The Speaker led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:
I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE
The Speaker laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 28, 2021.

Hon. Nancy Pelosi,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR Madam Speaker: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 28, 2021, at 4:03 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 848.

Appointments:
Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.
Election Assistance Commission, Board of Advisors.
Congressional Award Board.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,
Cheryl L. Johnson,
Clerk.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
The Speaker, after consultation among the Speaker and majority and minority leaders, the Chair announces that, when the two Houses meet tonight in joint session to hear an address by the President of the United States, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those immediately to her left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed in the Hall of the House except for invited Members of Congress, other invitees and credentialed staff members. All invitees and staff are required to follow the COVID protocols stated by the Sergeant at Arms in consultation with the Office of the Attending Physician.

All seating for the joint session will be assigned by name, both on the floor of the House and in the House gallery. Members will be required to sit in their assigned seat and the Sergeant at Arms will assist Members in finding their seats.

All Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in still photography or audio or video recording in the Chamber. Taking unofficial photographs detracts from the dignity of the proceedings and presents security and privacy challenges for the House.

RECESS
The Speaker. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of Rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 8:35 p.m. for the purpose of receiving in joint session the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

Joint Session of Congress
Pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 30 to Receive a Message from the President

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 8 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Ms. Kathleen Joyce, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The Speaker. The joint session will come to order.
The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort the President of the United States into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLEAVEN);

The gentleman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES);

The gentleman from California (Mr. AGUILAR);

The gentlewoman from Delaware (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER);

The gentleman from California (Mr. McCARTHY);

The gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY);

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE);

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY);

The gentleman from Utah (Mr. OWENS); and

The gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEeks).

The Vice President. The President of the United States, President of the Senate, the Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber:

The Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER);

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from Michigan (Ms. STabenow);

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS);

The Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBuchar);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. McCONNELL);

The Senator from South Dakota (Mr. TRUDE);

The Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO);

The Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST);

The Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT); and

The Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT).

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Hersey Kyota, the Ambassador of the Republic of Palau.

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Chief Justice of the United States of the Supreme Court.

The Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him in front of the Speaker’s rostrum.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker’s rostrum.

At 9 o’clock and 4 minutes p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, the Honorable William J. Walker, announced the President of the United States.

The President of the United States, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk’s desk.

The SPEAKER. Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor to the Presidential to you the President of the United States.

The gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEeks). The President—no President has ever said those words from this podium; no President has ever said those words, and it is about—about the First Lady—I am her husband—the Second Gentleman, Mr. Chief Justice, Members of the United States Congress and the Cabinet, and distinguished guests, my fellow Americans.

While the setting tonight is familiar, this gathering is just a little bit different, a reminder of the extraordinary times we are in.

Throughout our history, Presidents have come to this Chamber to speak to Congress, to the Nation, and to the world to declare war, to celebrate peace, to announce new plans and possibilities.

Tonight, I come to talk about crisis and opportunity, about rebuilding our nation and reinvigorating our democracy, and winning the future for America.

I stand here tonight 1 day shy of the 100th day of my administration. 100 days since I took the oath of office, lifted my hand off our family Bible, and inherited the most powerful nation—well, we all did—well, I did—well, that was in crisis: the worst pandemic in a century, the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, the worst attack on our democracy since the Civil War.

Now, after just 100 days, I can report to the Nation: America is on the move again, turning peril into possibility, setback into strength.

We are not the same people we were at the start. We are not the same people we were just 100 days ago. Americans always get up.

And today, that is what we are doing: America is rising anew, choosing hope over fear, truth over lies, light over darkness.

After 100 days of rescue and renewal, America is ready for takeoff, in my view.

We are working again, dreaming again, discovering again, leading the world again. We are not who we were at the start of this administration.

We have shown each other and the world there is no quit in America; none.

One hundred days ago, America’s house was on fire. We had to act. And thanks to the extraordinary leadership of Speaker PELOSI and Majority Leader SCHUMER, and with the overwhelming support of the American people—Democrats, Independents, and Republicans—we did act.

Together, we passed the American Rescue Plan, one of the most consequential rescue packages in American history.

We are already seeing the results. After I promised we would get 100 million COVID–19 vaccine shots into people’s arms in 100 days, we will have provided over 220 million COVID shots in those 100 days; thanks to all the help of all of you.

