

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks at the Congressional Picnic

July 19, 2023

The President. Hello, everybody!

Every time I hear "Hail to the Chief," I turn around and say, "Where is he?" [*Laughter*] I'm getting used to it, though.

Folks, thanks for being here. Welcome to your house. And you're the way—oh, you think I'm kidding? I know who—I know who owns this place.

[*At this point, a pigeon flew in front of the podium.*]

Thank you—that bird, right there. That—that pigeon. [*Laughter*]

Folks, first of all, let me begin by thanking all our families. I think we underestimate sometimes—hey, Tommy. How are you?

I think we underestimate sometimes how much pressure is put on the family—our kids, our grandkids, our spouses, our parents. And I want to thank you. And that's why this is really not for the Members of Congress; this is for all of their families. That's what this is all about. So thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you.

And, folks, look, I want to—a special welcome to Speaker Emeritus—and she's—she's going to be my Speaker her whole life, I think—my whole life. And I want to thank Nancy and her—and——

The First Lady. Oh, she's right there.

The President. Where——

The First Lady. There.

The President. There you are—well, she's hiding behind that big guy. You know what I mean? And her grandsons and—Leader Schumer and his wife and his daughter-in-law. And, by the way, he has a grandson. Now he—now that we know who—if we want to get anything done, we can go to his grandson. He's only 5 years old, and we can get it done.

And, folks, also, I want to thank Leader Jeffries. He's—the reason I like him so much—he's got a—he's got a backbone like a ramrod and he's got great integrity.

And Speaker McCarthy, who—I don't want to hurt his reputation, but I actually like him. [*Laughter*] And I'm sorry, I didn't want to hurt you. But all kidding aside, we've been able to work together, and I appreciate it very much.

And I don't know whether Dick Durbin is here. He was supposed to be coming down, as well Whip Clark. I'm not sure she's here as well. But any rate——

Audience member. Right here.

The President. There you are. Okay. We're all set then.

Look, folks, you know, Jill and I especially want to thank you and all the families for coming. I hope you have a good time. This is—nothing formal about this.

This is your house. This is the people's house. This is a night that—my favorite picture—I was—I'll end with this. My favorite picture that I—we have in this residence as well as home is when our boys were 7 and 8 years old at one of the congressional picnics. And they're standing

way down there, and they're both looking at the monument and the White House is in the background. It's my favorite picture of all time.

And I just want you to know: I hope you enjoy the night, and I hope you are able to spend some time with one another as well. You don't get a lot of opportunity to do that.

And it reminds me of the work that we have to do. You know, for all the disagreements we have, we've got to remember: At the end of the day, we're friends. That's how it's always been. We've got to be friends, good to each other. And I—no, I mean it. And I think we're getting there.

So I want to thank you all very much for coming. I'm not going to say anything more.

You want to say anything, Madam Vice President?

Vice President Kamala D. Harris. Thank you, all. Your role of leadership, the sacrifice that the families make really does make a difference in terms of the good work that we do together for the sake of our country.

So I thank you all for what you do every day.

The President. God bless America. Let's get going.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:16 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Nancy Pelosi; and Iris Weinshall, wife, and Elizabeth Weiland, daughter-in-law, of Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer. He also referred to his son R. Hunter Biden.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Congressional Picnic.

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Names: Biden, Jill T.; Biden, R. Hunter; Clark, Katherine M.; Durbin, Richard J.; Harris, Kamala D.; Jefferies, Hakeem S.; McCarthy, Kevin O.; Pelosi, Nancy; Schumer, Charles E.; Weiland, Elizabeth; Weinshall, Iris.

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