

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023*

**Remarks on Signing an Executive Order on Manufacturing Promotion Efforts in  
Auburn, Maine**

*July 28, 2023*

Kathie, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

And to the Governor and the congressional delegation, the mayors, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Governor Janet Mills, you're doing a great job for the people of Maine.

And my good friend and great partner and a tireless fighter for good jobs, Senator Angus King is—including it right here in Auburn Manufacturing.

Representative Cherrel [Chellie; White House correction] Pingree, a champion of farmers and workers, the environment, and a great friend.

And Representative Jared Golden, whose greatest claim to fame is the beautiful wife and little daughter I just met. *[Laughter]* An independent voice for the people of Maine, you serve the district just like you served your country as a marine, with integrity, honor, and fearlessness. Thank you.

And by the way—*[applause]*. By the way, he also fought hard for delivering funding on several airports in his district. I wonder how he got that money. *[Laughter]* You do—you're doing a great job, pal.

And thanks to all the State legislation and local officials here today. And I know you've been hit hard by flooding. And FEMA Administrator Criswell has been working closely with you on—in terms of the ground teams that we have—to get what you need. And we're not going away until everything is back. It's Build Back Better, not just build back to where it was, but better, because the environment has changed an awful lot.

I'm here to talk to you about what we're doing to bring manufacturing back to America, about our progress in building an economy from the middle out and the bottom up, not the top down.

Yesterday we learned the economy grew faster than expected last quarter. And this morning we saw data showing that last month the annual rate of inflation continued to decline. So inflation is now at its lowest point in 2 years.

And wages are up after being adjusted for inflation.

When I came to office, I was determined—determined—to end the trickle-down economy—excuse me, this little stand is out.

*[At this point, the President attempted to move the podium riser out of the way with his foot.]*

But I'll make sure I don't trip over it. Maybe if I stand on it, I'll make myself 3 inches taller. *[Laughter]*

I came to office determined—determined—to move from a trickle-down economics that everyone from the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal and the—has called Bidenomics. But the plan is working: building from the bottom up and the middle out.

Folks, you know, all that trickle-down stuff—when the wealthy do very well, we all do well—well, my dad was an honorable man. My dad worked like the devil. A real gentleman. But

not a whole lot ever trickled down on our kitchen table if you're middle class folks. I didn't get much.

According to Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, it's leading to a boom in manufacturing, what we're doing. We've created over 13 million new jobs, more than before the pandemic. Nearly 28,700 here in Maine. Eight hundred thousand new manufacturing jobs nationwide. We've attracted almost a half a billion dollars—half a trillion dollars in outside private investment to grow the economy, because they know it's available now.

That's more jobs in 2 years than have created by any President in a 4-year term.

Unemployment in America has been below 4 percent for the longest stretch in over 50 years. And it's not just that we've recovered all the jobs we lost during the pandemic. It's that we now have more jobs than we did before the pandemic.

And because unemployment has been so low for so long, workers that have been left behind for decades aren't just finding jobs—more jobs, they're finding better jobs with higher pay. And no wonder: Job satisfaction, according to all the measures, is at a 36-year high.

The share of working-age Americans in the workforce is as high as it's been in 20 years, including during every single day my predecessor was President. Remember we had—they were going to have that "Infrastructure Week"? Anyway, long story. *[Laughter]*

People are coming off the sidelines. Unemployment is down, but so is inflation. Remember, the experts told me, in total, all—but to get inflation under control—and I love this as a middle class guy—we had to lower wages and had to have higher unemployment—only way to get inflation down. Well, maybe if we get the excess profits of corporate America down, we lower it.

But I've never thought the problem was too many people or that working people were making too much money. We now know a big part of the reason for inflation was the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, broken supply chains, and excess profits, all hitting pocketbooks hard while paddling—while padding corporate profits.

By the way, I'm not against corporations. I come from the corporate capital of the world: Delaware. No, seriously. More corporations are incorporated in my State than every other State in the Union combined. But they should pay their fair share.

When the pandemic hit, all of a sudden, we couldn't get those little computer chips, about the size of the tip of my little finger. Well, guess what? You need about 300 of them to build an automobile. Guess what? And I can go on and on and on. We had tracked it—we had tracked it—over \$300 billion and people coming to America to build those factories—those factories now here in America.