We are marshaling—with your help, everyone’s help, we are marshaling every Federal resource. We have given vaccines to nearly 40,000 pharmacies half of all the adults in health centers, where the poorest of the poor can be reached. We are setting up community vaccination sites, deploying mobile units to get the hard-to-reach communities.

Today, 90 percent of Americans now live within 5 miles of a vaccination site. Everyone over the age of 16—everyone—is now eligible to get vaccinated right now, right away.

Go get vaccinated, America. Go and get the vaccination. They are available. You are eligible now.

When I was sworn in on January 20, less than 1 percent of the seniors in America were fully vaccinated against COVID–19. One hundred days later, 70 percent of seniors over 65 in America are protected—fully protected. Senior deaths from COVID–19 are down 80 percent since January—down 80 percent because of all of you. In America, over 100 days; thanks to all the help of all of you.

At a mass vaccination center in Glendale, Arizona, I asked the nurse: “What is it like?”

She looked at me and said every shot is like giving a “dose of hope,” was her phrase: “a dose of hope.”

A dose of hope for the educator in Florida, who has a child suffering from an autoimmune disease. She wrote to me that she was worried about bringing the virus home. She said she then got vaccinated at a large site in her car. She said she sat in her car when she got vaccinated and just cried—cried out of joy and cried out of relief. Parents are seeing the smiles on their kids’ faces, for those who are able to go back to school, because the teachers and school bus drivers and cafeteria workers have been vaccinated.

Grandparents are hugging their grandchildren instead of pressing hands against the window to say goodbye. It means everything. Those things mean everything.

There is still—all you know it—you know it better than any group of Americans—there is still more work to do to beat this virus. We can’t let our guard down. But, tonight, I can say because of you, the American people, our
We have to build back better. We have to do more than just build back. We have to compete more strenuously than we have.

Throughout our history—think about it—public investment and infrastructure have literally transformed America—our attitudes, as well as our occupations. The transcontinental railroad and the interstate highways united two oceans and brought a totally new age of progress to the United States of America. Universal public schools and college aid opened wide the doors of opportunity. Scientific breakthroughs around the world, from Texas storms, hacks, catastrophic failures, to wind turbines, bridges, highways; jobs building ports and airports, rail corridors, transit lines. It is clean water.

And, today, up to 10 million homes in America jobs and more than 400,000 schools and childcare centers have pipes with lead in them, including for drinking water—a clear and present danger to our children’s health.

The American Jobs Plan creates jobs connecting every American with high-speed internet, including 35 percent of rural America that still doesn’t have it. It is going to help our kids and our businesses succeed in the 21st century economy.

I am asking the Vice President to lead this advance, and I know it will get done.

It creates jobs by building a modern power grid. Our grids are vulnerable to storms, hacks, catastrophic failures, with tragic results, as we saw in Texas and elsewhere during the winter storms.

The American Jobs Plan will create jobs to lay thousands of miles of transmission lines needed to build a resilient and fully clean grid. We can do that.

Look, the American Jobs Plan will help millions of people get back to their jobs and back to their careers. Two million women have dropped out of the workforce during this pandemic, 2 million, and too often because they couldn’t get the care they needed to care for their child, or care for an elderly parent who needs help.

800,000 families are on a Medicare waiting list right now to get home care for their aging parent or loved one with a disability. If you think it is not important, check out in your own district, Democrat or Republican, Democrat or Republican voters. Their great concern, almost as much as the children, is taking care of an elderly loved one who can’t be left alone. Medicaid contemplated it, but this plan is going to help those families and create jobs for our caregivers with better wages and better benefits, continuing the cycle of growth.

For too long we have failed to use the most important word when it comes to meeting the climate crisis: Jobs. Jobs. Jobs. For me, when I think climate change, I think American Jobs Plan will put engineers and construction workers to work building more energy-efficient buildings and homes, electrical workers, IBEW members, installing 500,000 charging stations along our highways, so we can own the electric car market. Farmers; farmers planting cover crops so they can reduce the carbon dioxide in the air and get paid for doing it.

Look, think about it. There is simply no reason why the blades for wind turbines couldn’t be built in America instead of Beijing. No reason. None. No reason. So, folks, there is no reason why American workers can’t lead the world in the production of electric vehicles and batteries. I mean, there is no reason why we can’t have the capacity. We have the brightest, best-trained people in the world.

