

Remarks at a Campaign Reception in McLean, Virginia
September 13, 2023

The President. I want to make it clear the real reason I'm here. I've been told by every one of the elected officials that are on the Federal level there's one thing: The first election, as Senator Warner said, of '24 is your election here in Virginia. And I want you to know I'm going to do everything I can to raise as much money for you guys—we've already done a fair amount—making sure that you guys win. [*Inaudible*]

And if I didn't say that, Terry McAuliffe would drive me out of town. [*Laughter*]

Well, David and Sophie, thank you very much. And Governor McAuliffe, I'm sorry we're going to miss Dorothy tonight. The only reason I really came. [*Laughter*] No, I'm kidding. It's great to see you, pal. You've been a great help to me, and I—I really appreciate your friendship.

And Becky Pringle—[*inaudible*—Becky, I'm a—kind of a member in the sense of—[*laughter*]. [*Inaudible*—my wife teaches full time. If I wasn't—if I wasn't pro-NEA, I'd be sleeping alone. [*Laughter*] No, you think I—you know I'm not kidding. [*Laughter*] You know I'm not kidding.

I keep having to remind Jill, well, I was even there before she was a member. And—but look, Don and Gov and the Carpenters, you know, you guys and Lee Saunders and Mary Kay Henry of the SEIU, look, you guys—to use the expression in Claymont, Delaware—Claymont, Delaware, when we moved from Scranton—when everything died in Scranton, we moved down to Claymont, Delaware, a little steel town that was right on the Pennsylvania border.

And there was an expression we had in Claymont: You guys are the ones that brung me to the dance, man. And I appreciate it very, very much. And Members of—Tim and Mark and—and Don, you know—[*inaudible*—reason Don's wife is not here is Megan is with Jill right now at the White House.

And also, to all of you, you know, to state the obvious—this is not a joke—I wouldn't be here without you. I mean, you—the reason I'm standing here is because you guys, and I really mean it.

I—we've got a lot to do. We've got to finish the job. I think things are—I'm not going to keep you, because you're all standing here. But I'm looking forward to this race because we've got a story to tell, a record to run on, and a nation to save. I don't think that's hyperbole.

I don't think that's—for example, we're reestablishing American leadership—[*inaudible*—I just returned from a 5-day trip around the world. Not a joke. And went from India, the G-20 summit, straight—strengthening American leadership, and it's amazing. And I know some of you who do a lot of work in foreign policy and overseas, the rest of the world is looking to us. I mean, they genuinely are looking to the United States of America.

You know, Madeleine Albright was right. She—we are the essential nation—not me, Joe Biden; America. And look, you know—and then we announced a groundbreaking rail deal that's going to link India, the Middle East, and Europe, all the way across—and going to have pipelines under the Mediterranean.

We're—we're connecting the world in the way we're bringing allies together. And look, you know, with both economic and political consequences. It's not just economic consequences going but the political consequences.

And we made a historic trip to Vietnam. And you know, we strengthened our security in the Indian Ocean and that area, and everybody knows it.

I mean, I've been doing this a long time. I know I look like I'm 40, but I've been doing—*[laughter]*—I've been doing this for a hell of a long time. And I really mean it. The one thing I've spent—as John can tell you, I've spent most of my career in foreign policy and judiciary. They were the places when I was a Senator.

And as Vice President with—with Barack, I did an awful lot of the foreign policy, and then I taught it at Penn. It's what I've been—and I've never seen—I've never been as optimistic about the world as I am today. And I really mean it. I really, genuinely mean it.

You know, they talk about—when I was deciding whether or not to run in 2020, I was in the process of beginning to write a book, and it was called—because we're at—I think the world is at an inflection point. I really, genuinely mean this. I had a professor—a physics professor who used to say, "Joe, an inflection point is that point where you're going down the highway at 60 miles an hour, and you make a hard turn 7, 8, 10 degrees in one direction, and you never get back on the path you were on."

The world is changing. It's changing significantly, regardless of who the leadership in this country or any other country is. Think about the changes that are taking place. Ten years—what we do in the last couple of years, in the next 4 or 5 years, is going to determine what the world looks like for the next four or five decades. And that's not hyperbole.

