

Barack Obama in Tucson, Arizona | Friday, October 18, 2024

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Speakers:

Barack Obama - 100.0%

Notes:

Summary by ChatGPT

- Introduction and Election Urgency: Obama expresses his excitement about returning to Tucson and emphasizes the importance of voting in the upcoming election, encouraging the audience to participate and make plans to vote early or on election day.

- Critique of Donald Trump: He critiques Trump's character and competence, arguing that Trump is self-serving and disconnected from the struggles of everyday Americans. Obama highlights Trump's failures and lack of real solutions for pressing issues, such as the economy and healthcare.

- Kamala Harris's Qualifications: Obama praises Kamala Harris, portraying her as a capable leader with a track record of fighting for working people. He contrasts her concrete plans with Trump's vague proposals, asserting that Harris has practical solutions to improve Americans' lives.

- Policy Proposals and Comparisons: The speech details Harris's plans for economic reform, healthcare, housing, and support for families. Obama emphasizes that her policies will provide direct benefits to the middle class, unlike Trump's proposals, which he argues favor the wealthy.

- Immigration and National Unity: Obama addresses immigration issues, stating that Trump's approach lacks a real plan and merely promotes fear. He calls for a thoughtful approach to immigration, recognizing the complexities and emphasizing the importance of unity and collaboration in addressing these challenges.

Barack Obama 00:00:00
Uh, hello, Tucson.

00:00:06
Are you fired up? Are you ready to go, man? All right. It is good to be back.

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It is good to be back in Arizona. It's good to be back in Tucson.

00:00:28
And I appreciate y'all coming out the day before homecoming.

00:00:37
As we landed, we saw Colorado's buses at the airport.

00:00:45
And I know you know Colorado's got a couple good players, but I also know you guys have beaten them twice in a row, so don't bet against the Wildcats tomorrow. Come on.

00:01:03
I love you back, but I am not here just to talk about football. I am here to ask you to vote for my friend and your outstanding congressman, Raul Grijalva.

For your next member of Congress, from the 6th district, Kirsten Engel.

00:01:38

For your outstanding next United States senator, Reuben Gaelde. And for the next president of the United States, Kamala Harris.

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Now, before I get going, you guys have to, uh, you guys have to forgive me because let's face it, I'm a little out of practice, so I got a little something in my throat.

00:02:15

But that's okay, because what I have to say is going to make so much sense that even if I'm, um, coughing a little bit, I think you're still going to catch what I'm saying here. Because here in Arizona, voting has already started.

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You can vote early or return your mail ballot today.

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There's no reason to delay what you waiting for.

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And of course, you can vote at your polling place on election day, November 5. Si se pueda. Uh, just remember to bring your photo id.

00:03:06

And I think as Ruben mentioned, but as Ruben mentioned, you need to make a plan. And if you've got any confusion, any uncertainty about what your plan is to vote, then you go to [iwillvote.com az](https://www.iwillvote.com/az). And then once you've got a plan, then you've got to make sure your friends and family make a plan to vote, too.

00:03:38

Because together, we've got 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.

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Now, we know this election is going to be tight, and it's going to be tight because a lot of Americans are struggling right now. Ah. As a country, we've been through a lot over the

last few years. We've had a historic pandemic that wreaked havoc on communities and businesses. Disruptions from the pandemic then caused prices to spike, and that put a strain on family budgets.

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And in a lot of ways, it felt like the aspirations of working people have taken a backseat to the priorities of the rich and the powerful and the well connected. So I understand why people are looking to shake things up. I get why sometimes folks are frustrated with politics. I'm, uh, sometimes frustrated with politics.

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So I get it. What I cannot understand is why anyone would think that Donald Trump will shake things up in a way that is good for you. That I don't understand, because. Because there is absolutely no evidence that this man thinks about anybody but himself.

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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, he's trying to sell you stuff.

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He's got his gold sneakers, he's got the \$100,000 watch, says it's a swiss watch, but nobody can actually figure out where in Switzerland was this thing made. He's got. This is my favorite. He's got the Trump bible. Wants you to buy the word of God Donald Trump edition.

