

Barack Obama Campaigns for Kamala Harris in Atlanta, GA | 10.24.24

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Speakers:

Barack Obama - 100.0%

Notes:

Summary:

In this speech delivered in Atlanta, GA on October 24, 2024, former President Barack Obama rallies support for Kamala Harris's presidential campaign.

Key points include:

Urgent call for early voting in Georgia, emphasizing the importance of photo ID and making a voting plan

Criticism of Donald Trump:

Characterizes Trump as self-centered and focused only on personal gain

Cites concerns from Trump's former staff (Gen. John Kelly, defense secretaries, Joint Chiefs chairman)

Criticizes Trump's merchandise ventures (gold sneakers, watches, Trump Bible)

Challenges Trump's claims about the economy, clarifying that Trump inherited Obama's economic growth

Disputes Trump's claims about pandemic relief checks, noting they came from Biden's administration

Support for Kamala Harris:

Highlights her middle-class background and work experience

Emphasizes her record as prosecutor and California Attorney General

Praises her plans for healthcare, housing, and middle-class tax cuts

Supports her commitment to reproductive rights

Policy Discussion:

Addresses current economic challenges while noting wage growth and low unemployment

Discusses the importance of the Affordable Care Act and its impact

Reflects on pandemic response and the consequences of poor leadership

Values and Character:

Emphasizes the election is about values and character, not just policies

Defines real strength as helping others and standing up for those in need

Contrasts Harris's leadership style with Trump's approach

The speech concludes by endorsing Harris as the next president, presenting her as a leader who demonstrates true strength and character.

Barack Obama

00:00:00

Are you fired up? Are you ready to go?

Barack Obama

00:00:06

Ah, it is good to be back in Georgia. Good to be back in Atlanta. And this is quite a lineup you've had in. You got my buddy Bruce Springsteen. You got Tyler Perry.

Barack Obama

00:00:27

You got a couple of guys from those Capital One commercials. If that doesn't get you fired

up to vote, I don't know what will.

Barack Obama

00:00:38

Now, you've heard this already. I am going to repeat it. We are going to keep repeating it here in Georgia. Early voting has already started. So if you have not already, go vote.

Barack Obama

00:00:55

Return your absentee ballot. If you're going to vote, remember to bring your photo id. If you need to figure out where to go, go to iwillvote.com ga and then you get your friends and you get your family to make a plan to vote. Because together we have a chance to choose a new generation of leadership in this country and start building a better and stronger and fairer and more hopeful America now.

Barack Obama

00:01:31

Yeah, I love you, too.

Barack Obama

00:01:40

Now, we know. We know this election is going to be tight because a lot of Americans are still struggling. As a country, we've been through a lot.

Barack Obama

00:01:58

As a country, we've been through a lot over the last few years. We had a historic pandemic that wrecked havoc on communities and businesses. And then disruptions from the pandemic caused price hikes that put a strain on family budgets. And people feel like no matter how hard they work, sometimes it feels like they're just treading water.

Barack Obama

00:02:24

So I get why people are looking to shake things up.

Barack Obama

00:02:29

What I cannot understand is why anybody would think that Donald Trump will shake things up in a way that is good for you. Because there is absolutely no evidence that this man thinks about anybody but himself.

Barack Obama

00:02:51

I've said it before. Donald Trump is a 78 year old billionaire who has not stopped whining about his problems since he rode down that golden escalator nine years ago. And when he's not complaining, what? When he's not sending out crazy tweets, he's trying to sell you

stuff.

Barack Obama

00:03:18

He's trying to sell you gold sneakers, Trying to sell you a hundred thousand dollar watch. Trying to sell you a Trump Bible, wants to sell you the word of God. Donald Trump edition. Got his name right there next to Matthew and Luke.

Barack Obama

00:03:43

Now, you cannot make this stuff up. If this was on a Saturday Night Live skit, you'd say, well, no, that's crazy. But he's doing it because all he cares about is his ego, his money, his status. That's his mindset. Those are his intentions.

Barack Obama

00:04:03

And then there's the question of his confidence. I mean, have you seen Donald Trump lately? He out there giving two hour speeches. Just words, Sally. He said the other day, January 6th was a day of love.