The postwar era has ended. And so we have an opportunity to put together a world that's a hell of a lot safer and more secure for the United States. And don't get over—overly concerned about China. China has got a lot of problems, a whole hell of a lot of problems.

And so, look, folks, you know, I think if you take a look at what's going on—I'm going to be in Maryland tomorrow, by the way. And by the way, you know, NATO is still together and very close.

My team put together an amalgam of how many hours I've spent with the NATO leaders of G-7. It's over 180 hours so far, either—everything from in-person meetings to being on Zoom with them. And they know that we are the organizational structure for Europe.

And there's never been a—as Dr. Kissinger said—well, I won't go into what he said.
[Laughter]

But anyway, I'm going on too long. But you know, I'm going to be in Maryland tomorrow, and I'm going to lay out what the—this press started off not as a compliment—calling my economic policy "Bidenomics." But guess what? It's working. It's working.

And the MAGA Republicans, the MAGA—MAGA-nomics is the alternative they have.
[Laughter] And think about it. I'm not joking. What have they offered? What economically or politically they—have they offered? It's all about tearing things down.

We're building an economy this time around, which I've always—we—you and I talked about this when you were running, Terry, and that was from the middle out and the bottom up, not from the top down.

When the middle does well—when the middle class does well, everybody does well. The wealthy do very well and the poor have a way up.

No, I really mean it. And I think it's a big deal. Look, we've created 13.5 million new jobs since I took office—three—800,000 manufacturing jobs. The unemployment rate has been under 4 percent for the longest stretch in 50 years.

Job satisfaction is the highest it's been in 36 years. The downside is, gasoline prices are getting high again. And it's a big deal.

But look, today's report on inflation provides more evidence that core inflation—which the Fed looks at—core inflation is trending back down toward pre-pandemic levels. For the last 3 months, it's averaged 2.4 percent. I predict it will be under 2 percent—be around 2 percent, under 3 percent, before this administration is over. And the lowest point in almost 2 years—well below what it was a year ago, at 9 percent.

Folks, we have a lot more to do. But we have the lowest inflation rate, for all our problems, of any major economy in the world. Anyway.

And wages are growing faster than inflation—it's going to take time for people to catch up—but you wouldn't know it from reading the negative news. And the fast—we're the fastest growing recovery—we've had the fastest recovery from the pandemic of any major nation in the world.

Look, and we're living through one of the greatest job-creation periods in history. That's because we decided—and some of you were—have helped me a great deal, including the Members of Congress, in investing in America. Invest in America. It used to be the way to deal with this—and by the way, I'm not anticorporation. I come from the corporate capital of the world—[laughter]—Delaware. No, there's more corporations incorporated in Delaware than every other State in the Union combined. So I'm not anticorporation.

But guess what? The days of deciding the way to grow is send—go find the cheapest jobs in the world and bring back the product to the United States, they are over for the United States. They are over, because we're investing in America.

And we've seen over half a trillion dollars in private-sector investment—a half a trillion dollars in private-sector investment. Not just what the American—what the Government is investing, what the—what private sector is investing.

We're making things here in America with union labor—union labor.

Folks, and here's how we're doing it: We passed the American Rescue Plan, vaccinating—and when I say "we," all the Members in here of the House and Senate, they did it. And we passed it, and we vaccinated the Nation. We got the economy moving again.

We passed the bipartisan infrastructure law, and we've announced over 37,000 projects already. In Virginia alone, we've already announced \$215 billion—excuse me—215 projects in the State of Virginia and \$6.4 billion so far.

Seventy million—seventy million for a new gate—14—at Dulles. Seventy-two million dollars—seventy-two million dollars for the 14th Street Bridge connecting Arlington to DC. Four hundred thousand Virginia families are now getting high-speed internet because of this—affordable.

We're making Infrastructure Decade instead of—remember, we had "Infrastructure Week" for 4 years with this guy? [Laughter] Not a joke. I wish it were—had been a joke.

