

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024

Remarks at a Campaign Event in Irvington, New York

April 25, 2024

The President. Thanks. Don't leave yet.

Before I begin, I want a promise. When they say, "Joe Biden is in the outer room to see the President," you won't say, "Joe who?" *[Laughter]*

God love you. You're a good man. *[Laughter]*

Actor Michael Douglas. Thank you.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Douglas. Thank you. God bless you.

The President. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Mr. Douglas. Thank you so much.

The President. Sit down, folks, please.

Dylan, thank you for that introduction. And—and your sister, she is—she could be President too, maybe, if she wants. *[Laughter]*

And your dad Michael, I—Michael and I have something in common: We both married way above our station. *[Laughter]* Some things are just self-evident, in my opinion. *[Laughter]*

Catherine couldn't be here, but I'm grateful for her sharing her family tonight. And by the way, she's in——

[At this point, the President briefly imitated an Irish accent.]

——Dublin, holy God, you know. *[Laughter]* The place—the only place I'm positive I could win. I could be elected Taoiseach in Dublin. *[Laughter]*

I went back to Mayo to my—I—because we were trying to get the Irish accords through—together. And I quote, as my—no family member has been in Ireland since 1848 or something like that. But I went to speak at a cathedral in Mayo that my great-great-grandfather had made the bricks for. He was an—and in Ireland, everything is about your lineage. They keep, you know, doing your background.

And so I stood out along the river in Mayo with 32,000 people, pouring rain, and they stood there and listened. I decided I don't know why the hell my family ever moved. *[Laughter]*

But anyway, she's in Dublin, and tell her I love her.

Look, and, of course, Michael was a great "American President." He—*[laughter]*—he was single at the time. *[Laughter]* I wonder what the hell that would be like. *[Laughter]*

It was bad enough when I lost my first wife and my child, and I was a new U.S. Senator. I saw that I got put on the 10 most eligible bachelors list in America. And I swore, after a year, I've never going to go out with anybody again in my whole life. *[Laughter]*

It's an unusual situation. I don't know how you movie stars handle it. *[Laughter]*

You know, look, and it's great that he's one of our Founding Fathers now. *[Laughter]* I was the Ben Franklin Professor of Presidential History at the University of Pennsylvania for 4 years, teaching at Penn. And Ben was right: If we can keep it—that's what it was all about.

I now have a portrait in the Oval Office, when you come and see it, of Ben Franklin to remind everybody that, you know, I knew him really well. *[Laughter]* He was only a couple of years older than I was, but you know? *[Laughter]*

But look, it's a reminder of the incredible history of our Nation and the future that's within our reach.

You know, I also include Rodge and Barbara and all of the cohosts of this event to thank them for their support. It really makes a big difference. You know, I know you have a lot more important things to do, a lot of things that you can be doing, and stepping up and doing what you're doing for me, it really makes a big difference, including the Members of Congress who are here today.

Representative Bowman, thanks for the welcoming me into your district. I got a passport to come in. *[Laughter]*

And, Mondaire Jones, who needs to win in November—Mondaire, you know—one of my best friends in Congress for—she's much, much younger than I am, but—*[Laughter]*—Nita Lowey. Nita, I love you.

As we head into the spring, we generally feel a bit of excitement building here, you know, in this campaign. So far, we have 1.5 million people who've contributed to our campaign—1.5 million; 550,000 new since 2020. And 97 percent are under \$200—97 percent.

We're almost—we've raised almost a quarter of a billion dollars so far.

And so, look, we've ramped—133 campaign headquarters and field offices, and we hired hundreds of staff all across the country before Trump and his MAGA Republican friends even have one single office open. So—and it's good out there. It feels good out there.

I've been going—I haven't had a chance to watch the court proceedings—*[laughter]*—because I've been—*[laughter]*—because I've been out campaigning in all the States.

And while the press doesn't write about it, the momentum is clearly in our favor. Polls are moving towards us and away from Trump. The last 23 polls, we're ahead in 10 of them, and he's ahead in 8, and we're tied in 5.

And just 2 days ago, we got the best polls we've ever seen. NPR/Marist poll, which is considered one of the best in the country, we're ahead by 5 among all voters and 6 by voters who are likely to vote. That's 50—53 to 47. And it keeps moving. Every single week, things are getting better.