Barack Obama

00:04:14

He said that like it was Woodstock or Coachella.

Barack Obama

00:04:21

If your grandpa was acting like this, you'd call up your brother, call up your cousin, you say, hey, have you noticed grandpa? He acting kind of funny right now.

Barack Obama

00:04:36

But here's the interesting thing is he acts so crazy and it's become so common that people no longer take it seriously.

Barack Obama

00:04:49

I'm here to explain to you, just because he acts goofy does not mean his presidency wouldn't be dangerous. And you do not have to take my word for it. Lately, some of the people who know Donald Trump best have been saying in no uncertain terms that he should not be president again. The other day, General John Kelly, Donald Trump's former chief of staff, said that Trump told him he wanted his generals to be like Hitler's generals.

Barack Obama

00:05:26

Now, don't boo, vote.

Now, I want to explain that in politics, a good rule of thumb is don't say you want to do anything like Hitler.

Barack Obama

00:05:40

You know, that's just good political advice. But it is useful because it gives us a window into how Donald Trump thinks. And John Kelly isn't the only one saying this. Two of his defense secretaries, people who worked for him, said the same thing. His chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that is the top of the top brass in our military, said he is dangerous.

Barack Obama

00:06:17

Now, I happen to know John Kelly and Mark Miller. They served under me when I was Commander in chief. These are serious people.

Barack Obama

00:06:30

This is a decorated soldier and Marine who served in battle. They are not quote, unquote, woke liberals.

Barack Obama

00:06:42

They are people who have never in the past even talked about politics because they believe that the military should be above politics.

Barack Obama

00:06:57

But the reason they're speaking up is because they have seen that in Donald Trump's mind, the military does not exist to serve the Constitution or the American people. He doesn't see being commander in chief as a solemn, sacred responsibility. Just like everything else, he thinks the military exists to do his bidding, to serve his interests.

Barack Obama

00:07:22

He said if he's elected, he'll use that military to go after, quote, the enemy within which he defines as anybody who criticizes him or refuses to bend the knee. He can't handle that. And unlike last time, unlike the first time, he won't have people like John Kelly around to stop him. He'll be surrounded by people who are just as loony as he is.

Barack Obama

00:07:53

And who will let him do what he wants?

Barack Obama

00:07:56

And so my question to you, Georgia, is how is any of that going to help you? We do not

need four years of a wannabe king, a wannabe dictator running around trying to punish his enemies. That's not what you need in your life. America is ready to turn the page. We are ready for a better story, Georgia.

Barack Obama

00:08:20

We're ready for a President Kamala Harris.

Barack Obama

00:08:29

And the good news is that Kamala Harris is ready for the job.

Barack Obama

00:08:38

This is a leader who has spent her life fighting on behalf of people who need a voice, who need a champion. Kamala wasn't born into privilege. She was raised in a middle class family. She worked at McDonald's when she was in college to pay her expenses. She didn't pretend to work at McDonald's when it was closed for a photo op.

Barack Obama

00:09:05

She actually cares what people are going through because she's seen it in her own family, in her own life. As a prosecutor, Kamala stood up for children who'd been victims of sexual abuse. As attorney general of California, fought the big banks and for profit colleges, secured billions of dollars for people after they'd been scammed.

Barack Obama

00:09:28

After the home mortgage crisis, Kamala pushed me and my administration hard to make sure homeowners got a fair settlement. It didn't matter that I was a Democrat, that she had knocked on doors for my campaign.

Barack Obama

00:09:40

And I wish she wasn't going to let anybody stop her from winning as much relief as possible for families who deserved it. So the point I'm making, if you elect Kamala Harris, she will not be focused on her problems, her ego, her money. She's going to be focused on you. She's going to be focused on you.

Barack Obama

00:10:06

Kamala understands that too many folks here in Georgia and across the country are struggling to pay the bills now. Understand wages are steadily growing, unemployment is low, inflation is finally slowing. But we all know the price of everything from housing to health care to groceries is still too high. And it hurts. She understands that.

