

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

October 13, 2023

Hello, everybody.

It's good to be almost home. Hey, guys, I live in Delaware. Okay? *[Laughter]*

And by the way, I'm a big Pennsylvania guy, but you have an advantage in Philly. One, I married a Philly girl. Two, you're between Scranton and Wilmington. You know, Scranton—you guys have no sense of humor, man. *[Laughter]*

Look, Ryan, thanks for that introduction. I really mean it.

Shooting of Police Officers at Philadelphia International Airport

And before I get started, I want to acknowledge two brave police officers—on a serious note—who were shot last night, one was killed, at the Philadelphia Airport. I talked to the chief and the mayor about this. They put their lives on the line to protect this community. We owe them a debt of gratitude, and we're praying for them and for their families today.

Hamas Attacks Against Israel

I also want to say a word about the situation in Israel. The more we've learned about the attack, the more horrifying it becomes. More than 1,000—1,000—innocent lives lost, including at least 27 Americans. These guys make—they make Al Qaida look pure. They're pure evil.

As I said from the beginning: The United States—make no mistake about it—stands with Israel. The United States stands with Israel. Secretary of State Blinken was in Israel yesterday, and Secretary of Defense Austin is there today. We're making sure Israel has what it needs to defend itself and to respond to these attacks.

It's also a priority for me to urgently address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. At my direction, our teams are working in the region, including communicating directly with the governments of Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and other Arab nations and the United Nations to surge support and humanitarian consequences for Hamas's attack to help Israel.

You know, we have to—we can't lose sight of the fact that the overwhelming majority of Palestinians had nothing to do with Hamas and Hamas's appalling attacks, and they're suffering as a result as well.

This morning I spoke with the family members of all those Americans who are still unaccounted for on a Zoom call for about an hour and a—10, 15 minutes. They're going through agony not knowing what the status of their sons, daughters, husbands, wives, children are. You know, it's gut wrenching. I assured them of my personal commitment to do everything possible—everything possible—to return every missing American to their families.

We're working round the clock to secure the release of Americans held by Hamas in close cooperation with Israel and our partners around the region. And we're not going to stop until we bring them home.

National Economy and Clean Energy

Folks, now for the reason to be here.

Secretary Granholm, no one is more enthusiastic about building our clean energy future than you are.

And we also—I've—I've got so many friends here today. The Pennsylvania delegation. Josh Shapiro, the Governor. Mayor Kenney is an old friend. One of my closest friends in the Senate and in politics, Bobby Casey. Representative Brendan Boyle, who's always there.

And I have Governor John Carney from Delaware and Tom Carper, two of the best people I've ever worked with.

And New Jersey delegation—Donald Norcross. I kid Donald all the time that Delaware is small, but we own the Delaware River up to the high-water mark in New Jersey. *[Laughter]* By the way, there was a lawsuit that happened—actually happened. Anyway, but—and he couldn't be here, but Cory Booker is a good friend, and he's—was—who's on the ground in Israel and—when the attacks occurred. For everything he's doing to support the people of Israel, and I also want to thank him for pushing so hard for the projects we're about to talk about.

And Governor Phil Murphy couldn't be here, either, but he's also a strong, strong supporter.

And one thing before we get started: Let's go, Phillies! You watch that game last night? Yo! Between the Phillies and Eagles, man, we're—it's a good year, man. *[Laughter]* This is a good year. We're going to win the Series and the NFL. Look—and if I didn't say that, Bobby Brady would be up on the stage here with me. *[Laughter]*

Look, you've heard me say it before: When I think climate, I think jobs—good-paying jobs, union jobs. That's a—by the way, I'm serious.

Look, let me get one thing straight about unions. The reason I'm so pro-union: The middle class built America. Wall Street did not build the middle class. Unions built the middle class. That's why. I mean it. I'm not—that's not a joke. I'm deadly earnest about that.

And it's especially true when it comes to clean energy and manufacturing. When the public sector and the private sector come together, proving we can do big things in America.

One of the things that I worried about was that, you know, we talked about—people—there used to be an argument that you can't have industrial policy dictated by the Government.

Well, guess what? I found that when you—when the Government invests in the needs of the American people, invests in America and the American people, guess what? The private sector jumps on real quick.

In fact, I've asked CEOs this question repeatedly: When the United States invests considerable resources in new industry, does it encourage or discourage businesses to get in? And the answer is clear. It encourages them to get in.

Federal investments attract private-sector investments. A lot of it. It creates jobs and industries, like clean energy, and demonstrates we're all in this together. And that's what this is all about today.

