

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Reception in Detroit, Michigan
September 14, 2022

The President. Hello, Michigan Democrats! And I hope some Republicans. Please have a seat if you have one. *[Laughter]*

Gov, thank you for that introduction. And—but more importantly, thanks for your partnership. If you take a look at the objectives you set out to meet and when I've set out to meet, they overlap. And you're doing one heck of a job, you and the Lieutenant Governor.

I figured—I finally figured out why the Lieutenant Governor is so good: I met his mom and dad. *[Laughter]*

Folks, this is not hyperbole: We need to do everything we can to reelect this team. You know, the fact is that, you know, we've got Debbie Dingell, who is my boss. *[Laughter]* Where is Debbie? She's here?

Audience member. There she is.

The President. Debbie. And so I just do whatever Debbie tells me, especially in Michigan. *[Laughter]*

But anyway, and you've got a great congressional delegation here. And you know—and they're fully—on the way out, on Air Force One, we talked about why this is so important for you guys to get reelected and how much it means.

But I tell you something else: It means more than just to Michigan. It means a great deal not just in the Midwest, but to the Nation. Because you have set out and you made a—you've been a commonsense leader, that you earned the support of the mainstream Republicans because you're a uniter, not a divider. And the Gov believes and delivers for the people in Michigan.

And so she made the biggest investment in K–12 in the State's history. And the fact that you guys—and by the way, I tried to do it in terms of the United—in terms of nationally to have schools start—pre-K start at age 3. We learned that if you send a kid to school to—not to daycare, but to school—as early as age 3, no matter what their background, they have a 56-percent chance—better chance of being—going all through 12 years of school and on to community college.

And community college is the best kept secret in America of what we can do. Matter of fact, the reason Jill is not here today is, she's teaching at a community college still.

And look, you turned a \$3 billion deficit into a \$7 billion surplus. You cut taxes. You cut taxes for small businesses. And more people are employed by small business than major corporations. And you're a champion of pre-K and childcare for working families. And you're also a key partner in everything from infrastructure to manufacturing.

And so, in less than 60 days is this election—but as Gretchen would say, "Who's counting?" You know, the stakes are crystal clear. The stakes are crystal clear.

The right to choose is on the ballot—*[inaudible]*—no, I mean in your State it is literally on the ballot. Literally on the ballot.

The Social Security you paid for is literally—there you go—*[laughter]*—the Social Security you paid for is literally on the ballot.

The safety of kids and gun violence—from gun violence is on the ballot. Our kids should be going to school learning how to read and write, not how to duck and cover.

You know, the survival of our planet from global warming is literally on the ballot. It's not hyperbole.

You know, if I came out here—any of us came out here 15 years ago and said these things, people would look at us like we're nuts, but we—the right to vote itself is on the ballot. It's on the ballot.

So, folks, I apologize for repeating myself because you've probably heard me, at least on the national television, say this before: I believe America is at an inflection point. This is not your father's Republican Party. This a different breed of cat. Really and truly.

There is an extreme set of Republicans running the Republican Party these days. And that includes Gretchen's opponent, from what I've read, who wants to take us backwards—full of anger and division and—and you know, but we can choose a different path. Democrats, Independents, mainstream Republicans—with unity, hope, and optimism, we can move. We have a record of big accomplishments. In the American Rescue Plan, for example, we created 10 million—10 million—new jobs, more than any President in the first 18 months of their administration.

That's the first major piece of legislation we passed to helped Gretchen and the mayors all across Michigan keep teachers, police, firefighters, and other first responders on the job.

Not a single Republican voted for it—the infrastructure law—which was a bipartisan effort. We had a group of Republican—a minority, but they still stepped up and made it happen, to literally allow us to rebuild America so we can once again lead in the remainder of the 21st century.

The CHIPS and Science Act will ensure the future is made in America and made here in Michigan. You know, we used to invest, in the United States, 2 percent of our GDP in research and development. It's now about seven- tenths of a percent we invest. The rest of the world is catching up. The rest of the world is catching up. And they're moving in a direction that they're going to pass us if we don't get moving.

And we beat the NRA. We're going to ban assault weapons. And I'm a gun owner. And I'm a gun owner.

