

Remarks at a Campaign Reception in Henderson, Nevada
February 4, 2024

Hello, hello, hello. Please, have a—please take your seats. Thank you very much.

Richard, that was a very gracious introduction. I really mean it. Thank you.

I look out, and, for a lot of the elected officials here, this is like a busman's holiday for them. [Laughter] Having to come here, even though they're elected officials.

Sasha, thank you for hosting us. As I said earlier, in the kitchen, that it's not all that easy to open up your home. Not—for some people, but not for a whole crowd. And there were probably as many Secret Service agents in here before checking things out as there are standing here now. [Laughter] So—but my host said: "No, I'm a cop. I understand." [Laughter] Any rate.

Thank you all for your support. You know, there's a simple reason I'm here: to say thank you. You all are the reason—not a joke—you're the reason that I'm President of the United States. You're the reason Kamala Harris is a historic Vice President. And you're the reason Donald Trump is a defeated former President. And you're the reason he'll [we'll; White House correction] make Donald Trump a loser again.

In 2020, I ran—I thought everything this country stood for, everything we believed in, I thought it was all at stake. What made America "America," I believed, was at risk. I think people thought I was being a little hyperbolic at the time. I heard—the press would say: "Joe, what do you mean our democracy is at risk? What do you mean we're in a battle for the soul of America?"

Well, if you notice, most people don't say that anymore. They don't say that anymore.

Just think back to the mess Donald Trump left this country in. The pandemic was raging; the economy was reeling. And look how far we've come because of all of you. We vaccinated America. People were dying. We lost over 1,200,000 people because of the slow start in all this process.

We created a record nearly 15 million new jobs just since we came into office—more than any President ever has in that short a time—to get the economy—make it stronger. And 285,000 of those jobs are here in Nevada—285,000 new jobs in Nevada.

It's because of your congressional delegation, in large part, and I mean that sincerely. Not a joke.

We know we have more to do, but inflation is now lower in America than any other major economy in the world. In recent weeks, we're seeing real evidence that American consumers are feeling real confidence in the economy. It's beginning to move.

And you may remember, I'd note parenthetically, that when I ran in 2020, everybody said we're in real trouble. And I said, "We're going to be fine," because I could tell. As I went around the country, you could feel it; you could taste it.

Well, and then in 2022, remember we were going to—the red wave was coming? We were going to get wiped out? We did better as an incumbent President in an off-year than any President has in recent history because people got it.

And then the Washington—and then we ended up in a situation where, in 2023, every contested primary, every contested general election in the country—from Kentucky on—we won, with one exception.

A recent Washington Post headline said, "Falling inflation and rising growth give U.S. the world's best recovery"—"the world's best recovery."

And that's—to tell you something else that—that you want to know: Who else is noticing how good the recovery is? Donald Trump. He recently said—[*laughter*].

[*At this point, a child applauded.*]

You've got it, kiddo. [*Laughter*]

He recently said, "When the crash comes, I hope it's soon." He's looking for a crash. He wants it to happen in the next 12 months, because he does not want to be a—another Herbert Hoover.

I've got bad news for him. [*Laughter*] He's already a Herbert Hoover. [*Laughter*] He's the only President, other than Herbert Hoover, who has lost more jobs than he had when he came into office in the first place.

It's unbelievable. It's un-American: a sitting—a former President that's seeking the office, hoping for a recession that would devastate millions of Americans. And here's what he really means. He knows, while the economy is strong, it's good—good for America, and it's bad for him politically.

Trump said the one President he doesn't want to be like, as I said, is Hoover. But it's too late. He's already Donald "Hoover" Hump—Trump Hump. [*Laughter*] That was intended. [*Laughter*]

Folks, I promised—I promised we—we'd beat—take on Big Pharma. They're not bad guys, but they make extraordinary profits—extraordinary, exorbitant prices. They charge more—if you have a prescription now and you take it to a local drugstore here in this State or this city, I can take you—get on a plane with me, we can go to anywhere from Montreal to Berlin to London to Rome, and I can get you that same prescription by the same company for 40- to 60-percent less. How do you figure that? How do you figure that?

Charging more for prescription drugs here in America than they do anywhere else in the world. That's not hyperbole. That's a fact. I said we'd take on and we'd finally beat them.

I was at a conference—I was a—doing a town hall in Virginia a year and a half, almost 2 years ago. And a lovely woman stood up and said, "I need help." She said, "I have insurance, but I don't have enough because I have two daughters with diabetes, and it's about 800 bucks a month for me." And she said: "I have to split the—I have to split the insulin. I have to cut it." And I thought to myself, "What's going on?"