But what's more important is what actually—people when they actually vote. Just 2 days ago, the Pennsylvania primary, we beat Trump's turnout by 150,000 more votes voted for me than voted for Trump. Democrats are strongly behind us, and he's losing a lot of Republicans, still, to Nikki Haley in that primary. *[Laughter]*

We're also getting major endorsements. Yesterday I received the endorsement of the North American Building Trades. Over 3,500 people showed up. It's the biggest in our Nation and a strong key to battleground States like Wisconsin and Michigan. They have a very strong presence there.

But look, I know not everyone is feeling the enthusiasm. Just the other day, a defeated-looking guy came up to me and said: "Mr. President, I'm being crushed by debt. I'm completely wiped out." And I had to tell him: "Donald, I'm sorry. I can't help you." *[Laughter]* "I'm not—I'm just not in the position to do it." *[Laughter]*

Trump is in trouble, unrelated to me and related to me, no matter—and he knows it.

Earlier this week, I was in Florida, where they're about to implement one of the most extensive and extreme abortion bans in the country. There's only one reason and one person responsible: It's Donald Trump.

He's worried voters are going to hold him accountable for overriding—overturning *Roe v. Wade* and all the cruelty and chaos that's been created. But he said—he asked voters to give him credit for it. He claimed that he was the reason why. He appointed those folks.

Look, we—I have news for Trump: The voters are going to hold him accountable. Mark my words, it's going to move millions of voters of women and men at the polls—to the polls this year.

And I've said many times, Trump and his MAGA crowd don't have a clue about the power of women. You know, when—[*applause*]*—no, I really mean it.*

You may remember, in the Court's decision, it said, but women—when they changed it, they said there's no constitutional right—Federal—but it's up to the States. They said: "But women have a vote. Women have a vote. They can do something about it," almost with tongue in cheek—cheek.

Well, he—we reelected Kamala and me with a Democratic Congress—if we do that, I promise you, *Roe v. Wade* will be the law of the land again. I guarantee it.

But look, folks, chaos is nothing new to Trump. His Presidency was chaos. Not a joke. Trump is trying to make the country forget just how dark and unsettling it was when he was President, but we'll never forget.

We'll never forget how—him lying about COVID, telling the American people to inject bleach into their arms. He injected it into his hair. He got it wrong. [*Laughter*] He got—he missed. But—but all—but all—all kidding aside, that's what he said.

And you know, he did that interview acknowledging that he knew it was a serious proposition [problem; White House correction], but he didn't want anybody to know. He said it's going to go away by thanks—remember all that?

Well, guess what? Over—well over a million people died. They died.

We'll never forget the—his love letters to Kim Jong Un of North Korea and his admiration for Putin. He talks about how smart Putin is and how, if he wants to move into Ukraine or anywhere else, have at it if they're not doing enough for us.

We'll never forget him wanting tear gas to be sprayed on peaceful protesters outside the White House, and then holding a Bible upside down. Now he's writing his own Bible, and he's trying—[*laughter*]*—and he's trying to sell it.*

Look, and we'll certainly never forget the insurrection of June 6—January 6, excuse me—and those dark days of history. The idea that that wasn't an insurrection, I don't—I don't—understand it.

Off the Oval Office—and I hope some of you come and visit. Off that Oval Office, there's a small dining room. He sat there for 2 hours watching on television, watching the chaos, not doing a damn single thing. Policemen died. People were, in fact, badly hurt. I mean, it's never—it's just—it's nothing short of the Revolutionary—of the—excuse me, the Civil War—hasn't been even close. It was one of the worst derelictions of duty of any President in American history.

And we want to go back to that—any of that?

Look, look how far we've come. Since we've been in office, we've created 15 million brandnew jobs, more jobs in that short of time of any President in American history. More people

have health insurance today than ever before in the history of this country, and it's working and it's increasing.

We took on Big Pharma. You know, I can put you in Air Force One when we take off here. And you have a prescription from any drug company in America, and you can bring that with me—with you. I can fly you to Toronto. I can fly you to London. I can fly you to Berlin, to any country, any capital in the world, and you can get that same prescription for 40- to 60-percent less than you get it here.