The American Jobs Plan is going to create millions of good-paying jobs, jobs Americans can raise a family on, that pay a living wage and send their kids to college, instead of defaulting on it. That is what it is.

Throughout our history—think about it—the research and development, the fundamental research, the intrapreneurs who create America to create American jobs. That is what it is. Independent experts estimate the American Jobs Plan will add millions of jobs and trillions of dollars in economic growth in the years to come. It is an 8-year program. These are good-paying jobs that can’t be outsourced. Nearly 90 percent of the infrastructure jobs created in the American Jobs Plan do not require a college degree. 75 percent don’t require an Associate’s degree. The American Jobs Plan is a blue-collar blueprint to build America. That is what it is.

And it recognizes something I have always said in this Chamber and the
other. Good guys and women are on Wall Street, but Wall Street didn’t build this country; the middle class built the country, and unions built the middle class. So that is why I am calling on Congress to pass the Protect the Right to Organize Act, the PRO Act, and make it to my desk so we can support the right to unionize.

And, by the way, while you are thinking about sending things to my desk, let’s raise the minimum wage to $15. No one, no one working 40 hours a week, who works 40 hours a week should live below the poverty line. We need to ensure greater equity and opportunity for women. And while we are doing this, let’s get the Paycheck Fairness Act to my desk as well. Equal pay.

And, finally, the American Jobs Plan will be the biggest increase in non-defense research and development on record, in more technological change, and some of you know more about this than I do. We will see more technological change in the next 10 years than we saw in the last 50. That is how rapidly artificial intelligence and so much more is changing. And we are falling behind the competition with the rest of the world.

Decades ago, we used to invest 2 percent of our gross domestic product in America, 2 percent of our gross domestic product in research and development. Today, Mr. Secretary, that is less than 1 percent. China and other countries are closing in fast.

We have to develop and dominate the products and technologies of the future: advanced batteries, biotechnology, computer chips, clean energy. The Secretary of Defense can tell you, and those of you who work on national security issues know, the Defense Department has an agency called DARPA. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the people who set up before I came here, and that has been a long time ago, to develop breakthroughs that enhance our national security. That is their only job, and it is a semi-separate agency. It is part of the Defense Department. It has led to everything from the discovery of the internet to GPS and so much more. It has enhanced our security.

The National Institutes of Health, the NIH, I believe, should create a semi-separate agency for health, and here is what it would do. It would have a singular purpose: To develop breakthroughs to prevent, detect, and treat diseases like Alzheimer’s, diabetes, and cancer.

I will still never forget when we passed the cancer proposal in the last year I was Vice President, almost $9 billion going to NIH. And if you excuse the point of personal privilege, I will never forget you standing, Mitch, and saying to name it after my deceased son.

It meant a lot. So many of us have deceased sons, daughters, and relatives who died of cancer. I think of no more worthy investment. I know of nothing that is more bipartisan. So let’s end cancer as we know it. It is within our power. It is within our power to do it.

Investments in jobs and infrastructure like the ones we are talking about have often had bipartisan support in the past. Vice President Harris and I met regularly in the Oval Office with Democrats and Republicans to discuss the need to go around the country and reach a group of Republican Senators who just put forward their own proposal. So let’s get to work.

I wanted to lay out before the Congress my plan before we got into deep discussions. I like to meet with those who have ideas that are different, that are better. I welcome those ideas, but the rest of the world is not waiting for us. I just want to be clear. From my perspective, doing nothing is not an option.

Look, we can’t be so busy competing with one another that we forget the competition that we have with the rest of the world to win the 21st century.

Secretary Blinken can tell you, I spent a lot of time with President Xi. I traveled over 17,000 miles with him. I spent over 24 hours in private discussions with him. When he called to congratulate me, I asked for our discussion. He is deadly earnest about becoming the most significant, consequential nation in the world. He and others, autocrats, think that democracy can’t compete in the 21st century with autocracies. He is deadly earnest about coming to compete in the 21st century. It made us the best-educated, best-prepared Nation in the world.

The first is access to good education. When this Nation made 12 years of public education universal in the last century, it made us the best-educated, best-prepared Nation in the world. I believe it is the overwhelming reason that propelled us to where we got in the 20th century, but the world has caught up, or catching up. They are not waiting.