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His name's going to be on there embossed, right next to Luke and Mark and Matthew.

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And by the way, I will give you one guess. You could not make this stuff up where these bibles are made.

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So mister tough guy on China, except when he can make a few bucks hawking his Trump edition bibles. Come on, man, you can't make this stuff up. But he's doing it. And the reason he's doing it is because what he cares about is his ego and his money and his status. He's not thinking about you.

Donald Trump sees power as nothing more than a means to his ends. He wants the middle class to pay the price for another huge tax cut that would mostly help him and his country club buddies. He doesn't care if he costs more women their reproductive freedoms, because it won't make a difference in his life.

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Do not boo. Vote. They can't hear you when you boo. But when you vote, everybody can hear you vote.

00:08:18

Most of all. Most of all, Donald Trump wants us to think that this country is hopelessly divided between us and them, between the, quote, real Americans, which, by which he means his supporters and the outsiders who don't support him. Because having people divided and angry and aggrieved and resentful, he figures that boosts his chances to get elected.

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Now. So those are his intentions. I do have to point out that along with his intentions, there is also a question of his competence. Have you seen him lately? I mean, he is out there.

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He's given two. Two and a half hour speeches, just word salads. You have no idea what he's talking about. He's talking about Hannibal Lecter. He's talking about this.

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He's talking about that. He held a town hall meeting where he just, uh. Let me explain, because I've done a lot of town hall meetings. The point of a town hall meeting is to take questions. He just decided, you know what?

00:09:44

I'm going to stop taking questions. And then he's swaying to Ave Maria and YMCA for about half an hour. Folks are standing there, not sure what's happening. Can you imagine if I did that? Can you imagine if Ruben did that right in the middle?

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Now, our playlist would probably be better, but he called himself the father of IVF. I do not know what that means. You do not either.

He said January 6 was a day of love. Do not boo vote.

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It made January 6 sound like it was Woodstock.

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You.

00:10:47

You would be worried if your grandpa was acting like this. No, no, I'm not joking. You would, right? You'd be. You.

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You'd call up your cousins and you say, have you noticed?

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So imagine it coming from a guy who wants to be given unchecked power.

00:11:18

Tucson. We do not need to see what an older loony Donald Trump looks like with no guardrails. We have had enough of arrogance and bumbling and bluster and division. America is ready to turn the page. We're ready for a better story.

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We are, uh, ready for a president. Kamala Harris.

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I warned you. I warned you. I gotta go ahead and chant that.

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And the good news is Kamala Harris is ready to do the job.

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This is a leader who has spent her life fighting on behalf of people who need a voice, who need a champion, somebody who was raised in the middle class, believes in the values that built this country, worked her way through college in McDonald's, served with distinction in every office she has ever held.

Who is as prepared for the job as any nominee for president has ever been. That's who Kamala is.

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And in the White House, um, she will have an outstanding partner in Governor Tim Walz.

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Love that dude. Tim's a veteran. He's a teacher, he's a coach, he's a hunter. Been a great governor, working with Democrats and Republicans to get stuff done.

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And I learned the other day, he can take a vintage truck apart and put it back together again, which is just cool.

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You think Donald Trump can do that?

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For that matter, do you think Donald Trump has ever changed a tire in his life?

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Yeah. You know, he's like, he's like having jeeves change his tire.

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The point is, I was just picturing it. The point is, if you elect Kamala and Tim, they will not be focused on. On their problems. They will be focused on yours. They understand that too many folks, not just here in Arizona, but across the country, are still struggling to pay the bills, even though wages are steadily growing, even though inflation is finally slowing, the price of everything from health care to housing to groceries.

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It's still too high and it hurts.

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So the question is not whether or not we need to do some things different. The question is who's really going to do something about it?

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So what we need to do is to evaluate the plans of the respective candidates. Donald Trump's plan is to give another massive tax cut to billionaires and big corporations. Now, do not boo vote. I am going to break you of this habit.