I'm here to announce one of the largest advanced manufacturing investments in the history of this Nation: \$7 billion in Federal investments that's going to attract \$40 billion in private investment in clean hydrogen to power our economy spread over 16 States, creating tens of thousands of good-paying jobs, many of them union jobs—most union jobs. It's a \$50 billion investment in our economic competitiveness, in a stronger energy-secure economy, and combating the existent threat of climate change.

It's all part of my plan to make things in America. You know, there was a law early on that I even didn't—I forgot about, which was that—back in the thirties, during the Roosevelt time, it said it wasn't only good, but we should encourage—when the President has money to spend that the Congress gave him, that President should do two things.

One, is make sure he or she invests that money by making sure that it's—that money is being spent on American projects, by American workers, with American products. And guess what? Presidents all along kept saying: "Well, we have exceptions. We—only 30 percent need to be that. Only 40 percent."

Well, guess what? I changed that. To invest in America and invest in Americans is what we do. We grow the economy from the middle out and the bottom up, not the top down.

When I came to office, I was determined to move away from the trickle-down economics. You know, as they usually say: When the wealthy did well and big business, everybody is going to do well? Well, not a whole hell of a lot dropped down on my dad's kitchen table when I was growing up. *[Laughter]* No, I'm serious.

We have to—I decided we're going to focus on building the middle class. When the middle class does well, everybody does well. The poor have a way up, the middle class do very well, and the wealthy still do well. They've got to start paying their taxes. That's another issue.

Folks, you know, the press started calling this—my plan—"Bidenomics." Today's announcement is a critical piece of that plan.

Let me explain. I've made it a goal for our country to get to net-zero emissions from pollutants no later than 2050. By the way, it's the only existential threat to humanity, is, we don't do this, if we don't stay below these numbers, our—the whole world is changing. Our kids are going to be and our grandkids are going to be—anyway, I don't want to even think about it.

Clean hydrogen is going to help us meet this goal. When it comes to charging our cars or powering our homes, all we need is clean electricity to power—to get the—from solar and wind. That's just fine. And we're doing that. And we're getting close to meeting that goal.

But when it comes to manufacturing things like steel, aluminum, and other materials, factories need to process materials at over 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit to get that done. You can't—you need to burn fuel to get that done. You can't get it done with wind and solar power. You cannot generate that much energy.

That's where hydrogen comes in. Hydrogen, you can power industries like the production of steel and aluminum. It can transfer—and it's going to end up changing our transportation system, like trucks, rail, planes.

Clean hydrogen produce the use—energy resources like wind and solar. That lets us get to—you get to this place without putting more carbon in the atmosphere.

You know, I—when I put that forward, they said we couldn't do anything bipartisanly in the Congress. Well, I introduced the bipartisan infrastructure bill. It got passed. It got passed even though we only had a couple votes extra in the Senate. And it contained funding to harness the benefits of hydrogen and to encourage States and industries to join together to create things called "hydrogen hubs."

And, folks, those hubs are about people coming together across State lines, across industries, across political parties to build a stronger, more sustainable economy and to rebuild our communities.

The hubs in the Middle Atlantic Region is made up of 17 sites spanning Southeastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey. And the hubs are existing infrastructure supporting the oil industry and oil pipelines and refineries, and repurpose and regenerate—generate, store, transport, and use clean hydrogen instead. This hub alone is going to produce 100,000 tons of hydrogen per year—100,000 tons.

Up to \$750 million in public investment is attracting \$2.25 billion in private investment. And here are some of the examples of how it's going to work. The Delaware City Refinery in my State—vacant—owned by Chesapeake Utilities in Georgetown, Delaware, and a former jet fuel terminal in New Jersey all use renewable energy, like solar power, to produce clean hydrogen.

Plumbers, pipefitters are going to replace and retrofit oil pipelines to transport the hydrogen here, where fueling stations at the Port of Philadelphia, in partnership with Philadelphia Gas Works, will provide clean hydrogen to people to power trucks, heavy-duty equipment operated by longshoremen and teamsters. That will mean cleaner air, since the equipment that runs on hydrogen produces fewer emissions than diesel.

Across town, on the site of the old Philadelphia Energy Solutions Oil Refinery, a new Bellwether District, Hilco—well, it's going to use clean hydrogen or steam to power generate—to power the life sciences and logistics on campuses where companies will do research and development for the next-generation technologies.

The city of Philadelphia and Southern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority are going to use clean hydrogen to power their heavy-duty vehicle fleets, like steel—like street sweepers, garbage trucks, fuel cells, and electronic buses.