I decided we're never going to be in a position we don't—we're not at the beginning of the supply chain—a phrase I don't think any of us really heard until 3 years ago.

So we went to work getting our economy back on track fixing those supply chains. We've made a lot of progress.

Now one reason we have inflation fall by two-thirds without losing jobs is that we're seeing corporate profits start to fall as well. We have more to do, but I like what I said: Inflation is now at the lowest point it's been in over 2 years.

In fact, we have the lowest rate of inflation among the world's major economies. Every major economy in the world, our inflation rate is lower. We're growing faster. We're economically more advanced than every other major country in the world. It's down from 9 percent to 3 percent, and it's going to continue to go down.

While there is more work ahead, earlier this week, the Washington Post suggested Republicans may have to find something else to criticize me for—[laughter]—now that inflation is coming down. Maybe they'll decide to impeach me because it's coming down. I don't know. I love that one. Well, anyway, that's another story. [Laughter]

At the same time, pay for low-wage workers has grown at the fastest pace in over two decades, and wages are growing faster than inflation. That means an awful lot to working people where I come from; they have more money in their pockets than they did before.

My dad used to say, "At the end of the month, the question is: Do you just have a little—after you pay all your bills, do you have just a little breathing room—a little breathing room, a little left over?" Folks, that's Bidenomics. It's about growing the economy and strengthening the middle class, making things in America again.

Under trickle-down economics, it didn't matter where companies made things, as long as it helped their bottom line, even if that meant jobs and supply chains moved overseas.

What did most of these guys do? They decided to send the jobs overseas where the labor was cheaper and bring the product made back to the United States more expensive. Entire towns and communities got hollowed out not just here in Maine, but all across America. This is not just for Maine, this is all of America. Small towns and medium-sized towns all across America factories got shut down.

All over the country, parents saying to their children: "Honey, I'm sorry. I lost my job. We can't live here anymore."

You saw it here in Maine. Let me remind you of a few examples: Auburn and Lewiston, right next door, used to be home to some of the country's largest textile mills. Bates Manufacturing was the largest employer in Maine with thousands of employees supplying the country with high-quality cloth and quilts.

Bates Manufacturing survived the Civil War, the Great Depression, and two World Wars. But in the 1990s, American textile production moved overseas, and Bates closed shop. And by the way, my State used to be a gigantic producer of textile, the DuPont Company.

The same thing happened with Maine's iconic paper industry—the same thing happened. The industry lost 8,000 jobs over the past two decades as paper mills shut their doors.

Take the Verso mill in Bucks—excuse me, Bucksport. Founded in 1829 [1929; White House correction]. Provided generations of good jobs and up to 40 percent—47 percent of the town's tax revenue. A decade ago, it closed down, devastating the town, like so many thousands of towns all across America.

Between 1990 and 2010, Maine lost nearly 45,000 manufacturing jobs. And like we saw across the country, once-thriving cities and towns became shadows of what they used to be. And when these towns were hollowed out, something else was lost as well. And I come from Northeast Pennsylvania; I know about shutting down towns. Pride—people lost their pride.

Folks, this is what trickle-down economics looks like. But now we're turning things around. Since I took office, we've attracted over half a trillion dollars in private investment in manufacturing in America—industries of the future. We're seeing a factory boom. Spending on construction of manufacturing plants nearly doubled in the last 2 years, after growing only 2 percent under my predecessor in his 4-year term.

The last quarter factory construction contributed to—more to the gross domestic product than it did any time in the last 40 years. Instead of exporting American jobs, we're creating American jobs and exporting American products again. That's how we make money.

Like here at Auburn Manufacturing, now, you heard Kathie talk about starting this company 40 years ago making advanced textiles that are fire and heat resistant. They weathered decades of economic storms. Now, with the help of the American Rescue Plan, they're having their biggest export year ever. The company is growing, and their products are made in America. Made in America.

Not just here, but here we're seeing a resurgence in Maine's paper industry as well. Under the previous administration, a mill in Westbrook owned by Sappi North America laid off 75 workers. Under my administration, they got a million-dollar grant from the American Rescue Plan. They used it to invest in technology to improve pulp yields. Now they're expanding their business, creating hundreds of good-paying jobs.