Well, we won. We lowered prescription drug costs, like 35 bucks for insulin instead of 400 bucks a month for all those people with diabetes.

We've made historic investments in rebuilding the country with these computer chips. I was just—I was just—had an—did a major event up in Syracuse, where the landmark preliminary agreement between my administration and Micron, a microchip manufacturer. We came up with \$6.1 billion in funding this CHIPS program. We used to create 40—we used to make 40 percent of them. We're now down to zero—zero number.

We paired that—Micron—Micron came along and said, "Okay, if you're going to come up with \$6 billion, we're going to come up with \$125 billion," to invest in New York State alone to build chip facilities right here in New York. The single biggest investment ever made in the history of this State—ever.

We've made the most significant investment on climate ever and the most significant gun safety law in 30 years. And we have much more to do. By the way, now they're trying to take down the gun laws we passed.

We should—I was part of one of two people who got—when I was a Senator, we outlawed assault weapons. And guess what? They're back. They're back. There's no legitimate reason whatsoever for anybody to be able to own an assault weapon. I taught constitutional law: You have the right to own a gun, but from the very beginning, it was not an absolute right. You weren't allowed to buy a cannon when you were in 1800. *[Laughter]* You—no, I'm—no, I'm serious.

You know, I love these guys who say that "the blood," the—you know, "the blood of liberty is"—he goes—they're full of malarkey. *[Laughter]*

And by the way, no one—no one—should own a weapon without a background check. Nobody.

And, folks, when I ran, I made a commitment. I said I want an administration that was going to look like America. I placed more Black women in the circuit courts of appeal than every other single President in the history of the United States. I put the first Black woman on the Supreme Court.

I could go on, but the point is, it's—this is all at stake. Trump wants to get rid of everything we've done. He's been very clear about it.

Trump is determined to, quote—he—I love this phrase—he's going to "terminate" the Affordable Care Act. Why? Because it was Obamacare, and now it's on steroids. And guess what? It's saving a lot of lives—you know, the thousands of thousands, millions of people who have preexisting conditions who wouldn't be able to get insurance otherwise. He can't stand it, being associated with Barack.

He's determined to get rid of the climate law. Why? Because he does not believe there's a climate crisis.

I have, since I've been President, flown over—because of the crises we've had, flown over more forest fires and more flooding that has wiped out places than the entire State of Maryland—the entire—it would take up the entire State of Maryland.

Look, he's determined—he's determined—to cut taxes for a lot of you. Well, I don't—I don't think you should be paying more taxes, except for one thing: You know, there's a thousand billionaires in America. You know what their average tax rate is? Eight-point-three percent. Anybody want to trade? Raise your hand. *[Laughter]*

No, I'm serious. If they just had a 25-percent tax rate—not even the highest tax rate—we'd raise \$400 billion over the next 10 years; be able to continue to do what I've already done, lower the deficit and not raise it; and be able to have childcare, be able to have eldercare, be able to do things that other countries are doing that make life easier for everybody and grow the economy.

And by the way, he wants to not only raise—have another major \$2 trillion tax cut, he—while he wants to cut Social Security and Medicare and do such other—significant other damage.

But the biggest threat that Trump poses is to our democracy. I really believe that. Some of you may remember when I ran—because you helped me the first time—I indicated that—I spoke—made a speech at—when I was in Independence Hall in Philadelphia. And I said our democracy was at stake. And the press said, "What are you talking about democracy for?" Well, guess what? Even then, 60 percent of the people agreed with me. Our democracy literally is at stake.

Above all, what's at risk in 2024 is our freedom—basic freedoms and democracy.

And by the way, when you talk about taking away a woman's right to choose, we're well beyond that now. They want to take away the right for contraception, take away the right to marry, take away a whole range of things that Clarence Thomas talked about no longer being guaranteed in the Federal Constitution.

Trump not only embraces the violence of January 6, he's running on it. I mean, he's running on it. He calls the insurrectionists who are in prison—he calls them "patriots," and, if reelected, he says he's going to pardon them. He means it.

