

happens. Change comes to America. And that's the spirit that we need again.

If people ask you what this campaign is about, you tell them it's still about hope. You tell them it's still about change. You tell them it's still about ordinary people who believe that in the face of great odds, we can make a difference in the life of this country.

Because I still believe, Seattle. I still believe. I still believe we're not as divided as our politics suggest. I still believe that we have more common ground than the pundits tell us. I believe we're not Democrats or Republicans first; I think we're Americans first. I still believe in you. I still believe in you, and that's why I'm asking you to still believe in me. I told you in 2008 that I wasn't a perfect man—maybe Michelle told you. *[Laughter]* And I won't be a perfect President. But I promised back when I was running that first time that I'd always tell you what I thought, and I'd always tell you

where I stood, and I'd wake up every single day fighting as hard as I know how for you.

And, Seattle, I've kept that promise. I have kept that promise, and I will keep it as long as I have the honor of being your President. So if you're willing to stick with me, if you're willing to fight with me, if you're willing to work even harder this election than the last one, I guarantee you we will move this country forward. We will finish what we started.

I'm still fired up. I'm still ready to go. And we will show the world why it is that the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. at the Paramount Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to Kenmore, WA, resident Suzanne Black; Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; and former President William J. Clinton.

## Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Studio City, California May 10, 2012

*The President.* Thank you, everybody. Please, everybody have a seat. What a extraordinary evening. It is wonderful to be with all of you.

A couple of people I want to acknowledge: First of all, your outstanding mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, is in the house. Where's Antonio? Right here. Also the Congressman of this district, somebody who knows foreign policy as well as anybody in Congress and who has just shown extraordinary leadership on so many issues, Congressman Howard Berman is here.

I want to thank Jeffrey not just for this evening, but for his tenacious support and advocacy since we started back in 2007. He has just consistently been there for me through thick and through thin. Sometimes, the 2008 campaign gets romanticized, and everybody says how perfect it was, and I have to remind them, no, I was there. *[Laughter]* And the only person I don't have to remind is Jeffrey, because he was there through all the ups and downs. And occasionally, he would call and say,

"Barack, I don't think things are working the way they're supposed to." *[Laughter]* But no matter where we were and what phase we were in, in that campaign, he stuck with us. And over the last 3½ years, he's remained just an extraordinary friend.

So, Jeffrey, thank you for everything you've done.

And then I want to thank Clooney for letting us use his basketball court. *[Laughter]* This guy has been talking smack about his basketball game—*[laughter]*—ever since I've known him. And we've actually known each other a while. It was wonderful, walking through the house, and the famous "Hope" poster from the 2008 campaign—people don't realize that the photograph of me is actually me sitting next to George. Because George had come into DC to advocate on behalf of Darfur and to make sure that we were doing the right thing for so many people who were going through such horrific events, and we struck up a friendship. And this is the first time that George Clooney has ever

been photoshopped out of a picture. [Laughter] Never happened before. [Laughter] Never happened before, will never happen again. [Laughter]

But the wonderful thing is the artist actually sent George—some of you have seen this—a print with my picture and his picture right next to each other with the same—in the same format. Why he said at the bottom, “Dope and Hope,” I don’t know. [Laughter] I don’t think that’s fair. That’s not fair. [Laughter] That’s not right. It ain’t right. [Laughter]

But look, I cannot take credit for this. Jeffrey can take some credit. But let’s face it, we raised a lot of money because everybody loves George. [Laughter] They like me; they love him. [Laughter] And rightfully so. Not only is he an unbelievable actor, but he is one of those rare individuals who is at ease with everybody, seems to just occupy a constant state of grace, and uses his extraordinary talents on behalf of stuff that’s really important. And he takes time to actually figure out the facts and the issues. And so we couldn’t be prouder, George. Thank you. And I couldn’t be prouder of him as a friend.

I see a lot of familiar faces in the audience, and I’m going to be joining each of you at your table, so I’m not going to take a long time to talk up here.