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Now, some people, because, you know, I'm having conversations around the country with folks as I go campaigning, and I'll hear some people say, you know, well, I remember the economy when those first two years with Trump, they were pretty good.

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And I say, yeah, yeah, it was good because it was my economy that I gave to him.

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Uh, I had spent the previous eight years cleaning up the mess that Republicans had left me.

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So when I handed over the economy to Donald Trump, we had had 75 straight months of, uh, job growth. And I said, here you go. And all he did with it was give a tax cut to people who did not need one and drove up the deficit in the process. And now he wants to do it again.

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Now, wait, wait. Uh, in fairness, his other big economic plan is to slap tariffs on everything from food to tvs. Now, understand, a tariff is any imported good, you just slap an extra cost on it. And if some other country's not playing fair in terms of trade, then you use it as a tool in your tool belt.

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But this is basically a Trump sales tax that could cost the average family almost \$4,000 a year.

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This is not a plan to bring down prices. If you think prices are high now, Donald Trump's message is, you ain't seen nothing yet when it comes to health care, Donald Trump's got one answer, and that is. And Obamacare. Get rid of the Affordable Care act, even though 45 million people rely on it.

Couple, uh, of weeks ago, his running mate had the nerve, the chutzpah, to say that Donald Trump salvaged the Affordable Care act. What? Donald Trump spent his entire presidency trying to dismantle it, and he couldn't even do that right.

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Thanks to John McCain. He didn't do it.

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And now, eight years after he was elected, after all the arguments against Obamacare have been proven to be wrong, and even folks who don't like me sure like that insurance.

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When he was asked about it, he said, well, I have a concept of a plan for how I might replace it. Now, I want you to think about that. Let's say your boss gives you an assignment, says she needs it by Friday. Friday rolls around. Your boss says, so, did you finish that project I asked for?

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Well, I haven't actually started, but I do have a concept of a plan.

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Students here at Arizona, you could try it with your professors.

00:19:19

Papers do, and you just write on a sheet of paper, concept of a plan.

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You could try it at home. Honey, did you do the dishes? I have a concept of a plan to do the dishes. Haven't done them yet. How's that going to go over?

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Uh, if it wouldn't work for you, why should it work for the president of the United States? But the good news is that Kamala Harris does not have concepts of a plan. She has an actual plan to make your life better, to bring down the cost of things like groceries. She'll go after corporations that are jacking up prices, just like she went after big banks and for profit colleges when she was attorney general in California.

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And believe me, when Kamala does, nobody's going to want to stand in her way.

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I've witnessed it. I remember after the home mortgage crisis, Kamala pushed me and my administration harder than any other attorney general in the country to make sure homeowners got a fair settlement. And it didn't matter that I was a Democrat. She wasn't going to let anything stop her from winning as much relief as possible for the families who deserved it.

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That's who she is.

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That's the kind of President Kamala Harris will be.

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To lower housing costs, Kamala is going to cut red tape and work with state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to build 3 million new homes. Concrete plans shall give first time homebuyers up to \$25,000 to help them with a down payment. Concrete plans to lower healthcare costs. Kamala already worked with Joe Biden to take on the drug companies, bring down the cost of insulin, hearing aids, more than 50 prescription drugs.

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Ruben worked on that.

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He knows about it. And as president, Kamala will never stop working to limit out of pocket costs and protect your care. Concrete plans. That's who Kamala is.

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And instead of giving more tax cuts to billionaires and people who don't need them and raising prices on working families. Kamala is going to give a tax cut to 100 million middle class and working people here in America. So if you're a new parent, you could qualify for a \$6,000 tax credit during the first year of your child's life.

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That will help, because raising kids is hard. She wants to make it easier to afford stuff like a

crib or a car seat or diapers.

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You think Donald Trump's ever changed the diaper? No. Jeeves.

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Jeeves, what is this?

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If you're starting a small business, Kamala Harris will give you a \$50,000 tax credit to help you get it off the ground. She believes in entrepreneurship. That's who Kamala is. That's what she stands for. Not concepts of a plan, actual plans.