The question is, who's really going to do something about it? So Donald Trump's plan is to give another massive tax cut to billionaires and big corporations because he was a reality star on the Apprentice. There are some folks who think, well, I don't know, he's a businessman. He must know something about the economy.

Barack Obama

00:10:49

I've heard people say this, right?

Barack Obama

00:10:51

I'll talk to them. Why would you think about voting for this guy? Well, they're all, well, I remember the economy when he first came in. It was pretty Good. Yeah.

Barack Obama

00:11:00

Yeah, it was good because it was my economy.

Barack Obama

00:11:11

I had spent. I had spent. I had spent eight years cleaning up the mess that the Republicans had left me. And then I handed over 75 straight months of job growth to Donald Trump, and all he did was give tax cuts to folks who didn't need it. Drove up the deficit in the process, and now he wants to do it again.

Barack Obama

00:11:39

You can't give him credit for that.

Barack Obama

00:11:44

And then I hear the other thing. I hear some folks will be like, well, Donald Trump sent me a check during the pandemic. No, no, no. Y'all know, because I've heard this. I know y'all.

Barack Obama

00:11:59

Some of you heard that.

Barack Obama

00:12:04

Hey, let me make sure y'all understand this. Joe Biden sent you a check during the pandemic, just like I gave people relief during the Great Recession. The thing is, we didn't put our name on it because it wasn't about feeding our egos. It wasn't about advancing our politics. It was about helping people.

Barack Obama

00:12:28

That's the difference. Don't be giving them credit for that. Come on.

Barack Obama

00:12:38

He sent you a check.

Barack Obama

00:12:43

Do not fall for that. Okie doke. Don't be bamboozled.

Barack Obama

00:12:51

Don't get fooled. And don't get fooled when he talks about health care, either.

Barack Obama

00:12:59

You asked Donald Trump what he's going to do to make health care more affordable. His only answer is end Obamacare and the Affordable Care Act. He doesn't really know why he wants to end it, except for the fact that I passed it. The problem he's got now is that it's popular because 50 million people have gotten health care because of it.

Barack Obama

00:13:24

So a couple weeks ago, you remember during the vice presidential debate, his running mate had the nerve, had the Hutzpuck, to say that Donald Trump salvaged the Affordable Care Act.

Barack Obama

00:13:46

Donald Trump spent his entire presidency trying to tear that thing down, and he couldn't even do that right.

Barack Obama

00:13:55

And now, eight years after he was elected, when he was asked, well, what are you going to do? He says, well, I've got concepts of a plan for how he'd replace it. Now, I want you all to think about this for a second. Let's say your boss on the job gives you an assignment, says, I need it by Friday.

Barack Obama

00:14:15

Friday rolls around.

Barack Obama

00:14:16

Your boss says, so, did you finish that project I asked you to do? And you say, well, I haven't actually started, but I got a concept for a plan.

Or you could try this at home, Honey, did you throw out the trash?

Barack Obama

00:14:40

I have a concept of a Plan to throw out the trash, how's that going to go on the couch? That's how it'll go over. If it wouldn't work for you, why should it work for the next president of the United States?

Barack Obama

00:15:01

The good news is that Kamala Harris doesn't have concepts of a plan. She got a plan to make your life better. She's going to go after corporations that unfairly jack up prices. She's going to make it easier to build and buy a home. She's going to limit out of pocket health care costs.

Barack Obama

00:15:22

She's going to give a tax cut to 100 million middle class families and working Americans. And if Congress passes a bill to restore the reproductive freedom that women had for nearly 50 years, the freedom that Donald Trump bragged about taking away, Kamala will sign it into law.

Barack Obama

00:15:51

It's an example of how elections matter. And I have to say, I get why folks get frustrated with politics. I do, too. Sometimes I don't watch cable news because sometimes I get why people block it out. It just seems like everybody arguing and fussing.

Barack Obama

00:16:15

But I always tell people, look, politics, it's not going to solve all your problems. No president is going to eliminate poverty in one term or eliminate racism, because those problems are hard.