The guy who invented insulin—many of you doctors in here know this—didn't want to patent it because he thought it should be available to everybody. It costs \$10 to make. If you package it, it may—you can get it up to maybe 12½ dollars.

Well, guess what? You have—they now only pay \$35 a month for insulin. That's all they can charge for seniors with diabetes. If they want to get their—anything doing—coming from the whole issue of what's happening with regard to the situation we have where people can get the drug through Medicare.

But look, and we're also capping the cost of all drugs for seniors at \$2,000 a year, because you know—many of you know here—some of these cancer drugs are \$10-, \$12-, \$14-, \$16,000 a year.

Our actions not only save the patients thousands of dollars and save lives, but they save the taxpayer—the taxpayer—more than \$160 billion. You hear me? One hundred and sixty billion

dollars is being saved because it does not—the—Medicare does not have to pay out that \$160 billion in order to provide the drugs; \$160 billion—that's what it means.

Republicans say they are concerned about deficit. Well, give me a break. *[Laughter]* No, I'm serious. You know—well, I'm going to get too detailed. I probably—*[laughter]*.

We tried to make \$35 a month for everyone. It lasted for a little while during the pandemic—just after the pandemic. But the Republicans, when we had to reauthorize it, wouldn't go for it. But with your help in 2024, we're going to make it happen for everybody—everybody, man.

And that's going to reduce the Federal deficit even more. Not a joke. It reduces the Federal deficit when they're not spending billions of dollars.

I promised to help ease accumulated student debt that millions of Americans carried for—all through the economic pandemic—economic crisis of the pandemic. The Supreme Court blocked me, but they didn't stop me. I found another way. They're already on the books—I was able to get 3.7 million people a total debt forgiveness amounting to \$130 billion. And relief is continuing.

There are several existing programs that the bureaucracy just didn't know how to handle. Now I found out—I didn't even know they existed, to be honest with you. And I'm pushing those programs, like the Public Service program, like that—that allows public—has anyone who's engaged in public service, if you've paid your student debt for 10 years in a row and you're a firefighter, cop, teacher—*[inaudible]*—nurse, you get your debt forgiven—the remainder forgiven.

And guess what? It generates significant economic growth as well. It costs a lot of money not being collecting—well, you'll be collected anyway. But where we are, not it means those folks can buy their first home. They can pay for their particular problems they may have. They can start that small business they wanted to start.

All across America, we fixed the program. We delivered relief for public servants like teachers, nurses, firefighters, social workers.

And I kept my promise to appoint the first Black woman to the Supreme Court of the United States of America. Her name is Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. And by the way, I've appointed more Black women to the circuit courts of appeal on the Federal level than every other President in American history combined.

And all told, I've gotten 171 Federal judges confirmed. Two-thirds of those judges are women—two-thirds are women and people of color.

When I got elected, I said I was going to have an administration that looked like America, and it does. I have more women in my Cabinet than men. *[Laughter]* There's a simple reason for that: They're smarter than most of the men I know. *[Laughter]*

But all kidding aside, thanks to the bipartisan infrastructure law, which I signed, there are now 40,000 infrastructure projects all across America and just getting started, including \$3 billion for the Nation's first high-speed rail line from Las Vegas to Los Angeles.

It's a 2-hour train ride instead of a 4-hour car ride. And guess what? All the studies show if a person can get on a train—an electric train—and go from point A to point B faster than they can in their car, they leave their car home. It has—it's going to take tens of thousands of cars off the highway, off the pollution index: 186 miles per hour; also reduce carbon emissions; making 3 million—taking 3 million vehicles off the road; creating 35,000 jobs during the construction phase—good-paying union jobs—10,000 union jobs in the building trades—carpenters, electricians, ironworkers, laborers, and more. And now—and now—and jobs well beyond that.

Generating significant economic growth from Nevada to California. And by the way, it includes transforming California, at the other end, high-speed rail. They're going to have a 220-mile-an-hour train through the central part of the State. That's going to connect California and Nevada. It's going to change economic conditions in both places in a big way.

You know, like FDR—FDR had the Rural Electrification program. Electricity changed the world in that time. But guess what? People in rural areas couldn't afford it. So he set up the Rural Electrification program. Well, the internet—providing that access was—is as—for affordable high-speed internet is the same thing. People can't make it anymore without internet. Whether you're a farmer knowing when to trade your cattle, whether you're someone who is engaged in—in telemedicine—I mean, whatever it happens to be, it's significant.