I signed the PACT law into act, the most significant law helping veterans and their families deal with toxic exposure to those burn pits, which are the size of a football field and 8, 9, 10 feet deep. A lot of those folks came home with headaches and sickness, and it turns out, they have cancer. Many died, more than any other war, from cancer.

Look, the price of gas is down \$1.30 this summer. And in 10 States, it's now below—it's at \$2.96. We—I mean, we—so we're making some movement.

I signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act, one of the most significant laws in our history. The American people won, and the special interests lost. We're going to get lower prescription drug costs. We pay the highest price for drugs of any industrial nation in the world. We're going to lower health-care costs. We're going to lower energy costs.

We're going to make the single biggest investment in climate reduction and climate control ever—ever, in all of history—and bigger than any other country in the world: over \$316 billion.

We're going to—under my predecessor, there was a \$2 trillion tax cut that they didn't pay for, that went to the top 1 percent, massively increasing the Federal debt and mainly benefiting the wealthiest and biggest corporations.

Well, guess what? Fifty—with the help of your delegation—55 of the biggest corporations that made \$40 billion in profits in 2020 didn't pay a single penny in Federal income tax—now they're going to pay a minimum of 15 percent. But they should be paying more, but that's what they're going to pay.

This is a—and this year, the biggest companies and their lobbyists spent lots of money—lots of money to try to keep that from happening. But guess what? They lost and you won.

Now they're going to pay that minimum tax of 15 percent—just 15 percent. You know, and days of billion-dollar companies paying zero—zero taxes—Federal taxes is over. And guess what? Every single Republican voted against the Inflation Reduction Act. It took every single Democrat in the Senate—all 50, plus the Vice President—to get it passed.

And we're doing it all while we're bringing down the deficit. We reduced the deficit in the first year of Presidency. With the help of your delegation, we've reduced it by \$350 billion. And we're going to reduce it this year by nearly \$1.5 trillion. That's a fact.

They're going to tell you we're spending all this money—we're spending a lot of money to make America better. But guess what? The deficit is coming down while we're doing it, not going up.

And by the way, not a single American making under \$400,000 is going to pay a single, solitary penny in additional tax. I made that commitment, and we kept it.

And, folks, look, the Inflation Reduction Act, which we celebrated yesterday with about 5-, 6,000 people on the White House lawn, is going to reduce the deficit nearly another \$300 billion over the next 10 years. As I said, the Governor turned a \$3 billion deficit into a \$7 billion surplus. I'll continue to make the necessary investments this State needs.

Folks, every election is a choice. But as my dad used to say: "Joey, don't compare me to the Almighty. Compare me to the alternative." [*Laughter*] But, folks, no matter who she's running against, she should win.

And here's the deal. Guess what? On choice, Democrats want to codify *Roe*—not what you have—what you have on the ballot. Republicans want a national ban on abortion. In fact, Gretchen's opponent supports an extreme ban with no exceptions for rape or incest or the life of the mother. Gretchen supports the ballot initiative to put the right to reproductive freedom in your State constitution.

Nationally, we're turning my—we're turning my infrastructure with the—and the President's—the last President's "Infrastructure Week" from being a punchline to a real "Infrastructure Decade" that's going to happen on my watch for the next 10 years.

Gretchen's opponent calls the infrastructure law "fake," but Gretchen knows infrastructure is about jobs, about keeping commitments—like here in Michigan, fixing the damn roads, for example. Just go down the list. Gretchen is always on the side of the people—working people, the middle class. Her opponent is not.

And look, take a look at congressional Republicans. What's their platform? There's notable exceptions. Not all Republicans are MAGA Republicans.

They want to do every—undo everything we've done. The Republican leader in the House has already said—already said—McCarthy has said his number-one priority is that they want to take back the House, if they do, and repeal the Inflation Reduction Act. That's their number-one priority.

The guy in charge of electing Republicans to the United States Senate, Rick Scott of Florida, proposes a ban to require Congress—a plan, I should say—to require Congress to vote on the

future of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid every 5 years. Google it; you'll see what I'm—I'm not exaggerating. Every 5 years, he wants Congress to get to vote to change, cut, or entirely eliminate Social Security.

And I'm deadly earnest about this. It's not just Social Security. Senator Scott wants everything in the Federal budget every 5 years—everything—all discretionary. And you all paid for your Social Security. It includes veterans benefits, Pell grants, everything else.