Barack Obama

00:16:34

It takes steps a little bit at a time. But your vote matters because that little bit of a time, that incremental improvement that adds up and things can get a little better or they can get a little or a lot worse. When I was president, we did not solve all problems with our health care system.

Barack Obama

00:16:57

But 50 million people getting health insurance that didn't have it before, that made a difference. You know, somebody who has health insurance because of it.

And I'm going to give you another example. When I was president, we put together an entire playbook for how to deal with a pandemic because we had dealt with Ebola, we had dealt with the H1N1 virus. We put together a plan and we practiced. And we had all the agencies in terms of how you going to do with the schools and how are we going to do with public health agencies.

Barack Obama

00:17:28

And we put it all together.

Barack Obama

00:17:30

And when Donald Trump came in, we gave him that playbook. And he, I guess, dropped it in the, in the dustbin. Three years later, a pandemic hit. And I want to be fair. Listen to me now.

Barack Obama

00:17:44

No matter who was president, the pandemic was going to be a huge crisis. People were going to get sick. People were going to die. Businesses were going to close. There would be travel restrictions.

Barack Obama

00:17:55

It was a once in a hundred year event. But if you look at a country like Canada, the per capita death rate during COVID was 60% lower than it was here in the United States. So you do the math. Over a million people died during the pandemic here in the U.S. 60% of over a million.

Barack Obama

00:18:20

That's 600,000 people. That's grandparents, that's aunts, that's uncles, parents, coworkers, friends. Everybody here was touched by it. Some people might have been alive if we had had a competent administration who was paying attention and trying to do things better. Instead of talking about injecting bleach into your arm.

Barack Obama

00:18:45

Now you remember that if somebody tells you it doesn't make a difference. It will not make things perfect, but it does make a difference to have somebody who is confident, somebody who sees you, somebody who respects you, somebody who cares about you, somebody who understands your dreams.

Barack Obama

00:19:10

And you need to remind folks who are still on the sidelines that the election is about more

than just policies. It's about values. And it is about. About character.

Barack Obama

00:19:22

Some of you know, when I was growing up, I didn't have a father in the house, but I did have people around me, stepfather, grandparents, teachers, coaches, and most of all, my mother, who tried to teach me the difference between right and wrong, who showed me what it meant to be honest and responsible, to work hard, to treat other people the way I wanted to be treated.

Barack Obama

00:19:50

And look, I was a knucklehead sometimes when I was a kid, and I didn't always live up to those values, even as a young adult. But over time, I internalized those values. And as an adult, I said, this is what I need to stand on. This is my foundation.

Barack Obama

00:20:07

And I suspect most of you grew up the same way. And one of the most disturbing things about this election and about Trump's rise in politics is how we seem to have set the values we were taught aside, how we seem to disregard them, how we pretend they don't matter. When Donald Trump lies about Hurricane Abe, you've got a hurricane in North Carolina.

Barack Obama

00:20:39

People desperate. And he and his vice presidential candidate deliberately circulate rumors that that money is being given to illegal aliens, illegal immigrants, as opposed to people who are desperate.

Barack Obama

00:20:57

When he cheats or shows utter disregard for our Constitution, when he calls service members who died in battle losers or fellow citizens vermin, people make excuses for it. They act like it's okay as long as their side wins. And I've noticed this, especially with some men who seem to think Trump's behavior is a sign of strength.

Barack Obama

00:21:23

That macho. You know, I'm going to own these folks.

Barack Obama

00:21:26

I'm going to put them down. I am here to tell you that is not what real strength is. It never has been. Real strength is about working hard and taking responsibility and telling the truth, even when it's inconvenient. Real strength is about helping people who need it and

standing up for those who can't always stand up for themselves.

Barack Obama

00:21:52

That's what we should want in our daughters and our sons. And that's what I want to see in the president of the United States of America.

Barack Obama

00:22:05

And the good news is we've got a candidate to vote for in this election who demonstrates that kind of character, who knows what real strength looks like, who will set a good example and do the right thing and leave this country better than she found it. That is what this election is about, and that is why it is my honor to introduce my friend, the next president of the United States of America, Vice President Kamala Harris.