As Jeffrey said, we’ve gone through 3½ extraordinary years, as tough as anything that we’ve experienced in our lifetimes. It turns out, though, the American people are tougher. So yes, we lost almost 8 million jobs during the crisis in 2007, 2008, 4 million before I took office, 800,000 the day I was sworn in—or the month that I was sworn in. The auto industry was brought to its knees, the banking system locked up, even as we were still in the midst of two wars and extraordinary terrorist threats from abroad.

And yet, despite all this, the American people are pulling through. And one of the great privileges of being President is you travel around the country and everyday there’s an affirmation of how decent and how strong and how caring the American people are. They’re not always paying attention to the babble in

Washington. They don’t have the time to read big briefing books on the latest ideas for Medicare reform. But they have good instincts about what’s right and what’s true. And it’s those instincts and it’s that resilience that really has enabled this country to weather an extraordinary storm.

And I’ve had the great privilege of seeing people in communities all across the country pull together, keep businesses open so that they don’t have to lay off their employees, folks who are out of work supporting each other in places of worship and in community centers, raising their kids, making sure that they’re getting off to a good start.

And as a consequence, we’re now at a place where we’ve created 4 million jobs in the last 2 years, 800,000 in the last 6 months—or few months alone, almost a million actually in the last 6 months. GM is the number-one automaker in the world, and not only that, but they’re actually making good cars and that people are buying. The banking system has worked through a lot of these issues, and slowly, things are coming back.

But as Jeffrey said, we still have so much work to do. There’s still so many people out there who are hurting, too many folks who are looking for work, too many people whose homes are underwater, too many communities that aren’t sure about the future, that are anxious. Even if they’re doing okay, they’re anxious about whether the future is going to be better for their kids and for their grandkids.

And so I always remind people that in 2008, I did not just run to get back to where we were in 2007. The crisis in a lot of ways was a manifestation of what had been going on for a decade or more: a sense in which a few of us were doing really well, but that that fundamental American promise that if you worked hard, no matter what you looked like, where you came from, what your last name was, who you loved, that you could make it if you tried; that everybody had a fair shot and everybody did their fair share and everybody played by the same rules. Those basic values had been dissipating for a decade or more.

And so that's the reason why over the last 3½ years, even as we've managed crisis, even as we've ended a war and are in the process of ending another one, even as we went after Al Qaida and have decimated the ranks of their leadership, even as we got the auto industry back to a place where it can now compete internationally and we unlocked the financial system so that businesses and families could get financing again—even as we did all those things, we kept our eye on the basic promise of our 2008 campaign.

That's why we worked on health care reform, not because it was popular, but because it was right. And as a consequence, 30 million people will have health insurance that didn't have it before. That's why we did Wall Street reform, not because it was easy or popular, but because it was right, because we can't have a system in which the recklessness of a few can bring down an entire economy.

That's why we have taken on education, sometimes offending folks in our own party because the status quo of some communities where half the kids are dropping out and only 1 out of 10 are reading at grade level. We can't compete doing that.

That's why we've doubled clean energy. That's why we doubled fuel efficiency standards on cars. That's why we've invested in science and research. That's why projects all across the country have been built, putting construction workers back to work. All of this has been in pursuit of the goal that we originally talked about in 2008, and that was creating an America where everybody had a shot, where we create a platform where if you are willing to work hard, you can make it.

And that requires us to do things together. And we're not finished. We've got a lot more work. And as we look forward towards this next campaign, the choice between the path that I've set for this country and that of my opponent could not be starker, and the stakes couldn't be higher. And I won't run through the differences in all the issues. What it comes down to is they have a different vision about how America works.

See, I think we work best when we're all in it together, when we've all got a stake in each other. And I've said this before: I believe that—Malia and Sasha are the most magical girls in the world. I don't worry about them. But I think their lives will be better if every child in America has opportunity and a good education and can go to college without worrying about being loaded up with tens of thousands of dollars' worth of debt. That will be a stronger America for them.

And Michelle and I—people have commented on the fact that I've got gray hair now. There was a blog post about look how wrinkly Obama is getting. [Laughter] It was sort of distressing. [Laughter] George doesn't have to go through these things. [Laughter]

Actor George T. Clooney. Look at me!