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Now, have you challenged Trump or JD vance on, um, these quote unquote concepts? They'll fall back on one final answer. This is their go to. After everything else makes no sense, they'll go. And it doesn't matter what the issue is.

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Housing, health care, education, paying the bills. He'll blame immigrants. He wants you to believe that if you let him round up whoever he wants and ship them out, all your problems will be solved. Now, wait, hold on a second, because this is a serious piece of business. Arizona is a border state.

00:23:59

You know, there are real issues at the border. We can't pretend there are not. We are a nation of laws, and we are a nation of immigrants. We were built on immigrants looking for a better life. We also have to make sure that the system works the way it was supposed to.

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Right. So we have a real problem to solve. But remember, Donald Trump was president for four years. He likes to talk about Kamala being vice president. Four years.

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We remember you being president, buddy, for four years. And if rounding up and deporting millions of desperate people, many of them women and children, is the answer to everything.

Looks like we might need an EMT right in front here. Everybody bend your knees real quick, because sometimes when you stand too long, you get a little faint. She'll be all right. Just got to make sure and drink your. Drink something if you got it.

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All right. Good job, emts.

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So the question is, why didn't he actually solve the problem when he was in power? Why was the number of undocumented immigrants basically the same when he left office as when he took office? I'll tell you why. Because he didn't have a real plan, and he still doesn't. What he had is talking points.

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What he had is a concept of a plan. And by the way, it was a mean and ugly concept of, you know, what would actually help bring order to the border and actually help fix our immigration system. The bipartisan deal that Kamala Harris supported, even though it was written by one of the most conservative Republicans in Congress.

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And Donald Trump deliberately lobbied against it and told Republicans, don't vote for it because he figured that if you passed it, he would not be able to engage in the same kind of fear mongering that he's been doing. He cared more about winning an election than he did to actually solve the problem.

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Vote.

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We do not need a president who's willing to make problems worse, to make his politics better. We need a president who actually cares about solving problems, making your life better. That's what Kamala Harris will do, and that's why you gotta vote.

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And to help her do it, she needs a senate full of public servants like Ruben Gallego.

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Ruben. Ruben.

Keep going while I take my sip of water. Ruben.

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You heard Ruben speak a little bit about his life. Son of an immigrant, single mom. Growing up, he and his sisters didn't have much. He worked construction, worked as a meatpacker. Anything to help his family.

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Later, he served in the marines. In Congress. He's proven that he will stand up to corporate price gouging and work to lower costs for families. Reuben is the kind of person we need in Washington. This is the kind of person who's going to help Kamala get stuff done.

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Folks who share our values and, ah, will do whatever they can to move the country forward.

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And him teaming up with Mark Kelly, man, that's a powerful one two punch right there.

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One of those values that Reuben shares, and that's talked a lot about in the campaign, is freedom. So I want to talk a little bit about that. I do not think we've ever had an election with candidates who understand freedom so differently.

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For Donald Trump and his cronies, freedom means that the powerful can do whatever they please. That's his definition of, uh, freedom. I want to fire workers for trying to organize a union. I should be free to do so.

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They want the freedom to throw out votes if they lose an election.

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They want to control what women can and can't do to their bodies.

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In other words, for Trump, freedom is getting away with stuff.

And it's like he said in the middle of the pandemic when he said, I do not take any responsibility at all. I'm not sure any american president has ever uttered those words other than Donald Trump. I do not take any. People were dying, hospitals overrun. I do not take any responsibility at all.

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That's his idea of freedom. I do what I want, and I'm not responsible for anything. We have a broader idea of freedom. We believe in the freedom to provide for our families if we're willing to work. The freedom to breathe clean air and drink clean water.

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The freedom to send our kids to school without worrying if they'll come home safely.

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We believe that true freedom gives each of us the right to make decisions about our own lives, how we worship, who we marry, what our family looks like. And we also believe that freedom requires us to recognize that other people have the freedom to make different choices. And it doesn't make them bad people.

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It doesn't make them evil people. It doesn't make them, um, enemies of the state.