You know, now Trump says if he loses again, there will be a "bloodbath." My—let me—no President—no President in modern—in—not in modern—in history has said those kinds of things.

Folks, we have to say with one voice, as Americans—as Democrats, as Independents—that there's no place ever in America for political violence. It's just never, never, never justified. Period.

Look, let me close with this. This election is about a competing vision of America. Trump's vision is one of anger, hate, revenge, retribution. That's what he talks about.

I have a very different view. I have a view of hope and optimism.

I've been doing this a long time. I know I only look like I'm 40, but I'm a little older. *[Laughter]*

But all kidding aside, I've never been more optimistic about America's prospects than I am today. We have the strongest economy in the world. The rest of the world looks to us.

Imagine had they—not finally passed the legislation for Israel and for—and for Ukraine. We are, as Madeleine Albright said, the essential nation. That's a fact.

Who leads the world without us? No, I just—I mean, I'm being literal. I'm not being figurative.

Look, I see an America defined by democracy, not diminished by it. I see an America where we protect our freedoms, not take them away. I see an America where the economy grows from the middle out and the bottom up, not the top down.

My dad, who was a hard-working guy, a well-read man who never got to—he got accepted to Johns Hopkins during the war for his—as they say in Baltimore——

[The President briefly imitated a Baltimore accent.]

——from Baltimore——and——but he never got to go. My dad used to 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,' and have a chance. Just an even chance."

Where working people finally get a fair shot, where health care is a right, not a privilege—a future where we save the planet from the climate crisis and our country from gun violence. These aren't crazy ideas. These are basic ideas that the vast majority of American people agree with.

Folks, this election is about democracy. It's not hyperbole. It's about democracy, freedom, America. This is why I need you.

I know we can do this together. As I said, I've never been more optimistic. Not a joke. And I've been doing this a long time. I was in the Senate for 36 years, Vice President for 8 years, and President going on 4. I may not be the smartest guy in the room, but I have more experience and wisdom on this stage than most anybody's ever held the office. And I'm telling you, we have to win this race. We have to win this race.

We just have to remember who we are. We're the United States of America. And there's nothing, nothing beyond our capacity—nothing—when we do it together.

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

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:15 p.m. at the residence of Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones. In his remarks, he referred to Dylan M. Douglas, son, and Carys Douglas, daughter, of Mr. Douglas and Ms. Zeta-Jones; H. Rodgin Cohen, senior chair, Sullivan and Cromwell LLP, and his wife Barbara; former Rep. Mondaire Jones; former Presidents Donald J. Trump and Barack Obama; former U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Nikki R. Haley, in her former capacity as a 2024 Republican Presidential candidate; Supreme Court Associate Justices Neil M. Gorsuch, Brett M. Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett; Vice President Kamala D. Harris; State Affairs Commission President Kim Jong Un of North Korea; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Supreme Court Associate Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson; and Supreme Court Associate Justice Clarence Thomas. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 26. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Campaign event in Irvington, NY.

Locations: Irvington, NY.

Names: Barrett, Amy Coney; Bowman, Jamaal; Cohen, Barbara; Cohen, H. Rodgin; Douglas, Carys; Douglas, Dylan M.; Douglas, Michael; Gorsuch, Neil M.; Haley, Nikki R.; Harris, Kamala D.; Jackson, Ketanji Brown; Jones, Mondaire; Kavanaugh, Brett M.; Kim Jong Un; Lowey, Nita M.; Obama, Barack; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Thomas, Clarence; Trump, Donald J.; Zeta-Jones, Catherine.

Subjects: 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; 2024 Presidential election; Abortion; Climate change; Contraception and family planning; COVID–19 pandemic; Economic improvement; Federal court nominations and confirmations; Gun purchase background checks, improvement efforts; Gun violence, prevention efforts; Health insurance, access and availability; Insulin cost controls; Israel, U.S. assistance; Job creation and growth; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; New York, Democratic Party event; New York, President's visit; North Korea, State Affairs Commission President; Prescription drug costs, reduction efforts; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Russia, President; Semiconductor manufacturing; Supreme Court Associate Justice; Tax Code reform; U.S. Supreme Court opinion overturning 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Ukraine, U.S. assistance; Vice President.

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