In Bucksport, the old Verso site is now home of an aquafarming company that raises sustainable salmon. The town is beginning to boom again.

And that's just the beginning. We're focused on growing the rural economy in Maine as well and all across the country. For example, under my administration, Maine has received millions of dollars to strengthen and expand access to small and mid-sized meat and poultry processing. Up to now, you had to go hundreds of miles, and you only had a few processors, and they gave you what they thought was necessary, not what your product was worth.

Having these facilities close by means farmers have a better shot at getting a fair price for their product. When those farmers do well, when the wealth they generate stays in Maine, when their children can stay in Maine and continue to farm, it builds a strong rural economy.

Building an economy from the bottom up and the middle out means small and mid-sized farmers, foresters, fishermen have a chance to succeed right here where they're from and don't want to leave.

That's why we're providing funding to encourage companies to use resources harvested in Maine for new and innovative products. And we're creating new markets for those products, like mass timber for the use in tall buildings or plant-based packaging materials or sustainable aviation fuels. That's where it's going to come from, by the way. Mark my words, the next 20 years, farmers are going to be providing 95 percent of all the sustainable airline fuel. From product.

We're helping fund renovations at the library of Bar Harbor or Portland Museum of Art using locally sourced mass timber.

We have a grant to a company called Tanbark in Saco to replace plastic packaging with packaging using wood fiber. And so your kids turn on—how many of your kids come to you and say, "Mommy, I didn't realize all that plastic was killing all those things in the ocean." Those ads you see. But because of what's going to happen here, that's not going to happen.

Bio-based products are the future of Maine, and Maine is leading the way.

Just last week, the National Climate Adviser was in Madison for the opening of TimberHP, a brandnew company that's turned a shuttered paper mill into America's first wood fiber insulation factory produced with 100-percent clean energy, helping families save on energy bills and creating 140 new jobs.

And I want to congratulate Governor Mills, who just yesterday signed legislation making Maine a leader in offshore wind industry. It's a big deal. It is a big, big deal. Committing—and the Federal Government is doing the same—committing to 3 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2040 and which will create good-paying union jobs.

I remember the Business Roundtable—the big businessmen, they said, "Why are you known as the most pro-labor Senator in the history of America?" A simple reason: It makes sure the product is better and ultimately cheaper.

You know, everybody thinks that to become a—for example, an electrician. You show up and say, "I want to be an electrician." You've got 5 years—5 years you've got to work before you can get a full salary and have the right to be able to go out there as an electrician. It's like going back to college. Five years. They're the best in the world.

This kind of resurgence is part of my plan to invest in America so our future, again, is made in America.

Most people don't know there has been a law on the books since 1933, which means it's totally consistent with all trade laws that exist in the world. And that law says that when the Federal Government spends your tax dollars, it must be spent on American workers and products made in America.

So, for example, when the Congress comes along and says, we want to build new decks for aircraft carriers—for example, over the last so many years, I get \$60 billion they vote to do things federally. Well, guess what? They ain't doing any of it unless they build it in America, by American workers. Because for the last 50 years, the vast majority of Democrats and Republicans did not insist on that—did not—and that's what I mean by "Made in America."

Well, guess what? I'm insisting on it. That's why it's here. And by the way, it's good for everybody. It's not just good for labor, it's good for everybody.

And today I'm going to sign an Executive order called "Invent It Here, and Make It Here." It's—here's how it works: Federal agencies research and fund development to encourage innovation. This Executive order dictates that those agencies have to prioritize domestic manufacturing when it comes time to bring those inventions to market. They can't go abroad. They have to look here—who can do it here. That's the law, and we're just beginning to enforce it.

Folks, we're not just making things in America. We're also buying American.

I announced new standards to require construction materials used in Federal infrastructure projects to be made in America: lumber, glass, drywall, fiber optic cables, and more. Every Federal infrastructure project will be built by American workers using American products, creating American jobs.

Folks, you know, these international agencies rate all governments about their capacities. We used to be rated—have the number-one best infrastructure in the world. Now we're number 13. China used to be beyond 13, and now they're number 2 or 3. What's going on here?