The President. I like that in you, brother. [Laughter]

But Michelle and I will be okay after this is all done. But our lives are better if, when I'm walking down the street and I see some elderly couple holding hands and they're walking through a park, I know, you know what, they've got Medicare that they can count on and they've got Social Security that they can count on. They're going to be able to pay the bills and enjoy their retirement.

I remind people when folks talk about the free market, you won't find a bigger advocate for the free market than me, but I also understand the free market works when we've got rules so that folks who are engaging in fair dealing and providing good products and good customer service, that they're not being undercut by folks who are cutting corners and cheating and bilking consumers.

And I'm reminded—I just came from Seattle; I told a roomful of folks, some of whom work for Microsoft, Bill Gates is a genius, Steve Jobs is a genius, Mark Zuckerberg, amazing what they've accomplished. But the Internet doesn't exist unless all of us together make an investment in something called DARPA that helped develop the Internet. That was a common enterprise that created this platform for success for everybody.

The other side has got a different view. Their attitude is, you're on your own. If you're a kid born in a poor neighborhood in L.A., tough luck, you're on your own. If you're a senior citizen who, because of bad luck, got laid off, or the company ended up dissolving without your pension being vested, tough luck, you didn't plan well enough. That's not the America I believe in. That's not the America you believe in.

And obviously, yesterday we made some news, but the truth is it was a logical extension of what America is supposed to be. It grew directly out of this difference in visions: Are we a country that includes everybody and gives everybody a shot and treats everybody fairly, and is that going to make us stronger? Are we welcoming to immigrants? Are we welcoming to people who aren't like us? Does that make us stronger? I believe it does.

And so that's what's at stake. Now, I will just close by saying that this is going to be harder than it was the last time. This is going to be harder than it was the last time, not only because I'm older and grayer and your "Hope" posters are dog eared and—[laughter]. You know, 2008 in some ways was lightning in a bottle. That's not going to be replicated. And we shouldn't expect it to; I've been President for 3½ years. But part of the reason it's going to be harder is because folks are still hurting out there and those frustrations with Washington and the nonsense they see on the news is making them more cynical than they were in 2008.

## Remarks in Reno, Nevada May 11, 2012

Well, good afternoon, everybody. And thank you for arranging a beautiful day. This is just a spectacular afternoon, and I'm thrilled to be here.

We all know how difficult these past few years have been for this country, but especially for this State. After the worst recession in our lifetimes—a crisis that followed the collapse of the housing market—it's going to take a long time for the economy to fully recover. More time than any of us would like. But there are

So we're going to have to fight against cynicism and a belief that maybe things can't happen and maybe the game is rigged, what's the point. That's what we're going to be fighting against this time.

And that means we're going to have to work harder. That means we're going to have to be more determined. That means that that passion that we brought to bear in 2008 is going to have to express itself maybe not in such flashy form, it's going to have to be steady, but we're going to have to keep those fires burning all the way through November and beyond. Because I'm not interested in just winning the election, I'm also interested in making sure that we can finish what we started in 2008. We've still got a lot of work to do.

So bottom line is, I still believe in the American people, and I still believe in you. And I hope you still believe in me. Because I'm as determined as I've ever been to make sure that this country stays on the right path. We're moving forward; we're not going backwards.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the residence of George T. Clooney. In his remarks, he referred to Jeffrey Katzenberg, chief executive officer, DreamWorks Studios; graphic artist Shepard Fairey; William H. Gates III, chairman, Microsoft Corp.; and Mark E. Zuckerberg, founder and chief executive officer, Facebook, Inc.

plenty of steps that we can take to speed up the recovery right now. There are things we can do right now to help create jobs and help restore some of the financial security that too many families have lost.

Now, I have to say that there are a few too many Republicans in Congress who don't seem to be as optimistic as we are. They think that all we can do are try the things that have been done in the past, things that they've tried in the past. So they want to cut more taxes, especially