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I mean, I listen to some of the language that's being thrown around. Look, even on the most contentious issues, I've always said there are good people of conscience on both sides of the abortion divide. And I respect anybody whose faith tells them that it's not something that they would do, that they support.

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But if we believe in freedom, then we should at least agree that such a deeply personal decision should be made by the woman whose body is involved, not by politicians.

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And it's been fascinating to watch Donald Trump just, ah, try to tie himself into a pretzel on this issue, because he sees that what his party has been doing is unpopular. And so when he ran for president the first time, he said he would support punishing women who got an abortion. Punishing women.

Then a couple weeks ago, he tells women he'll be their, quote, protector.

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I will tell you how he protected you, quote, unquote. He handpicked three of the Supreme Court justices who overturned Roe versus Wade. He bragged about it. And now there are Trump abortion bans in 20 states, many of them with no exceptions for rape and incest. And he's out there saying, well, you know, everyone wanted it this way, really.

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Donald Trump may be confused, but let's be clear about what's at stake here. If you send Reuben Guyu to the Senate, he'll vote to restore the reproductive freedom that women had for nearly 50 years.

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And if Congress passes that bill, Kamala Harris will sign it into law, because they understand freedom is about being able to make the right choice for ourselves and our families.

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And here in Arizona, you don't even have to wait. Abortion is actually on the ballot right here. You have a chance to vote yes on prop 139 and put women, not politicians, back in control of their personal medical decisions.

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It's an example of how, at the end of the day, this election, it's not just about policies.

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It's not just about plans or concepts of a plan. It's about values. It's about who we are, how we treat each other, the example we want to set for our children and their children. Uh, it's about character.

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Some of you know that when I was growing up, I didn't have a father in the house, but I was lucky enough to have people around me, a stepfather for a time, my grandparents, teachers, coaches, and most of all, my mom, who taught me the difference between right and wrong, who showed me what it meant to have integrity and to be honest and to be responsible and to work hard and to treat other people the way I wanted them to treat me.

And I suspect most of you grew up the same way. And, you know, I wasn't perfect right off the bat. And sometimes I didn't live up to those values and I made mistakes and I tried to learn from them. And then as I got older, I continued to benefit from people who reinforced those values.

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And, uh, obviously, my wife Michelle was one of those people.

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She's still trying to make me a little bit better.

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But it wasn't just Michelle. It was also friends and coworkers and neighbors and even political opponents, people on the other side of the aisle. And I already mentioned it before being here in Tucson. I'm thinking about my friend John McKay.

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Now.

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I don't want to over romanticize our relationship. And, you know, John was conservative, to put it mildly. Ran against me in 2008, talked about me on the campaign trail. But you know what? He understood that some values transcend party.

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He believed in honest argument and hearing the views of other people. He didn't demonize his political opponents. You remember the time at the end of the campaign when a woman at one of his rallies said, Obama, you can't vote for that Arab. He's not even a citizen. And she started going on a rant and he said, ma'am, ma'am, hold on a second.

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I have a lot of disagreements with Senator Obama, but I served with him. He's a good man. He's an honorable man. He's a patriotic american. Shut it down.

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He knew that if we get in the habit, if we get in the habit of bending the truth to suit political expediency or party orthodoxy, our democracy can't work.

The man had character. People like Gabby Giffords and Mark Kelly have character.

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Your governor has character. Your mayor has character. That's what I think about these days. I think about this a lot because it's so different from what we see right now out of the republican nominee. And increasingly, the entire party, uh, has just decided it's okay.

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I mean, one of the most disturbing things about this election and Donald Trump's rise in politics is how we seem to have set aside the values that people like John McCain stood for, values we were taught, uh, uh, a few weeks ago, we had one of the deadliest hurricanes in American history, and President Biden and Vice President Harris were down in North Carolina meeting with local officials and comforting families.

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And meanwhile, Donald Trump and his running mate were making up stories, circulating stories about how the Biden administration was withholding aid and not giving it to republican areas and giving it to undocumented immigrants. Just making stuff up. And even Republicans on the ground said it was a bald faced lie and there were real consequences to this.