And along comes Ron Johnson, the Senator from Wisconsin.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Well, guess what? He thinks 5 years is too long to wait to savage these programs. I mean, you've got to look this up, because until I physically read it and saw it, it was hard to believe they were really saying it.

He wants to put Social Security and Medicare on the chopping block every year. Let me remind you all: You pay for Social Security and Medicare. It's taken out of every one of your paychecks from the time you started working. This guy never gives up.

Well, guess what? We never give up either, and they're not about to do it.

Even a couple of years ago out here when I was campaigning, I would have never thought we would be facing a Republican Party with these kinds of views. I mean, think about it.

So let me close with this: We're at a very serious moment in our Nation's history. We remain in the battle for the soul of America in the literal sense.

Extreme Republicans don't just threaten our personal rights and economic security, they embrace political violence. Just look at January 6—what they're saying. They refuse to accept the will of the people. Look at them pushing the "big lie", continually.

They threaten our very democracy. I get criticized—I'm not going to take the time, but I got criticized for saying they're a threat to democracy. Well, a threat to democracy can almost be defined by saying: If you call for political violence or you defend it, and you don't allow for the legitimate transfer of power, that's when democracy is at risk.

To this day, they defend those who stormed the Capitol on January the 6th. Folks, you can't be pro-insurrection and pro-democracy.

You can't say you support law enforcement—[*applause*]. You can't say you support law enforcement and say the people who attacked—the people who attacked the Capitol on January 6 are patriots. A number of cops ended up dying.

That's why those who love this country—Democrats, Independents, mainstream Republicans—we've got to be stronger, more determined, more committed to saving American democracy than the extreme MAGA Republicans are to destroying American democracy. We have to organize, we have to mobilize, and we have to vote. Get out and vote.

Folks, we've got to remember who we are: We are the United States of America. There's not a damn thing in the world that we cannot do when we set our mind to it. Nothing, nothing, nothing. The United States of America. You couldn't have two better leaders in the State moving on that direction.

Folks, we've got to do it together. God bless you all. May God protect our troops. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:26 p.m. in the Portside Ballroom at the Huntington Place Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gretchen E. Whitmer and Lt. Gov. Garlin

Gilchrist II of Michigan; Garlin Gilchrist and Yvonne Posey-Gilchrist, parents of Lt. Gov. Gilchrist; Rep. Deborah A. Dingell; Michigan Republican gubernatorial candidate Tudor Dixon; and former President Donald J. Trump. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Democratic National Committee reception in Detroit, MI.

Locations: Detroit, MI.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; Dingell, Deborah A.; Dixon, Tudor; Gilchrist, Garlin, I; Gilchrist, Garlin, II; Harris, Kamala D.; Johnson, Ronald H.; McCarthy, Kevin O.; Posey-Gilchrist, Yvonne; Scott, Richard L.; Trump, Donald J.; Whitmer, Gretchen B.

Subjects: Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Business and industry : Domestic investment, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Advanced manufacturing, promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Strengthening efforts; Business and industry : Small businesses, promotion efforts; Children and youth : Childcare, affordability and costs; Congress : Bipartisanship; Congress : House of Representatives :: Minority leader; Democratic Party : Democratic National Committee; Diseases : Cancer research, prevention, and treatment; District of Columbia: Civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; Economy, national : Inflation; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Education : Early childhood education programs; Education : Postsecondary education :: Community colleges; Education : Postsecondary education :: Pell grants; Elections : 2022 congressional elections; Elections : Voter participation; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Energy : Gasoline, oil, and natural gas costs; Environment : Climate change; Health and medical care : Abortion; Health and medical care : Affordability and costs; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Health and medical care : Prescription drugs, affordability and costs; Infrastructure, national improvement efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Gun control; Law enforcement and crime : Gun violence, prevention efforts; Law enforcement and crime : Sexual assault and harassment; Michigan : Governor; Michigan : Lieutenant Governor; Michigan : President's visit; Republican Party : National Republican Senatorial Committee; Science and technology : Research and development; Social Security and retirement : Social Security program; Taxation : Corporate tax rates; Taxation : Tax Code, reform; Taxation : Tax relief; Veterans : Benefits; Veterans : Health and medical care; White House Office : Vice President.

DCPD Number: DCPD202200793.