TO: President Obama

FROM: Tran Phuoc Dang Khoa

SUBJECT: Advice for the President in the First Debate

To help you prepare for the First presidential debate with Governor Romney, this memo will provide you the useful advices that you can use in the debate. The memo also contains many interesting fact that will help defense your position and attack Governor Romney policy.

The First Presidential debate will be about domestic issues. The current economy performance and future plan around employment, taxes and Federal debt will be a large segment of the discussion. Apart from the economy, Medicare and education as well as the role of Federal government will also be big topics for your discussion. I will go through these topics one by one.

**Economy**

You have been the president for almost 4 years. People will be judging you based on the performance of the economy. It is getting better but not as good as many of the American expected 4 years ago. Therefore, Governor Romney can aggressively criticize your record. To defend your position, you have to provide a list of highlight achievements in the economy over the past 4 years. The facts of improving economies are:

* 31 consecutive months of jobs growth and 5.2 million new private sector jobs.
* Tax cut for working American, saving the typical middle-class family $3600 in taxes.[[1]](#footnote-1)

On employment issue, I recommend you to bring up the policy which raises the tax break for companies that ship jobs overseas. This policy will indirectly raises the tax of such company and implies a lower tax rate if they try to create job for the American. Additionally, the promise and investment in clean energy you made before also can result in 600,000 jobs by the end of the decade.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Governor Romney may also criticize your policy that added into the deficit. You can defend by stating the fact that amount of deficit you contributed into was much lower than Bush Policies and it was mainly for the Recovery Act which is essential to deal with the economic crisis. At the same time, you can also introduce your future plan of reducing the deficit of $4 trillion[[3]](#footnote-3) by reduce spending, savings from ending wars, closing corporate loopholes and tax increase for high income earners. As more details of the plan are given, your argument will be more convincing especially for logical thinkers. Nonetheless, you should careful as Governor Romney can use what you say against you. Therefore, you may want to avoid mentioning the saving of $590 Billion from healthcare[[4]](#footnote-4) in your reducing deficit plan as Governor Romney can interpret it as a “cut” which yield negative impression.

On the other hand, you should attack Governor Romney on his policy as well. He has refused to detail any plan for how he would reduce the deficit. In addition, he also intends to cut the taxes for the wealthy which will result in $5 trillion in tax cut[[5]](#footnote-5). This does not really make sense and is inconsistent with his plan of reducing the deficit. With his plan, Governor Romney may have the middle-class family paid more taxes to cover the tax cut for the wealthy that he introduces.

**Healthcare**

This is one of the main concerns of the American. Obamacare is your greatest plan in healthcare segment. You should once again reinforce what the benefits of Obamacare are and how it applies to the people, especially middle-class family such as free preventive services, increase of 3.1 million young Americans who have health insurance and especially the removal of lifetime cap on coverage[[6]](#footnote-6). Additionally, you should also bring up how you are going to improve the quality of medicare service, physician and nurse. Because you and Governor Romney have totally different viewpoint in this matter, while you introduce Billion dollars saving in medicare, he will definitely criticize on reducing in healthcare quality and coverage. As Governor Romney plans to go back to traditional healthcare, it will be easy for you to defend your position and criticize his policy if you can clearly explain the appealing benefits.

**Government regulation**

It is likely in the debate that the discussion about the viewpoint of yourself and Governor Romney on the role of the government. In this part, I recommend you to clearly state your stand on having some level of government intervention in every area, especially the economy, despite the free market model that the United States is following. Regulation is important to make sure nothing is out of control. The Dodd-Frank Act will be a good example of where government intervention is important to prevent economic crisis.

Last but not least, your presenting style is a very critical factor for success. You may know what you are saying but your appearance and your style will have a great effect on the audience’s impression. As the president, you should appear in front of the people confidently, tell the people this is your plan and you will make it a success. From the beginning, you should try to be engaged with both Governor Romney and moderator Jim Lehrer. Smiling is extremely important because it is the most effective way to show your confidence. You also need to be mindful about your gesture and eye contact. Whenever you answer a question, you should try to look at both Governor Romney and the moderator. Good answer is important but it should not be long. Your answer should be concise and fit into 2 minutes. Speaking too long will create a negative impression to the audience.

The closing statement will be the last important message you will deliver to audience and make a good final impression. Within 2 minutes, you should pull together the contrast between you and Governor Romney and point out clearly and concisely how you are a better choice. Your message content should be close to the people and what matters to them. For example, “I promise bring our medicare system to the next level and create more jobs and opportunity for the middle-class” or “The America does best when the middle class does best”.

To sum up, you should prepare for the topic of employment, taxes, health care and regulation as these are important topics that are most likely to be brought up in the debate. You should appear in front of the audience confidently, be engaged with both the moderator and Governor Romney and most importantly, show your quality of an inspirational leaders.

These are all of my advices based my own perception and experience. I will always be available to assist you further if necessary. I wish you all the best for your First Debate.

1. Obama Biden. Retrieved from [http://www.barackobama.com](http://www.barackobama.com/) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Obama Biden, Energy Plan. Retrieved from <http://www.barackobama.com/plans/energy-plans> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Obama Biden, Taxes and the Budget. Retrieved from [http://www.barackobama.com/taxes](http://www.barackobama.com/taxes?source=primary-nav) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Obama Biden, Health Care. Retrieved from [http://www.barackobama.com/health-care](http://www.barackobama.com/health-care?source=primary-nav) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Obama Biden, Taxes and the Budget. Retrieved from [http://www.barackobama.com/taxes](http://www.barackobama.com/taxes?source=primary-nav) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Obama Biden, Health Care. Retrieved from [http://www.barackobama.com/health-care](http://www.barackobama.com/health-care?source=primary-nav) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)