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The other day, a man was arrested for threatening FEMA workers, emergency relief workers, because he believed some of those lies that were being spread.

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This isn't harmless yet. People at their, uh, some workers have been forced to relocate because they're worried about their safety. People who were just trying to help.

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You're trying to exploit that folks, that they're most vulnerable.

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It is shameful.

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And because Donald, um, Trump feels like making stuff up, you've got hard working public servants who cannot do their jobs, and you've got desperate families being left to fend for

themselves. Some of them are not even applying for aid they're eligible for, because they believed that, well, there's no point, because I'm not going to get help.

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So my question is, when did that become. Okay, look, uh, just hold on a second. I really want to focus on this.

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No matter where you are on the issues, how could you go along with that?

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If your coworkers acted like that, they wouldn't be your coworkers for very long. If you had a family member who acted like that, just making stuff up, hurtful stuff, you might still love them. But you tell them you got a problem, and you certainly wouldn't have put him in charge of anything.

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And yet, when Donald Trump lies or cheats or bullies or shows utter disregard for our constitution, when he calls service members like John McCain losers because they died in battle or were captured, when he calls fellow citizens verminden or the enemy within, people make excuses for it. They think it's okay so long as their side wins.

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And I have to say, I've noticed this, especially with some men who think Trump's behavior, the bullying and the putting people down and acting all, you know, pretend tough guy, that somehow that's a sign of strength.

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I am here to tell you that is not what real strength is, never has been. Real strength is about working hard and carrying a heavy load without complaining. Real strength is about taking responsibility for your actions 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.

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That's what we should want for our daughters and our sons.

00:42:43

That's what I want to see in the president of the United States of America.

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And the good news is that you have a candidate, you have candidates to vote for in this election who demonstrate character, who know what real strength looks like, who will set a good example and will do the right thing and lead this country better than they found it. And that is the choice in this election.

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So if you are talking to friends and family and neighbors, and it's hard to have political conversations right now, sometimes families are getting divided. It's getting so intense, friendships have broken off because of it. It shouldn't be that way. But, uh, Reuben and I were talking to a remarkable group of men right before we came out, and we were talking about this, and somebody said, man, I'm just so tired of everybody being divided and mean and nasty.

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And I said, well, we don't have to be that way.

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We can make arguments while still saying, I love you and I'm going to listen to you. But you need to have those conversations, though. If somebody says, well, I'm thinking about voting for Trump because I remember the economy being pretty good. Remind them why it was good. If you say, well, I'm mad about higher prices, you say, well, what is exactly Donald Trump's plan for higher prices?

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Just ask him. And if they don't, you tell them he's got concepts of a plan and it don't make sense.

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If they're concerned about issues like immigration, ask them, well, what do you think he's going to do? Because we know what he did the first time didn't work. You can have that conversation. And if after you've gone through that and the folks who are unconvinced say, uh, yeah, I don't know, I still like them, then I think you have to then say, yeah, but what about character?

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What about values?

Because that matters. It's not just policies or on the ballot. Don't vote for somebody who does not respect you. Don't vote for somebody who makes fun of people because they're not like them. Don't prey on people who are weaker than you.

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It's about values. It's about character. So whether this election is making you feel excited or scared or hopeful or frustrated or anything in between, do not sit back and hope for the best. Get off your coach. And what?

00:46:14

Put down your vote. And do what? Vote for Kamala Harris as the next president of the United States. Vote for Tim Walls as the next vice president of the United States. Vote for Ruben Gallego and this whole incredible Arizona democratic ticket.

00:46:31

Tell your friends and family members and neighbors to do the same, because if enough, uh, of us make our voices heard, we will leave no doubt about the outcome of this election. We will leave no doubt about who we are and what America stands for. And together, we will keep building a country that is more fair and more just and more equal and more free.

00:47:02

That is our job. That's our responsibility.

00:47:05

Tucson, uh, let's go do it. Thank you. I love you. Bye.