We passed the CHIPS and Science Act. We used to invest a higher percentage of our GDP in research and development than any nation in the world. We now rank number 18. We've moved it all. We're changing it with the CHIPS and Science Act.

We've invested—and we're helping bring \$230 billion in private investment in semiconductor manufacturing, and we invented it here in America. But guess what? We refined it. We went from producing 40 percent of these chips down to 10 percent, but it's coming back. It's coming back big time. As I said, over \$230 billion committed in private investment for new infrastructure facilities.

And one of the best things: They have these—they call "fabs"—meaning factories. They're about the size of football fields. The average salary is 120,000 bucks, and you don't need a college degree to have the job. I'm serious.

Folks, we passed the Inflation Reduction Act without a single solitary Republican vote. You know why? We've been taking on Big Pharma for a long time. You pay more for whatever prescription drug you have—I don't care what it is—you can buy it—if they're the same manufacturer, you can buy it cheaper in Montreal, in Paris, in London, in—anywhere in the world than you can here. Not a joke.

And guess what? We've been fighting Big Pharma a long time. Why is it that the Veterans Administration can negotiate drug prices? Well, guess what? We now have Medicare and Medicaid negotiating drug prices. Anybody in here—anybody in here who knows somebody who needs insulin for diabetes, guess what? It goes from about 400 bucks a month to \$35 a month. And by the way, they're still making a 300-percent profit.

The guy who invented the insulin didn't want to patent it because he wanted it available for everyone. Well, guess what? We're in a situation now where, if you have, you know—I was in—I was at a townhall in Virginia about 15 months ago. And a woman raised her hand and she said, "I have"—she said: "I have insurance. I have two young daughters. They both—they have—both have type 2 diabetes. I can't afford it. It's costing me \$1,400 a month. My insurance can't cover it."

Well, guess what? It's now costing her \$70 a month. *[Inaudible]*

So, folks, look, the fact is that, you know, this is—and we also—and in that legislation, there's a circumstance that in 2025, no matter what your total prescription bills are—drug bills are—you're never going to have to pay—if you have Medicare, you're never going to have to pay more than \$200—sorry, \$2,000 a year.

And by the way, some of these cancer drugs—we just did a major cancer initiative as—in the—in the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room. They are lifechanging. Some of these cancer drugs cost \$13-, \$14,000 per month. People can't make it. So, folks, this is lifechanging.

It includes the largest climate investment ever in the history of the world: \$369 billion.

And by the way, anybody who thinks we are—don't have a climate problem, come talk to me, will you? *[Laughter]* Convince me.

And by the way, with all this spending, I brought the deficit down \$1 trillion in 2 years. One trillion dollars.

And we did it by making folks begin to pay their—begin to pay their fair share.

You know, how many of you here think—no matter how much money you make, you think the tax system is fair? *[Laughter]* Okay? Well, look, we need to close loopholes in Big Oil that made \$200 billion and paid nothing last time out. They—I mean—anyway, I guess what I'm trying to say is that I'm proposing that—we used to have 720 billionaires in America before the—during the pandemic. It's now up to a thousand.

You know what the average Federal tax rate is? Eight percent, e-i-g-h-t. I don't want them to have to—I don't want to gouge anybody. I don't want people having to pay 60, 70 percent like if you talk—if you just paid the top rate, we would have—wipe out the entire debt. The entire—*[laughter]*—no, I'm serious.

And by the way, that little deal with Medicare—you know what? We've reduced the—we've reduced the cost to the taxpayer by over 1 trillion 600 billion dollars over time, because you're

not—because you're not paying—the Government is not shelling out your tax dollars to provide for the medical needs of people.

And look, I'm going to end on this. I'm sorry it went so long. But you know, there's so much more to do. You know, the prospect of—you know, to protect a woman's right to choose.

As long as I'm President—I respect people who have differing views on abortion. But I thought *Roe v. Wade* got it pretty right. It—[*inaudible*]*—three trimesters, and it all—and I'm trying to codify Roe v. Wade. Codify Roe v. Wade. I think we've got a shot at doing it.*

And let's ban assault weapons, for God's sake. Look, I own shotguns. But who the hell needs 100 rounds or 60 rounds or——

Audience member. Hear, hear!