The DuPont Company in Delaware is going to use hydrogen to power their research and development operations at one of the most extensive power—experimental stations in the world in Wilmington, Delaware.

Here, in the Mid-Atlantic hub, every single one of these projects will use project labor agreements. That's another way of saying "union." Union. And by the way, here, it's going to create 20,800 jobs—20,800 jobs—here in this hub: plumbers, pipefitters, electricians, laborers, and so much more.

Look, we're not just creating jobs here in the region. In Western Pennsylvania, in Ohio, West Virginia, a hydrogen hub will bring another source of good-paying jobs to the coal communities so workers who have powered our Nation for generations can now work and produce clean hydrogen, just like—just like we've seen them start their careers reclaiming abandoned mines, manufacturing advanced batteries, and the solar industry. Because they deserve it. They powered us for so long, just like my hometown of Scranton.

The same communities that were once thriving coal-mining and power plant towns will now be at the center of our clean energy economy. We're restoring hope and opportunity and dignity along the way. That was my commitment, and that's what we're delivering.

We're doing the same thing at the hub in the Midwest, a hub in California, and another hub in the Dakotas and Minnesota. All across the country, from coast to coast, in the Heartland, we're building a clean energy future here in America, not somewhere else.

Taken together, the emission reductions from these hydrogen hubs will be the equivalent of taking 5.5 million gas-powered vehicles off the road—5.5 million.

And across America, all these hubs are anchored in the promise to local communities: a promise to build these right, to ensure local priorities are at the forefront, risks are mitigated, and everyone benefits, especially communities left behind, like those that have suffered disproportionately from the legacy of pollution and environmental injustice.

For example, here in Pennsylvania, Cheney University—the oldest HBCU in the country—is part of this hub and will be training workers for these new clean energy jobs.

Hubs are just one example of what we're doing to rebuild America for all Americans. Through the bipartisan infrastructure law, which I helped write and pass, we're making the most

substantial investment since President Eisenhower in roads, bridges, ports, airports, clean water, high-speed internet. These are good-paying jobs.

We've already announced over 38,000 projects across 4,500 communities all across this Nation. Here in Pennsylvania, we've already announced—it's going to get \$10.2 billion, including for 300 specific projects across the State.

There's no better example—[*applause*]. There's no better example of how we're—how we're rebuilding America and doing big things right here in Philly, where union labor—a great team effort to get I-95 back up and running in just 12 days, with the help of the Governor, after a section of that highway collapsed. Anybody think we'd be able to do that in 12 days? It had never been done before.

We're upgrading the airports, from Pittsburgh to Lehigh Valley to right here in Philly. And I want to tell you—and, Bobby—I say "Bobby"—my good buddy, the guy from Scranton—you know?—Casey. We're investing \$900 million—almost a billion bucks—to rebuild the Montgomery Locks and Dam.

We're going to get moving on the—and I promised Bob. We've got a lot of money for Amtrak. We're going to build—where is he? Bobby, we're going to build that line from Scranton to New York. It's coming, man. I'm determined to build that line. We used to have it. Now we've got the money, we're going to get it done.

Since I took office, we've created 13.9 million new jobs across America—13.9. We've created 850,000 [815,000; White House correction] manufacturing jobs, twice as many as the previous administration created in all its time.

The unemployment rate has stayed below 4 percent for 20 straight months in a row, the longest stretch in 50 years. We've achieved a 70-year low in unemployment rate for women. We've seen record-low employment—unemployment for African American and Hispanic workers and people with disabilities. This is everybody. Not just a few people; this is everybody.

And by the way, this data shows we have the highest—highest—share of working-age Americans in the workforce in 20 years.

And inflation is coming down. It's down 60 percent since last summer. Core inflation is the lowest level in 2 years, and now we have the lowest inflation rate of any G-7—any major industrial country in the world.

We're creating good jobs in communities—we have more to do. But we're creating good jobs in communities across the country, including in places that have been left behind for too long because factories shut down, towns were hollowed out, and jobs were moved, and people lost their sense of pride.

Hold a second. Think about it. How many small towns you know in Pennsylvania and all across the Midwest where there was a factory that for 30, 40 years people were able to work and have a good, decent salary—could live a middle class life? And, all of a sudden, corporate America decided: "I'm going to find cheaper labor overseas. I'm going to send the job overseas and import the product."

Not anymore. When those jobs move overseas, we're—they're bringing them back, and we're bringing them back big time—big time.