How can you have the most—the best economy in the world and the 13th-ranked infrastructure in the world?

Through the bipartisan infrastructure law—some of my Republicans crossed over and supported this—we've already announced over 37,000 projects in 4,500 communities. Remember we used to have "Infrastructure Week" in the last guy's administration? Now we've got Infrastructure Decade. Because guess what? Guess what? It's 1 trillion 300 billion dollars invested in America over the next 10 years, \$1.5 billion invested right here in Maine so far.

For example, we're cleaning up legacy pollution: Callahan Mine in the Superfund site in Brooksville. Maine is receiving \$164 million to replace lead service lines and improve drinking water and address contaminants like PFAS. We're removing every single lead pipe in America. They're a risk to everyone's health, especially to our children, with—400,000 school fountains have that lead in them.

Right now over 42,000 homes and small businesses across Maine don't have access to high-speed internet. We're investing \$500 million in Maine to connect every single corner of the State, especially in rural communities, to the internet—affordable internet. And we're making it affordable, saving nearly 100,000 families \$30 a month for their internet bills.

We're making investments like this all across the country. You can see exactly where to go, if you go to—online to go to [invest.com](https://invest.com)—invest.com. Punch in wherever neighborhood you want to find out about, and you'll see what we're doing.

These investments are going to create thousands of jobs across the country. We're making sure workers have the skills they need to do these jobs

In Maine, the AFL–CIO is—with funding from the American Rescue Plan—just graduated its first cohort of its Union Construction Academy to bring unprecedented workers, like women and people of color, into the trades.

The IBEW—[*applause*.] The IBEW, also with funding from the American Rescue Plan, runs a pre-apprenticeship program for high school students, and there is a training center in Newport.

Folks, this matters.

My "Investing in America" agenda also has another transformative impact. Every single Republican in the Congress voted against the Inflation Reduction Act. That's the one that had a total of \$659 billion in it for infrastructure—I mean for the environment over the next several years.

You see, they don't think we have an environmental crisis. All this stuff happening is just temporary. They don't wonder about it anymore. You know, when the ocean off the State of Delaware—or off of Florida is 102 degrees, something is going on.

The vast majority of them voted against the infrastructure law as well. But that hasn't stopped them from claiming credit for it now that billions of dollars and thousands of jobs are coming into their States. Well, like I said at the State of the Union: I'll see them at the ground breaking. [*Laughter*]

Folks, the distinguished Senator from Alabama put out a release saying Alabama is so—I forget the exact number—is going to get 1 billion 600 million dollars for such and such. He voted against it. He voted against it. I could go on, but I won't. [*Laughter*]

But I made a commitment when I ran that I'd be President for everybody, whether they voted for me or against me. The vast—a majority of all this money is going into red States because they've been so badly hurt. A majority of it. I'm not picking winners and losers based on who they voted for. I'm picking winners and losers based on the need they have in their communities.

Folks, let me close with this. I'm not here to declare victory on the economy. We have more work to do. We have a plan for turning things around.

Bidenomics is just another way of saying restoring the American Dream. Forty years of trickle-down economics limited that dream to the very top.

But I believe every American willing to work should be able to get a job, no matter where they live—in the Heartland, small towns, the Northeast, big cities—to raise their kids on a good paycheck and keep their roots where they grew up.

My dad used to have a saying. My dad was a well-read man whose greatest regret was he never got to go to college, but a really decent, honorable man. And he used to—and I give you my word, this is what he'd say—and all my siblings remember and my friends. He'd say: "Joey, a

job is about a lot more than a paycheck. It's about your dignity. It's about respect. It's about being able to look your kid in the eye and say, 'Honey, it's going to be okay. It's going to be okay.'"

That's what it's all about. That's what it's about. That's the American Dream. If you're willing to work hard, you ought to be able to make it. It shouldn't be limited to just a few people. It's rooted in what's always worked best in this country: investing in America, investing in Americans. Because when we invest in our people and we strengthen the middle class, we see stronger economic growth, and everybody benefits.

You know, we're making significant progress, and I want you to know we've done all this without raising taxes. And guess what? I commit that we'll never raise Federal tax on anybody making less than \$400,000. Period.