The President. No, I'm serious. I was trying to get the first assault weapon ban passed, which I did back in Delaware when I was a—still a Senator. I got it nationally. And what happened was, I'm walking through the area—the area in—where I call the Eastern Shore of—Eastern Maryland is really Western Delaware. [*Laughter*]

And so we're walking through, and I'm going where—I'm going where the voters are. And I'm walking and a guy is fishing in the area, the whole wetlands there. And he said: "Biden, you're not taking my damn gun. Boy, what are you doing?" And I said, you—I said, you know, "What do you mean? I'm not taking your gun." "Yes, you are," he said. "My AR-15."

I said, "You know, if I haven't noted, you must be one hell of a lousy shot." [*Laughter*] And he looked at me, and he said—no, I'm serious. True story. He said, "What do you mean?" He said, "You"—I said, "You need a magazine with anywhere from 30 to 100 rounds in it?" I said: "Those deer aren't wearing Kevlar vests, man. What's the matter with you?"

And he looked at me, and he said, "What do you mean?" I was—and I said it again. He said, "Well, damn, boy, you make a good point." [*Inaudible*] [*Laughter*]

But I'm serious. Think about it.

And look, we also have to make it easier for—we have to—I—I'm not going to get into it—again, you're standing, I apologize.

We should pass the PRO Act. [*Inaudible*] It doesn't dictate you have to organize. It just says that—fair organization plans. That's what it does.

And, folks, look, we learned this week that 3 million more kids are living in poverty because the MAGA Republicans let our expanded childcare tax credit lapse, which cut poverty in half in America.

Guess what? It is—it's—we're fighting to restore it. Why? Not only is it good for families and children, it grows the economy. [*Applause*] No, no, no. Think about. Not a joke.

If you have enough money to have a little bit of daycare and a little bit of help, you can go back to work. It grows—there's economic growth. More people work. And it far outweighs any cost to the program.

And, folks, here in Virginia, the stakes have never been higher. Governor Glenn Youngkin and the extreme Republicans have made it clear that they're trying to take us back on issues like choice.

Virginia is, to state the obvious, a key battleground State. And I'm committed to leading the charge here. I've authorized the DNC to give the first \$1.5 million to Virginia's coordinated campaign. And—because I'm afraid of Senator Warner, I'm going to do more. [*Laughter*]

Look, it's 15 times more than in 2019, so far.

Look, you're here for me, but I want you to know: I promise you, I'm here for you. I promise you.

We've determined the project—to project a majority in the State Senate, we need to keep 21 seats and need to take back the House of Delegates—[*inaudible*].

And it matters. It really, really matters. I'm doing this in three other States as well. It matters.

State—control of the State legislature—the one place we made a mistake the last 20 years, in my view, is putting much more emphasis on the Federal legislature than on the State legislature.

We'd be in a very—it doesn't mean we ought to do less in the Federal, but we should do a hell of a lot more in the State legislature.

Look, before I close, I want to say a word about impeachment. [*Laughter*]

It was pointed out to me today that Marjorie Taylor Greene, the first day she was elected, said, "First thing we want to do is impeach Biden."

Well, I tell you what, I don't know quite why, but they just knew they wanted to impeach me. And now, the best I can tell, they want to impeach me because they want to shut down the Government—

Audience member. Yeah.

The President. —and have some—

No, you think I'm kidding. Watch.

So, look—look, I've got a job to do. Everybody always asks about impeachment. I get up every day—not a joke—not focused on impeachment. I've got a job to do. I've got to deal with the issues that affect the American people every single solitary day.

And a couple of years ago, I met my Cabinet; and I met them again when I appointed them; and I met again today in the Cabinet Room, focusing on how we end cancer as we know it as a country. And I'm focused on these things.

But I was asked once: If I could do only one thing—I was asked about 15 months ago—only do one thing, what would I do?