I would say, parenthetically, if we were sitting down, if we have set a bipartisan agreement, the President said, okay, we are going to decide what we do in terms of the government providing for free education, I wonder whether we would think, as we did in the 20th century, that 12 years is enough in the 21st century. I don’t think so. I cannot. I cannot. I cannot think that 12 years is enough in the 21st century.

Twelve years is no longer enough today to compete with the rest of the world in the 21st century. That is why my American Families Plan guarantees an additional 4 years of public education for every person in America, starting as early as we can.

The great universities in this country have conducted studies over the last 10 years. They show that adding 2 years of universal, high-quality preschool for every 3-year-old and 4-year-old, no matter what background they come from, puts them in the position to be able to compete all the way to 12 years. It increases exponentially their prospect of graduating and going beyond graduation.

Research shows when a young child goes to school, not daycare, they are far more likely to graduate from high school and go to college and never go on welfare after high school. When you add 2 years of free community college on top of that, you begin to change the dynamic. We can do that.

And we will increase Pell grants and invest in historically Black colleges and universities, Tribal colleges, minority-serving institutions. The reason is, they don’t have the endowments, but their students are just as capable of learning about cybersecurity, just as capable of learning about the rest of the world.

All the things that provide those jobs of the future.

Jill is a community college professor who teaches today as First Lady. If I have heard it once, I have heard it a thousand times. She has long said that, Joe, any country that out-educates us is going to outcompete us. She will be deeply involved in leading this effort.

The second thing is, the American Families Plan will provide access to quality, affordable childcare. I am proposing legislation. We guarantee that low- and middle-income families will pay no more than 7 percent of their income for high-quality care for children up to the age of 5. The most hard-pressed working families won’t have to spend a dime.

Third, the American Families Plan will finally provide up to 12 weeks of paid leave and medical leave, family medical leave. We are one of the few industrial countries in the world. No one should have to choose between a job and a paycheck or taking care of themselves and their loved ones, or parent, or spouse, or child.

Fourth, the American Families Plan puts money directly into the pockets of millions of Americans. In March, we expanded a tax credit for every child in the family, up to $3,000 per child over 6 years of age, and $3,600 for children under 6 years of age. With two parents, two kids, that is $7,200 in the pockets to help take care of your family. That puts more than 65 million children, and help cut childcare poverty in half. We can afford it. So we did that in the last piece of legislation we passed, but let’s extend that childcare tax credit at least through the end of 2025.

The American Rescue Plan lowered healthcare premiums for 9 million Americans who buy their coverage under the Affordable Care Act. I know that is really popular on this side of the aisle, but let’s make that provision permanent so their premiums don’t go back up.

In addition to my American Families Plan, I am going to work with Congress.
this year to address other critical priorities for American families.

The Affordable Care Act has been a lifeline for millions of Americans, protecting people with preexisting conditions and protecting women’s health. And the pandemic has demonstrated how vital it is.

Let’s lower deductibles for working families on the Affordable Care Act, and let’s lower prescription drug costs. We know how to do this. The last President had that as his objective.

We know how outrageously expensive drugs are in America. In fact, we pay the highest prescription drug prices in the world right here in America. We pay nearly three times for the same drug as what other countries pay. We have to change that, and we can.

Let’s do what we have talked about for all the years I was down here in this body, in Congress. Let’s give Medicare the power to save hundreds of billions of dollars by negotiating lower prescription drug prices.

By the way, that won’t just help people on Medicare. It will lower prescription drug costs for everyone. And the money we save, which is billions of dollars, can go to strengthen the Affordable Care Act and Medicare coverage and benefits without costing taxpayers an additional penny.

It is within our power to do it. Let’s do it now. We have talked about it long enough. Democrats and Republicans. Let’s do it this year.

This is all about a simple premise: Healthcare should be a right, not a privilege, in America.

So, how do we pay for my Jobs and Family Plans? I have made it clear that we can do it without increasing deficits.

Let’s start with what I will not do. I will not impose any tax increases on people making less than $400,000 a year. It is time for corporate America and the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans to begin to pay their fair share—just pay their fair share.

Sometimes, I have arguments with my friends in the Democratic Party. I think you should be able to become a billionaire and a millionaire but pay your fair share. A recent study shows that 55 of the Nation’s biggest corporations paid zero Federal income tax last year. Those 55 corporations made in excess of $40 billion in profits.

These corporations also evade taxes through tax havens from Switzerland to Bermuda to the Cayman Islands, and they benefit from tax loopholes and deductions that allow for offshoring jobs and shifting profits overseas.