Unlike—and you hear some of my friends on the other side, the MAGA Republicans, saying Big Spendin' Biden is raising the deficit. Guess what? In the 4 years that the last guy was President, he raised the national debt by almost 40 percent. You know that \$2 trillion tax cut? Raise your hand if you got any of it. Two trillion, not a penny paid for.

But guess what? In 2 years, I've cut the national debt by 1 trillion 700 billion dollars while doing all of this—while doing all this—[*applause*]  
—1 trillion 700 billion dollars.

Because when ordinary people are able to make a living, they buy things, they go out and do things, they're able to live. And it raises funding. It doesn't cut it. It doesn't cut—the idea that we're going to have a bigger debt.

For the longest time, I've been told to give up on American manufacturing. And some of you have been involved in American manufacturing—how many times have you been told, "Well, we used to be the largest manufacturer in the world, but not anymore. We can't compete." Hell we can't compete.

There is nobody in the world we can't beat, let alone compete. I've never believed it. And we have the tools to change it. America used to lead the world in manufacturing, and we're doing it again.

Folks, I'm honestly—I can honestly say I've never been more optimistic about America's future. Now, I know I look like I've only been around a couple of days, but—[*laughter*]  
—I've been around a long time.

I've said—and I've said to—and all my colleagues, and I think my former colleague in the Senate used to hear me say it: It's never, ever been a good bet to bet against the American people. Never, never, never. And it's a real bad bet to bet against us now.

So, folks, I really mean this: We just have to remember who in God's name we are. We are the United States of America. And there has never been a single thing—a single thing—we've set our mind to in war or peace, when we've done it together, we haven't accomplished. Not one thing.

That's who we are. Let's not forget that. There is nothing beyond our capacity if we work together like you're doing here in Maine.

So God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Thank you very much.

[*The President left the podium and greeted members of the audience. He then returned to the signing desk and continued his remarks as follows.*]

And the bad news is, I'm coming back to shake your hand, but I forgot I didn't sign the order. [*Laughter*] All that talk and no action.

All right. I'm signing the Executive order. Federal research and development in support of domestic manufacturing in the United States, which means more jobs.

*[The President signed the Executive order titled "Federal Research and Development in Support of Domestic Manufacturing and United States Jobs."]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:44 p.m. at Auburn Manufacturing, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to Kathie M. Leonard, president and chief executive officer, Auburn Manufacturing, Inc., who introduced the President; Mayor Jason J. Levesque of Auburn; Mayor Carl L. Sheline of Lewiston, ME; Isobel Golden, wife, and Rosemary Golden, daughter, of Rep. Jared F. Golden; former President Donald J. Trump; National Climate Adviser Ali Zaidi; and Sen. Thomas H. Tuberville. He also referred to his sister Valerie Biden Owens and brothers James B. and Francis W. Biden.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Manufacturing promotion efforts, signing the Executive order in Auburn, ME.

*Locations:* Auburn, ME.

*Names:* Biden, Francis W.; Biden, James B.; Criswell, Deanne Bennett; Golden, Isobel; Golden, Jared F.; Golden, Rosemary; King, Angus S., Sr.; Leonard, Kathie M.; Levesque, Jason J.; Mills, Janet T.; Owens, Valerie Biden; Pingree, Chellie M.; Sheline, Carl L.; Trump, Donald J.; Tuberville, Thomas H.; Zaidi, Ali.

*Subjects:* Bipartisanship; Broadband and wireless technologies; Climate change; COVID–19 pandemic; Economic improvement; Economic stimulus legislation; Federal deficit and debt; Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); Global supply chain disruptions, efforts to address; Household income and wages; Inflation; Infrastructure improvements; Job creation and growth; Labor movement and organized labor; Lead service lines, replacement efforts; Maine, Auburn Manufacturing, Inc.; Maine, flooding damage and recovery efforts; Maine, Governor; Maine, President's visit; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Meat-processing industry, competition and pricing; National Climate Adviser; PFAS and chemical pollutants, regulation efforts; Research and development; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Solar and wind energy, promotion efforts; Tax Code reform; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Unemployment rate.

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