I said I'd end cancer as I know it, not because—more people die of heart disease than cancer. More people die—there's other problems that exceed cancer by a long shot. But think about it: Cancer is one of those things that if we're able to—we have to remind the American people there's nothing beyond our capacity. Nothing.

We don't think we can do big things anymore. We can. We can, we can, we can. We can do anything we set our mind to do if we do it together. Not a joke.

Look, the—I'm focused on things the American people want us to focus on: growing the economy, making more good jobs available, and lowering prescription drug prices. Encouraging MAGA Republicans to join me, which is going to take a hell of a lot of—[*inaudible*]. [*Laughter*]

Look, I'll close with this. I ran for office—when I announced—for three reasons. I said one was to restore the soul of the Nation, and I meant it.

Think back a little bit. Did you ever think you would have to worry about going through protests where you see people standing with their little kids giving you the middle finger and have banners saying, "F the Democrat" or "Joe Biden"—I mean, we've—it's just been—it's becoming debased, our public disgust. And so that was—we just have to change it.

Secondly is to rebuild the middle class.

And thirdly is to unite the country. Now, everybody—the press obviously said, as John and others will tell you, I was viewed as someone who could bring Republicans and Democrats together when I was in the Senate. They said: "He's just—it's all changed. You can't do it anymore."

Well, how the hell do you think we got all this legislation passed? Because we stuck with it. We can do so much more, so much more.

And, folks, you know, our democracy and our freedom is literally at risk. I genuinely believe that, from the bottom of my heart. Not a joke. Not hyperbole.

You may remember—you may not remember as well—but I made a major speech on the worry about democracy to the—up in Philadelphia at Independence Hall. And the press said, "Ah, who cares?"

Guess what? Sixty percent of the American people are worried about democracy too. They're worried about whether or not it matters—whether or not what they do matters.

And so, folks, that—we've faced tough times in recent years, but the one thing I think we tend to forget: There's no quit in America. There's never been any quit in America. Period. Not a joke. Not a joke.

Everywhere I go around the world, they say—I say, "America is back." They look at me. "For how long?" They say—that's what they say in the G–7.

But guess what? We have never, never, never failed to accomplish what we've set our mind to when we've stuck with it and done it together. That's why we need to—[inaudible]. Folks, I've never been more optimistic about America's prospects than I am today, both economic and politically.

So thank you for giving me another chance. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. at the residence of David Frederick and Sophie Lynn. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Terence R. McAuliffe of Virginia and his wife Dorothy; Rebecca S. Pringle, president, National Education Association; Rep. Donald S. Beyer and his wife Megan; Lee Saunders, president, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Mary Kay Henry, international president, Service Employees International Union (SEIU); Sen. Timothy M. Kaine; former Presidents Barack Obama and Donald J. Trump; former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger; and Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 14. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign reception in McLean, VA.

Locations: McLean, VA.

Names: Beyer, Donald S.; Beyer, Megan; Biden, Jill T.; Frederick, David; Greene, Marjorie Taylor; Henry, Mary Kay; Kaine, Timothy M.; Kissinger, Henry A.; Lynn, Sophie; McAuliffe, Dorothy; McAuliffe, Terence R.; Obama, Barack; Pringle, Rebecca S.; Saunders, Lee; Trump, Donald J.; Warner, Mark R.; Youngkin, Glenn.

Subjects: Abortion; Cancer research, prevention, and treatment; China, relations with U.S.; Climate change; Corporate tax rates; COVID–19 vaccines; Economic improvement; Federal deficit and debt; Gasoline costs; Group of Seven (G–7) nations; Group of Twenty (G–20) nations; Gun violence, prevention efforts; India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor; Indo-Pacific,

economic and security cooperation; Inflation; Infrastructure improvements; Insulin cost controls; Job creation and growth; Labor movement and organized labor; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Medicare and Medicaid programs; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Poverty reduction efforts; Prescription drug costs, reduction efforts; Research and development; Semiconductor manufacturing; Tax Code reform; Unemployment rate; Virginia, Democratic Party event; Virginia, Governor; Virginia, President's visit.

DCPD Number: DCPD202300784.