That is not right.

We are going to reform corporate taxes so they pay their fair share and help pay for the public investments their businesses will benefit from as well.

We are going to reward work, not just wealth. We take the top tax bracket for the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans, those making over $400,000 or more, back up to where it was when George W. Bush was President, when he started, 38.6 percent. That is where it was when George W. Bush was President.

We are going to get rid of the loopholes that allow Americans who make more than $1 million a year to pay a lower rate than the people who make just that but that we are here to stay and that we aren’t going to go it alone. We are going to do it by leading with our allies.

No one nation can deal with all the crises of our time alone—from terrorism to nuclear proliferation to mass migration, cybersecurity, climate change, and, as we are experiencing now, pandemics.

There is no wall high enough to keep any virus away. As our own vaccine supply grows to meet our needs—and we are meeting them—we will become an arsenal of vaccines for other countries, just as America was the arsenal of democracy in World War II and, as a consequence, influenced the world. The American will be able to be fully covered by the vaccines we have for COVID-19.

The climate crisis is not our flight alone, either. It is a global flight. The United States accounts for, as of all of the major economies of the world, from China and Russia to India and the European Union. I said I would do it in my first 100 days. I want to be very blunt about it: My intent was to make sure that the world could see that there was a consensus and that we are at an inflection point in history. The consensus is if we act, we can save the planet, and we can create millions of jobs and economic growth and opportunity to raise the standard of living for almost everyone around the world.

If you watched any of it—and you were all busy; I am sure you didn’t have much time—that is what virtually every nation said, even the ones that aren’t doing their fair share.

The investments I have proposed tonight also advance a foreign policy, in my view, that benefits the middle class. That means making sure every nation plays by the same rules in the global economy, including China.

In my discussion with President Xi, I told him we welcome the competition. We are not looking for conflict, but I made absolutely clear that we will defend America’s interests across the board. America will stand up to unfair trade practices that undercut American workers and American industries, like subsidies for state-owned enterprises and the theft of American technologies and intellectual property.

I also told President Xi that we will maintain a strong military presence in the Indo-Pacific just as we do with
NATO in Europe; not to start a conflict, but to prevent one. I told him what I have said to many world leaders, that America will not back away from our commitments—our commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms and to our alliances. I pointed out to him, no responsible American President can remain silent when basic human rights are being so blatantly violated. An American President has to represent the essence of what our country stands for. America is an idea, the most unique idea in history. We are created, all of us, equal. It is who we are. We cannot walk away from that principle and in fact, say we are dealing with the American idea.

With regard to Russia, I know it concerns some of you, but I made it very clear to President Putin that we are not going to seek escalation, but that our actions and consequences if they turn out to be true, and they turned out to be true. So I responded directly and proportionately to Russia’s interference in our elections and the cyber attacks on our government and our business. They did both of these things. I told them we would respond, and we have.

But we can also cooperate when it is in our mutual interests. We did it when we expanded START I treaty on nuclear arms, and we are working to do it on climate change. But he understands, we will respond.

On Iran and North Korea, nuclear programs that present serious threats to America’s security and the security of the world, we are going to be working closely with our allies to address the threats posed by both of these countries through diplomacy, as well as stern deterrence.

And American leadership means ending the forever war in Afghanistan. We have, without hyperbole, the greatest fighting force in the history of the world. I am the first President in 40 years who knows what it is like to have a son serving in a war zone. Today we have servicemembers serving in the same war zone as their parents did. We have servicemembers in Afghanistan who were not yet born on 9/11. The war in Afghanistan, as we remember the debates here, was never meant to be a multi-generational undertaking of nation-building.

We went to Afghanistan to get the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11. We said we would support President Karzai and the government of Afghanistan. We said we would do our best to ensure that the Afghans could defend themselves against terrorist attacks. We said we would do our best to help the Afghans develop a stable government. We said we would do our best to help the Afghans develop a stable government. We said we would do our best to help the Afghans develop a stable government. We said we would do our best to help the Afghans develop a stable government.

After 20 years of American valor and sacrifice, it is time to bring those troops home. Even as we do, we will maintain an over-the-horizon capability to suppress future threats to the homeland. But make no mistake, in 20 years, terrorism has metastasized. The threat has evolved way beyond Afghanistan.
purchase guns, and we need a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

Don’t tell me it can’t be done. We did it before, and it worked. Talk to most responsible gun owners and hunters, and they will tell you there is no possible justification for having 100 rounds in a weapon.

