small-business owner suddenly can sell his or her goods around the world, that's good for all of us. If we build a new bridge that saves a shipping company time and money, then workers and customers all around the country benefit. They do better. That's how America became an economic superpower.

This has not traditionally been a Democratic or a Republican idea. It was a Republican, Teddy Roosevelt, who called for a progressive income tax. It was Dwight Eisenhower who built the Interstate Highway System. The first Republican President, President Lincoln—who, by the way, couldn't win the nomination for the Republican primary right now, for the—[laughter]. He'd be—[applause]—in the middle of a civil war, helped to make the transcontinental railroad possible, the land-grant colleges, the National Academy of Scientists. He understood that we're in this together, we've got to make an investment in our futures. It was with the help of Republicans that FDR was able to give millions of returning he-

roes, including my grandfather, the chance to go to college through the GI bill.

And that same spirit of common purpose, it still exists today. Maybe it doesn't exist in Washington.

Audience member. It exists in Vermont.

The President. But out here in Vermont and all across America, it's there. It's there when you talk to folks on Main Street. It's there when you go to a town hall. It's there when you talk to members of our Armed Forces. It's there when you talk to people in their places of worship.

Our politics may be divided. But most Americans still understand that no matter where you come from, no matter who you are, we rise or fall together as one Nation, as one people. And that's what's at stake right now. That's what this election's about.

So I know we've gone through some tough years. And I know that for all the things we've done, we've still got so much undone. We—and sometimes the change we fought for hasn't always come as fast as we wanted. And when you see what's been going on in Washington, I know it's tempting sometimes to get discouraged, to kind of think, well, maybe change just isn't possible. Maybe it was an illusion. But I want you guys to recall, I did say back in 2008, real change, big change, it's hard. It takes time. It takes more than a single term and more than a single President. What it takes is ordinary citizens who are committed to keep fighting and to keep pushing and inching us closer and closer and closer to our country's highest ideals.

And you know something else I used to say in 2008, I said, I'm not a perfect man—Mi-

chelle will tell you that—and I'll never be a perfect President. But I made a promise to you then that I would always tell you what I believed and I would always tell you where I stood and I would wake up every single day fighting as hard as I know how for you. And I have kept that promise. I have kept that promise. I have kept that promise.

So if you're willing to keep pushing with me through all the obstacles, through all the naysayers; if you're willing to keep reaching for that vision of America that we all have talked about—that commitment you didn't just make to me or I made to you, but that we made to each other—I guarantee you change will come. If you're willing to work harder in this election than you did in the last one, I promise you change will come. If you're willing to knock on some doors and make some phone calls, I promise you change will come.

We will finish what we started in 2008. Fight with me, and press on with me, and we will remind the world once again just what America is all about.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. at the University of Vermont. In his remarks, he referred to Jeanne A. Morrissey, president, J.A. Morrissey, Inc., who introduced the President; musician Grace Potter; Carolyn Dwyer, member, Vermont Democratic Party Executive Committee; and St. Johnsbury, VT, resident Melissa Jenkins, who was killed on March 25, and her son Ty.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in South Portland, Maine March 30, 2012

The President. Hello, Maine! Thank you! Thank you very much. Thank you! Well, it is good to be in South Portland, Maine!

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you! Thank you! It is wonderful to be here.

First of all, can everybody please give Richard a big round of applause for that great introduction. A couple other people I want to acknowledge. First of all, your outstanding Congresswoman, Chellie Pingree, is here. One of the great statesmen of our time, Senator