We're bringing affordable high-speed internet everywhere in America because internet is just as essential as electricity was back then.

And that includes nearly two—nearly 270,000 households here in Nevada. And by the way, paying \$30 or less—some that are already paying \$30 now are going to pay nothing because that's what we're doing—for high-speed internet, instead of two or three times as much, so children can do their homework, businesses can thrive, farmers can know when to sell their products.

Folks, we've ripped out every poisonous—we're going to rip out every poisonous lead pipe in America so every child in America can turn on a faucet and drink clean water without worrying about brain damage. It's real. And in the process, creating thousands of good-paying jobs—thousands of jobs.

I don't have to tell you about the carnage of gun violence. I don't have to tell anybody in the Las Vegas area about that. We passed the most significant gun safety law in decades. And I'm not going to stop until we once again ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. I did it once.

You saw what Trump said when those kids were killed recently—two teachers and a child—sixth grade. You know what his comment was when asked about it? He said, they've just got to "get over it." From the President of the United States, that's a quote. I'm not making it up. They've just got to "get over it."

We're saving the planet with the most significant investment in climate change ever, anywhere in the entire world. That includes \$12 billion in clean energy investments in Nevada to be a national leader in electric vehicles, batteries, and creating tens of thousands of good jobs, creating significant economic growth.

I signed into law a thing called the PACT Act, because I felt very passionate about it. I saw the—I've said and gotten in trouble for saying it—we have—for the last 30 years, we have a lot of obligations as a government. We only have one sacred obligation, and that's to prepare those we send into harm's way and care for them and their families when they come home or don't come home. One of the most significant laws helping veterans exposed toxic materials and their families—it matters.

There's so much more we're doing that we—and we can do it together.

And by the way, you know, all those firefighters in 9/11, you saw what happened to them. Our firefighters are dying. Well, my son was attorney general—I guess I shouldn't get personal with it. My son was the attorney general of the State of Delaware, and he decided to join the National Guard.

One day, I was home, and he said, "Dad, what are you doing Friday?" I said, "What do you need, Beau?" He said, "Swear me in." I said, "Swear you in for what?" He said, "I joined the National Guard."

When his unit got deployed, he kept coming to Washington, and I couldn't understand why. He had to get a dispensation. You either work for the Governor or you work for the President; you can't work for both. So he gave up his job as attorney general to go with his unit for a year to Iraq, like—like thousands of women and young men have done.

Well, guess what? His hooch in Baghdad was about—was not quite a quarter of a half—a little over a quarter mile from where he slept, a burn pit 10 feet deep, 100 yards long, 40 yards wide. They burned everything from human carnage to toxic waste in it. He breathed that air. He came home with stage 4 glioblastoma.

Folks, so many—and this is what we did.

I also moved up, from my generation, Agent Orange. Agent Orange now is totally covered, and they don't have to prove. If you have Agent Orange, you can prove—dropped on your head, you get covered.

And now imagine the nightmare that Trump returns—if he returns to office.

The President, he said—called servicemen buried in the cemetery in France—when he was there, he wouldn't go up to—to deal with it. You know what he said? I'm—got to hold my Irish temper. I'm glad I wasn't with him because I'm not sure what I'd have done. He said they're all a bunch of "suckers" and "losers." My son was not a sucker, nor were any of yours. Who does this guy think he is talking about Americans like that?

As I said, after that recent shooting in Perry, Iowa, two—two people died—a sixth-grader, principal—you've just got to "get over it." Just got to "get over it." Well, we're not going to get over it, but we're going to stop it.

Trump—Trump and his MAGA friends want to repeal the historic climate legislation.

And now, after trying and failing more than 60 times, Trump is trying—and his MAGA friends are trying to do away with the Affordable Care Act, which now another 20,000 people just signed up for because you can't get health insurance if you have a preexisting condition, but for the Affordable Care Act, if you don't have money. The law is the only reason that people all over the country with preexisting conditions are able to have it, and they want to take it away.

Trump and his MAGA friends are determined to take away the \$35-a-month insulin, which just got passed into law, the \$2,000 cap on prescription drugs.

How many of you believe the tax system is fair? You're all successful people. I'm not suggesting you—I come from the corporate State of the world. More corporations are incorporated in the State of Delaware than every other State in the Nation combined. I served there for 36 years. I'm not a Socialist. I'm not trying to—I want corporations to do well.