What do you think, deer are wearing kevlar vests?

They will tell you that there are too many people today who are able to buy a gun, but who shouldn’t be able to buy a gun.

These kinds of reasonable reforms have overwhelming support of the American people, including many gun owners.

The country supports reform, and Congress should act. This shouldn’t be a red or blue issue. And no amendment to the Constitution is absolute.

You can’t yell “fire” in a crowded theater from the very beginning, there were certain guns, weapons that could not be owned by Americans. Certain people could not own those weapons ever. We are not changing the Constitution. We are being reasonable.

I think this is not a Democratic or Republican issue. I think it is an American issue.

And here is what else we can do: Immigration has always been essential to America. Let’s end our exhausting war over immigration. For more than 30 years, politicians have talked about immigration reform, and we have done nothing about it. It is time to fix it.

On day one of my Presidency, I kept my commitment and sent a comprehensive immigration bill to the United States Congress. If you believe we need to secure the border, pass it, because it has a lot of money for high-tech border security. If you believe in a pathway to citizenship, pass it so over 11 million undocumented folks—the vast majority who are here overstaying visas—pass it. If you actually want to solve a problem, I have sent a bill to take a close look at it.

We also have to get at the root problem of why people are fleeing, particularly to our southern border, from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The violence. The corruption. The gangs. The political instability. Hunger. Hurricanes. Earthquakes. Natural disasters.

When I was Vice President, the President asked me to focus on providing the help needed to address the root causes of migration. It helped keep people in their own countries instead of being forced to leave.

The plan was working, but the last administration decided it was not worth it. I am restoring the program, and I asked Vice President HARRIS to lead our diplomatic effort to take care of this. I have absolute confidence she will get the job done.

If you don’t like my plan, let’s at least pass what we all agree on.

Congress needs to pass legislation this year to finally secure protection for Dreamers, the young people who have only known America as their home; and permanent protections for immigrants who are here on temporary protected status, who come from countries beset by man-made and natural-made violent and disasters; as well as a pathway to citizenship for farmworkers who put food on our tables.

Immigrants have done so much for America during this pandemic and throughout our history. The country supports immigration reform. Congress should act. Let’s argue over it. Let’s debate it. But let’s act.

And if we truly want to restore the soul of America, we need to protect the sacred right to vote.

More people voted in the last Presidential election than any time in American history—in the middle of the worst pandemic ever. That should be celebrated. Instead, it is being attacked.

Congress should pass H.R. 1 and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act and send it to my desk right away. The country supports it, and Congress should act now.

In conclusion, as we gather here tonight, the images of a violent mob assaulting this Capitol—desecrating our democracy—remain vivid in our minds. Lives were put at risk, many of your lives. Lives were lost. Extraordinary courage was summoned. The insurrection was an existential crisis—a test on whether our democracy could survive.

It did. But the struggle is far from over. The question of whether our democracy will long endure is both ancient and urgent. As old as our Republic. Still vital today.

Can our democracy deliver on its promise that all of us—created equal in the image of God—have a chance to lead lives of dignity, respect, and possibility?

Can our democracy deliver on the most promising of our people?

Can our democracy overcome the lies, anger, hate, and fears that have pulled us apart?

America’s adversaries—the autocrats of the world—are betting we cannot. And I promise you they are betting we can’t. They believe we are too full of anger and division of rage. They look at the images of the mob that assaulted the Capitol as proof that the Sun is setting on American democracy. They tell you we are broken. You know it. I know it. We have to prove them wrong. We have to prove democracy still works, that our government still works, and we can deliver for our people.

In our first 100 days together, we have acted to restore people’s faith in democracy to deliver.

We are vaccinating the Nation. We are creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs. We are delivering real results to people. They can see it and feel it in their own lives.

Opening doors of opportunity, guaranteeing fairness and justice, that is the essence of America. That is democracy in action.

Our Constitution opens with the words, as trite as it sounds, “We the people.”

It is time to remember that we are the people are the government. You and I. Not some force in a distant capital. Not some powerful force that we have to figure out how to control. It is us. It is “We the people.”

In another era when our democracy was tested, Franklin Roosevelt reminded us: In America; we do our part.

