

ry. You're still trying to figure out how you dig yourself out of a hole.

And that's going to make it tough. And frankly, it makes it easier for the other guys, because the other side, all they've got to do is just say, you know what, you're frustrated, things aren't where they need to be, and it's Obama's fault. And if they can spend hundreds of millions of dollars promoting that argument, then they don't have to come up with answers. They don't have to come up with a credible plan. They figure they can surf folks' frustrations all the way to the White House.

We've seen this game before. We've just never seen this much money behind the game. So the question then for us is going to end up being, well, how badly do we believe in what we say we believe in? How hard are we willing to fight for the future that we say we want for our kids and our grandkids?

The one thing I learned in 2008—traveling all across the country, starting in Iowa—was for all the cynicism and negativity and phony issues and sometimes outright lies that passed for political campaigns, when a group of ordinary citizens say, we want to bring change to our country, we want to make this work for everybody, when voters start talking to each other and making commitments to each other, not just to a candidate, but to an idea, change happens. That's what you showed me last time.

And so this time, we're going to have to be more determined and we're going to have to make those same commitments. I told people back in 2008, I said, I'm not a perfect man and I won't be a perfect President. But I promise you this: I will always tell you what I think, and I'll always tell you where I stand. And I'll wake up every single day just working as hard as I can to make your lives a little better. And you know what, I've kept that promise. I've kept that promise.

I still believe in you. I still believe in the American people. I still believe in the American idea. And if you still believe in me and if you are willing to knock on some doors and make some phone calls and get out there and get working and fight to finish what we started in 2008, we will not just win an election, we will continue down a path of glory for this country and remind the entire world just why it is that America is the greatest nation on earth.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:27 p.m. at the Chicago Cultural Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. John S. McCain III, in his capacity as the 2008 Republican Presidential nominee; Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts; and Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Chicago June 1, 2012

Well, I can follow a lawyer, but following a poet—[laughter]—that's hard.

I'm so grateful to Chaka and Tracey and their beautiful daughters for opening up this great home. I want to acknowledge somebody who is doing outstanding work on behalf of Illinois families every single day, your Governor, Pat Quinn, who's here today. Good job, Pat.

It's nice to be back on the South Side. For some reason, they didn't—whoever organized this didn't understand the geography of Chicago, because—[laughter]—we came south, now I'm going to have to go back north. [Laughter]

And then I go home back south. [Laughter] See, we could have just kept on going. [Laughter] But it's good to be home, and it's good to see so many good friends, and I appreciate all the new ones.

It is true Chaka and I have known each other for a long time. The first time we met, he was still a young up-and-comer. Now he's a big ship—[laughter]—now he's a big ship in the deep ocean, so—[laughter]. But not only has he not gotten any gray hair, whereas I have—[laughter]—but he hasn't changed in terms of his graciousness and his character. And so

we're just really appreciative of the friendship that we had.

Usually in intimate settings like this, I don't like to give a long speech. I'd rather have a conversation with everybody, have a chance to answer questions, take comments. So let me just say a few things at the top.

First of all, obviously, we've gone through an extraordinary time over the last 4 years, worst financial crisis since the Great Depression: a worldwide contraction, the locking up of the financial markets, businesses—even blue-chip companies—not being able to finance themselves, consumers getting hammered, the housing market crashing. And so we had to make a series of decisions very quickly at the beginning of my administration.

And we, for the most part, made the right decisions. They weren't always popular, but because of those decisions, the auto industry came roaring back. Because of those decisions, suddenly, credit started flowing again. Because of those decisions, we were out there exporting goods once again all around the world. Because of those decisions, the ship was righted and we started growing again and started producing jobs again. And we've now seen over 4 million jobs created over the last couple of years, and we've seen, just in the last 6 months alone, over 800,000 jobs created. Strongest manufacturing job growth since the 1990s.

And so there's a sense, even with a disappointing jobs report today because of what's happening in Europe—and we're now a global economy; it's integrated. So, when something happens across the Atlantic or across the Pacific, it gives us a shock. Despite all that, though, we're moving in the right direction. But we're not moving as fast as we could be. And more importantly, the reason I ran, and the reason a lot of you support me, wasn't just to get back to the status quo, it was to address the underlying challenges that had prevented us from creating an economy that, on a sustained basis, is providing security and hope and promise for people who were willing to work hard: middle class families who want to live out that dream of being able to buy a home and raise a family and send their kids to college and make sure

that they're doing even better than their—than they were.