But the idea—the idea—you know how we paid for all these programs and still cut the deficit \$7 billion on my watch? Because I said that, you know, the—remember reading about those 50 Fortune 500 companies that didn't pay a penny in tax that made \$40 billion? Well, guess what? I got—we had a Democratic Congress, and I was able to pass a law having a minimum tax of 15 percent—just 15 percent. It's helped pay for every one of those investments I mentioned. Well, meanwhile, Trump passed a \$2 trillion tax cut overwhelmingly benefiting the very wealthy and biggest corporations to—and exploded the Federal debt—exploded the Federal debt when he left.

And now, instead of protecting Social Security and Medicare like I am, Trump and his MAGA friends want to give it another massive billion-dollar tax cut to the superwealthy corporations. They want to do away with the 15-percent tax on corporations.

You realize, before the pandemic, we had 750 billionaires in America. Now we have a thousand. You know what their average Federal tax is? 8.3 percent.

My new young friend who is going to President someday, he pays more than that. [Laughter]

But think—[applause]—but no, think about that. Think about why people are so upset and why they're so angry. If they just had a 28-percent tax, which is not even the highest tax rate, they would generate over \$400 billion over 10 years. It would solve so many problems and be fair. It wouldn't cost anybody anything. You can still do a hell of a lot as a billionaire with a 28 percent tax cut.

Trump and his MAGA friends are determined to take away your fundamental freedoms, by the way. They have—they're under the—under—voting rights are under attack right now. And just—I won't go into the detail, but I just got two calls about what's happening in other States right now.

And now Trump is bragging about having overturned *Roe v. Wade*. He stood there and said, "In my Court, I was able to—I overturned *Roe v. Wade*"—a woman's freedom to choose. Look, now they're planning on a national ban to get a majority of the States to vote to say there can be no exceptions. No—and by the way, that's happening. But not on my watch.

That's why I need your help reelecting our Democratic constituents here—our Congresspersons here. Because we've got to have a Democratic—a Democratic Senate and Democratic House. Because I promise you, we are going to restore *Roe v. Wade* as the law of the land.

But I really mean it. You know, the Supreme Court, when they passed the *Dobbs* decision, said, "Well, women have a voice; they can vote," meaning like they don't take it seriously. They're about—they're about to see something they never thought about. [Laughter] Look at the States where they have lost.

If MAGA Republicans try to pass a national ban on the right to choose, I will veto it. It will never happen. And if you elect me and Kamala, we're—and win back the House and the Senate, we are going to, in November, restore *Roe v. Wade* to the law of the land again.

Look, let me close with this. Trump and his MAGA friends are dividing us, not uniting us; seeking to—seeking, as Trump says, to "terminate"—his phrase—"terminate" elements of the U.S. Constitution—"terminate"; embracing political violence.

I—you know, some of you have been to my office and you—you're all invited to—if you're going to be in Washington, to let us know when you are going to be there, because you can come by. But I could show you where he sat on the 6th, in that little dining room right off the Oval Office, threatening everything we stand for.

Let me just read a couple of his key statements he's recently made. Trump said, "I want to be a dictator on day one," and he's repeated why he wanted to be that. Trump said: Our opponents "live like vermin in the confines of our country" and "the threat from outside forces is far less sinister, dangerous, and grave than the threat from within" among Americans.

Trump said, "We have a—we have vicious people outside, but I believe truly the people inside our country are far more vicious." Trump said, immigrants, including from Africa, Asia, and all over the world are "poisoning the blood of our country."

Trump said the "J6"—meaning the January 6 hostages that have been sentenced and pled guilty—he said, "The JC—J6 hostages—don't call them prisoners. They're hostages. I call them hostages. They're hostages, not prisoners."

What the hell is with this guy? I mean—I mean, seriously. Those of you that are students of history, can you ever remember any President ever saying anything like this?

In 2016, he said, I—quote: "In 2016, I declared I am your voice. And now I say to you again tonight, I am your warrior, I am your justice, I am your retribution."

He joked about the attack on Paul Pelosi. Remember the guy that came after him with a hammer and cracked his skull, nearly killed him? Well, as he said, "What in the hell are you doing on her—what—what in the hell was going on with her husband? She got a wall around her house. Obviously, in that case, it didn't work very well, did it?" *[Laughter]* Didn't work.