We all do our part. That is all I am asking. That we all do our part, all of us. If we do that, we will meet the central challenge of the age by proving that democracy is durable and strong.

The autocrats will not win the future. We will. America will. The future belongs to America.

I stand here tonight before you in a new and vital hour in the life of our democracy and our Nation. And I can say with absolute confidence: I have never been more confident or optimistic about America, not because I am President, but because of what is happening with the American people. If we have stared into the abyss of insurrection and autocracy, of pandemic and pain, and “We the people” did not flinch.

At the very moment our adversaries were certain we would pull apart and fail, we came together. We united. We fought and helped summon our strength and new resolve to position us to win the competition for the 21st century on our way to a Union more perfect, more prosperous, and more just as one people, one Nation, and one America.

Folks, as I told every world leader I have ever met with over the years, it has never, ever, ever been a good bet to bet against America, and it still isn’t.

We are the United States of America. There is not a single thing—nothing—beyond our capacity. We can do whatever we set our minds to if we do it together. So, let’s begin to get together.

God bless you all, and may God protect our troops.

Thank you for your patience.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 10 o’clock and 20 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President’s Cabinet;

The Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court;

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps;

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Consequently, at 10 o’clock and 21 minutes p.m., the joint session of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.
MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the message of the President be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered printed.

The motion was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ACULAH). Pursuant to section 11(b) of House Rule V and section 1 of House Resolution 188, the House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. on Friday, April 30, 2021.

Thereupon (at 10 o’clock and 21 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, April 30, 2021, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications are taken from the Speaker’s table and referred as follows:

EC-963. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting that, as a result of continued consequences of the opioid crisis, a renewal, effective April 8, 2021, that a public health emergency exists and has existed since October 26, 2017, nationwide, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 247(d); July 1, 1944, ch. 733, title III, Sec. 319(a) (as amended by Public Law 107–186, Sec. 144(a)); (116 Stat. 690); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-964. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the threat of foreign interference in United States elections that was declared in Executive Order 13848 of September 12, 2018, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1614(c); Public Law 94–412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1703(c); Public Law 95–223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-965. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to significant malicious cyber-enabled activities that were declared in Executive Order 13694 of April 1, 2015, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1614(c); Public Law 94–412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1703(c); Public Law 95–223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-966. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Libya that was declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 23, 2011, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1614(c); Public Law 94–412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95–223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-967. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to transnational criminal organizations that were declared in Executive Order 13581 of July 26, 2011, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1614(c); Public Law 94–412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95–223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-968. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Mali that was declared in Executive Order 13582 of July 26, 2019, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1614(c); Public Law 94–412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95–223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-969. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to the Taiwan Relations Act, agreements between the American Institute in Taiwan, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, and United States Agencys, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 3311(a); Public Law 96–8, Sec. 12(a); (93 Stat. 20); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-970. A letter from the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department’s FY 2020 No PEAR Act Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107–174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109–835, Sec. 604(h); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC-971. A letter from the Senior Adviser, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a notification of a nomination and designation in a foreign role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105–277, Sec. 151(b); (112 Stat. 2861–64); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC-972. A letter from the First Vice President and Vice Chairman, Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting the Bank’s FY 2020 No PEAR Act Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107–174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109–435, Sec. 604(h); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC-973. A letter from the Senior Vice President, Controller and Chief Accounting Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, transmitting the Bank’s 2020 management report and financial statements, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106(a); Public Law 97–258 (as amended by Public Law 101–576, Sec. 306(a)); (104 Stat. 2354); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC-974. A letter from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting the Board’s FY 2020 No PEAR Act Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107–174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109–435, Sec. 604(h)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC-975. A letter from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting the Commission’s 2020 No PEAR Act Report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107–174, 203(a) (as amended by Public Law 109–435, Sec. 604(h)); (120 Stat. 3242); to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

EC-976. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department’s final rule—Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes (Docket No.: FAA–2020–0459; Product Identifier 2020–NM–01036–A; Amendment 39–21385; AD 2021–02–02) (RIN: 2120–AA44) received April 20, 2021, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1); Public Law 104–121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EC-978. A copy of the President’s message to the Congress, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3621, printed.

EC-979. A copy of the President’s message to the Congress, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3621, printed.

EC-980. A copy of the President’s message to the Congress, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3621, printed.

EC-981. A copy of the President’s message to the Congress, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3621, printed.