And by the way, I mean it. Think of the pride. You know, you lived in a neighborhood. You lived in a small town. Your whole life, your father and your grandfather—you're able to make it. And, all of a sudden, there's nothing left. Kid comes to you and says: "I got a good education, Mom, but I can't live here anymore. There's no jobs." We're going to restore their pride as well.

Under Bidenomics, you don't have to leave home or your family to get a good job. Under Bidenomics, we're investing in industries of the future so that the future is made in America—made in America. And, folks, we're just getting started.

My "Investing in America" agenda has led to manufacturing boom, attracting over a half a trillion dollars—half a trillion dollars—in private investment in 2½ years, in manufacturing and the industries of the future.

Spending on factory construction has doubled in the last 2 years after growing only 2 percent under my predecessor. And now, instead of exporting American jobs, we're creating American jobs and exporting American products. I really mean it. Think about—I know this sounds boring—but I really mean it. And that's good for everybody.

Let me close with this. I came to office determined to get this country up again so it—we could face the existential threat of climate and still grow, to fundamentally change our economy, and to transition this country to a clean energy future. Today's announcement is all part of a bigger vision to do just that.

We're going to invest—in the Inflation Reduction Act that we passed, I was able to put in six—\$369 billion—\$369 billion. And by the way, I reduced the budget by \$1.7 billion [trillion; White House correction]. [Laughter] Okay? I reduced the debt while doing this. To fight climate change, it's the largest investment of its kind anywhere in the world—the single largest investment ever.

And we invented—by the way, we invented the semiconductor, the little thing—that little chip about the size of the end of your finger—when we went to the Moon. It affects nearly everything in our lives, whether you have a cell phone, an automobile, a refrigerator, sophisticated weapons systems.

But guess what? We were initially producing 40 percent of them all in the world. Guess what? We got down to producing 10 percent. Why? We took it overseas.

So I proposed legislation—which I thought would be a slam dunk to pass, but we had a little bit of resistance from my MAGA friends—and signed it. And as a result, semiconductor companies all over the world are investing hundreds of billions of dollars to bring chip production back home.

For example, you know, just outside of Ohio—outside of Columbus, Ohio, there was a thousand acres. We had Intel come along and say: "Look, we're going to invest there. We're going to invest over \$20 billion. We're going to build these new fabs"—these factories, they call them. They're, like, twice the size of football fields. And guess what the average pay is? About 100- to 110,000 bucks a year. And you don't need a college degree to have the job. [Laughter]

Look, with this bipartisan infrastructure law, we're seeing cranes in the air, shovels in the ground, and pride coming back to cities and towns all across the country.

Nearly a century ago, Franklin Roosevelt's Rural Electrification Act brought electricity to millions of Americans, generating significant economic growth and prosperity. Nearly 70 years ago, President Eisenhower launched the Interstate Highway System.

The investment we're making today will be for our kids and grandkids what those historic projects were in previous generations, only bigger. Today—today's announcement is transformational. You know, and it joins a long line of transformational investments we've made just since I took office.

And as a result, I truly believe that this country is about to take off. Because for the first time in a long time, we're actually investing in America. We're investing in Americans, not just America. We're investing in our future.

I can honestly say—and I mean this—and I know I don't look it, but I've been around for a while—[laughter]—I've never been more optimistic about America's future.

We just have to remember who in the hell we are. We're the United States of America. There is nothing, nothing, nothing beyond our capacity if we work together. Nothing. Because of you all, we're going to get it done. We're the leading country in the world. We're going to remain that way.

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

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. at the Tioga Marine Terminal. In his remarks, he referred to Ryan Boyer, business manager, Philadelphia Building and Construction Trades Council; Ofc. Richard Mendez of the Philadelphia Police Department, who was killed in a shooting at Philadelphia International Airport on October 12, and Ofc. Raul Ortiz, who was wounded in the shooting; John M. Stanford, Jr., interim police commissioner, Philadelphia Police Department; Sens. Thomas R. Carper and Cory A. Booker; Gov. Philip D. Murphy of New Jersey; former Rep. Robert A. Brady; and former President Donald J. Trump. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14.

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Locations: Philadelphia, PA.

Names: Austin, Lloyd J., III; Biden, Jill T.; Blinken, Antony J.; Booker, Cory A.; Boyer, Ryan; Boyle, Brendan F.; Brady Robert A.; Carney, John C., Jr.; Carper, Thomas R.; Casey, Robert P., Jr.; Granholm, Jennifer M.; Mendez, Richard; Murphy, Philip D.; Norcross, Donald W.; Ortiz, Raul; Shapiro, Joshua D.; Stanford, John M., Jr.; Trump, Donald J.

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