Oh, God, I wish we were still kids.

Trump suggested that Mark Milley, who is a hell of a soldier, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, was—Mark Milley should, quote, "face death" because he contacted China following January 6 to reassure them that the United States was still stable.

You know, I bet folks in the press business know press people who are worried that if he wins, they're going to have to move because he wants to move against them.

So, folks, look, you know, I think that the people of Nevada, the vast majority of Americans, are still decent; they still believe in honesty, decency, dignity, respect. I think that they believe that we're all created equal. They don't always—it's hard to do, but we hold these truths self-evident. We've never lived up to it, but we've never walked away from it before.

We're the most unique nation in the world. We're the only nation based on an idea. Every other nation is organized based on ethnicity, religion, or some common denominator. We're the only nation based on an idea, that we hold these truths to be self-evident; we're all created equal, endowed by our Creator, et cetera.

We've never fully lived up to it, but we've never walked away from it verbally before—but practically. And I think everybody deserves a shot.

My dad used to have an expression. He'd say at the dinner table—my dad was a well-read man. He never got a chance to go to college because of World War II, but he was a really decent man. And dinner was a place we had conversation and, incidentally, ate. *[Laughter]* He'd go back and close his business he managed.

And my dad would 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"—I swear to God; my word as a Biden, these are his exact words—"It's about being able to look your kid in the eye and say, 'Honey, it's going to be okay,' and mean it."

Just giving people a shot. Just giving people a shot.

And that's why the fundamental change I made in the economy and a lot of serious economists, mainstream economists are now giving me credit and agreeing with me. We used to have a trickle-down theory: Let the wealthy do very well—and I don't have any problem with it. You can make a billion dollars. Make it. Just pay your fair share. Just pay your fair share. But what's happening now is that we used to have a trickle-down economy: If everybody—if they did very well, it would trickle down to middle class folks.

Well, the middle class kept shrinking the last 30 years. And I've been of the view that the way to grow the economy is from the middle out and the bottom up. Because the wealthy do very well when that occurs, and everybody grows. I mean, for real. And that's exactly what we've done.

There's a provision in the labor law back in the thirties that no one paid attention to, including Democratic Presidents. And that is if in fact—if in fact the Congress gives you money to spend, whether to put a new deck in an aircraft carrier or build a new highway, you're instructed to do two things: It must be done with an American workforce and with American product.

Well, everybody found all kinds of exceptions not to do that. I changed the exception rule. And guess what? It's working. We've grown the economy, and the middle class is growing, and the wealthy are still doing very well. And everyone is doing fine.

But what's going to happen if he gets elected President?

Look, folks, we have—we have to keep the White House, but we have to keep the Senate. Got to reelect Jacky. You've got to keep—I really mean this. And we must win back the House and win up and down the ticket.

When we do that, we'll be able to look back and say something few generations get to say: We literally saved American democracy. It's not hyperbole. [*Inaudible*]

Folks, one thing we have to remember—we seem to have forgotten—this is the United States of America. Nothing—nothing—is beyond our capacity. Nothing ever we've set our mind to we've failed to do when we do it together. Nothing.

This is you—we're the only nation in the world that's come out of every crisis we've entered stronger than we went in. That's who we are. We can't let this guy drag that out of us. There's nothing beyond our capacity. Nothing.

And, folks, I think, with your help, we're going to continue this going until the next generation picks us up and takes us even further.

So thank you. God bless you all. And thank you for all you've done for me.

Hey, folks, when I was a Senator, I spent a lot of time on highway crowding and highway safety. I got elected President; there's no problem with highways. There—we never have any cars in front of us. I don't know how that happens. [*Laughter*]

But all kidding aside, we just got a notification that—to make a whole issue of this—the NFL teams are arriving, and I can't—they can't land until I take off. [*Laughter*] Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. [*Laughter*]

So, folks, I've got to get the hell out of here. I—no, I'm not even kidding. You think I'm joking. I'm not, Gov. I'm not.

So thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. at the residence of Richard D. Perkins and Sasha Sutcliffe-Stephenson. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Jacklyn S. Rosen; Rep. A. Constadina Titus; Paul F. Pelosi, Sr., husband of Rep. Nancy Pelosi; David DePape, who was convicted of assault and attempted kidnapping in the attack on Mr. Pelosi in his San Francisco, CA, residence on October 28, 2022; former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley, USA (Ret.); and former Gov. Stephen F. Sisolak of Nevada. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 5. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

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