And that's the reason why, even as we've done all this work to try to get the economy moving in the right direction—in fits and starts, as frustrating as it sometimes has been—what we've also tried to do is think about the future: Where are we going? And that's the reason why we doubled fuel efficiency standards on cars and doubled the production of clean energy, even as we were increasing the production of oil and gas, because we want to make sure that we've got control of our energy future. That's going to be critical to our success.

That's the reason we decided to double exports, because we don't want to just be a country that consumes things, we want to be a country that sells things.

That's the reason why we invested so heavily in education reform. And some great work's being done in Illinois. But all across the country, over 40 States have engaged in some unprecedented reforms looking for results. And that's the reason why we made college more accessible by greatly increasing the access to student loans and Pell grants, making sure that young people have the ability to train themselves for the skills they need for the 21st century.

That's the reason why we did health care reform, because not only was health care killing families, but it was also just the biggest single factor in driving our deficits and a huge strain on American businesses that were making us less competitive. And so I could not be prouder of the fact that 30 million people are going to have access to health care who didn't have it before. And young people already are able to stay on their parent's plan. And seniors are seeing discounts for their prescription drugs that are making a difference in their quality of life.

And on the international scene, because, as I said, we don't live—just to continue the nautical theme—[*laughter*]*—no country is an island. [Laughter]* Well, some countries are islands, but we're not. [*Laughter*] The world's interconnected. And so we had a goal of righting the ship of foreign policy, regaining respect

around the world, strengthening our alliances, ending the war in Iraq, phasing down the war in Afghanistan, going after Al Qaida in a way that was smart so that not only did we get bin Laden, but also we've weakened Al Qaida to the point where it's much more difficult for them to threaten our homeland or our allies.

So that's a lot of work for a relatively short period of time. But we've got so much more work to do. And that's where we're going to need your help. This is going to be a close election; it's going to be a tight election. I'm absolutely confident that the agenda we have to further expand clean energy and to invest in science and technology, in balancing our deficits and reducing our debt in a balanced way, in making sure that we keep Wall Street reform that will prevent the kinds of shenanigans

that got us into this mess in the first place, and making sure that we maintain health care reform that is providing, for example, preventive care for women—I want to make sure that stays in place, that we're implementing it effectively, because that's going to be part of how we create an economy that lasts for everybody, not just for a few.

But in order to do it, we're going to have to want it; we're going to have to fight for it. And we proved in 2008 that when people come together, they can't be stopped. That's what we're going to do in 2012 as well.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:35 p.m. at the residence of Chaka M. and Tracey Patterson.

Remarks at an Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser in Chicago *June 1, 2012*

Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Well, first of all, it is just good to be home. And it is good to be back with so many close friends.

Jim was in some ways being modest, because he talked about supporting me for my Presidential race, but like so many of you here—like folks like John and Neil and other folks in this room—actually, the Crown family, from the grandpas all the way to the grandkids, they supported me when I ran for State senate, supported me when I lost a congressional race, supported me when I won my Senate race, and then supported me in my run for the Presidency. These guys have been friends for a really long time. And Michelle and I love them to death, and to see how remarkable their children have turned out, watching them grow up, is a great thing to see. So please give the Crowns a big round of applause. They—[*applause*—wonderful friends.

So I am not going to give a long speech. This really is family. You guys know me. You don't need to hear a lot of speechmaking. What I want to do is mostly answer questions and entertain ideas and comments from you. But what I do want to just say briefly is both what

this campaign's going to be about and why it's going to be so important.

There are going to be a lot of issues involved because we have probably as sharp a contrast between two candidates as we've seen in a very long time, substantively. I feel very strongly we've got to have comprehensive immigration reform. We should—we're a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. Governor Romney has a different view. I care very deeply about women's health issues. Governor Romney thinks differently about those issues. I very much believe that the environment and making sure that we're protecting it for the next generation is consistent not just with Democratic traditions, but with traditions dating back to Teddy Roosevelt, a Republican. Mr. Romney disagrees with me.

So there are going to be a whole set of issues to debate. But the essence of this campaign is going to be about the economy. It's going to be about how do we create an economy that works for everybody, that is dynamic, that is competitive, that meets the challenges of the 21st century and provides a platform where everybody who's willing to work hard can succeed. And I mean everybody—whatever their background,