

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

**Remarks Prior to a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters**  
*September 20, 2024*

*The President.* Well, good morning. I guess it's still morning, isn't it? Yes.

Before I begin this Cabinet meeting, I want to discuss very briefly the need for Congress to pass a continuing resolution. It's critical. And we have 10 days for Congress to pass a short-term funding bill that gives them more time to deliver on our national defense, veterans, hard-working families—what we've already appropriated. It's important we get it done.

And it's the only path forward, by—it's by working across the aisle. We've got to have faith that our leaders will pull this together. It's really important. It's a—and—to fund the Government.

And so this Cabinet meeting comes at a time when we have 4 months left in the administration. And we're going to keep running through the tape because the Vice President and I are determined to keep making sure that the democracy delivers what the American people are asking for and what we provided.

That means continuing to implement the historic laws we've passed. They've allowed us to invest in America, rebuild our infrastructure, and implement our historic laws.

So we're grateful that Jill is here today. [*Laughter*] I heard that clapping—it wasn't for me—when we came in.

And here, across previous administrations, First Ladies have attended these meetings and on—for specific reasons. It's the first time Jill has joined us. And it goes to show how important the issue is, what she's about to speak to, to both of us.

Today, at the top of our meeting, Jill is going to give an update on the House initiative—White House initiative to fundamentally change the approach and fund—on how we approach and fund women's health services.

So I'd like to turn it over to Jill and—for any comments she has.

*The First Lady.* Thanks, Joe.

*The President.* And it's all yours, kid.

*The First Lady.* Thank you.

You know, sometimes the White House surprises you. When Joe became President, I knew I wanted to keep shining a light on the issues that I'd worked on for so many years: supporting military and veteran families, ending cancer as we know it with the Biden Cancer Moonshot, lifting up educators, and promoting free community college as a pathway to good-paying careers.

But then last year, I learned about—more about gaps—huge gaps in our understanding of women's health. Our Nation is home to the best health research in the world, yet women's health is understudied, and research is underfunded. And we still know too little about how to effectively prevent, diagnose, and treat a range of health conditions in women, from heart disease to cancers.

It was one of those moments where you can never see the world the same way again. And I knew that I had to add this to my portfolio.

So, last November, Joe and I launched the first-ever White House Initiative on Women's Health Research. And what has never surprised me about the White House is that when you have a great team, which Joe has in all of you, you can bring about solutions quickly.

I'm here, my first time at a Cabinet meeting, to thank you for the incredible progress we've made on women's health research, all in less than a year. Joe directed Federal departments and agencies to prioritize women's health research and innovation, and you responded.

In February, ARPA-H, the agency Joe created to pursue breakthrough health research, at lightning speed, launched its first-ever Sprint for Women's Health. The \$100 million investment will fund innovations that will be life changing for women.

Then, a month later, NIH committed another \$200 million to fund interdisciplinary women's health research, for example, looking at how menopause affects heart health, brain health, and bone health.

In May, the Department of Defense and the VA launched a new joint effort to improve research for women in the military and for women veterans.

On Monday, I'll be at the Clinton Global Initiative to make a new announcement, and we will share more then.

In June, the Department of Health and Human Services announced new funding to address the unique mental health and substance use treatment needs of women.

Your agencies are strengthening standards so that when the Government funds research, it includes women from the beginning. That means making sure women are enrolled in clinical trials and that researchers design studies, analyze data, and report finding [findings; White House correction] in ways that improve women's health.

Joe's Executive order directed the most comprehensive set of actions that any President has ever taken to advance women's health research. And, in his State of the Union Address, he asked Congress for \$12 billion to secure the bold and transformative health discoveries we need.

Our White House initiative has built momentum for health research focused on women, but we have to keep moving forward. We have to keep working across Government and the private sector to incentivize innovative health research for women.

It's time to write a new story of health care in this country, one where women get the answers we need, where the United States continues to be home to the most cutting-edge research in the world, and where everyone can lead healthier lives.

Thank you.

*[At this point, several reporters began speaking at once.]*

*Q.* Mr. President, is it realistic to get to a cease-fire?

*Hamas-Israel Conflict in Gaza, Palestinian Territories/Lebanon*

*Q.* Mr. President, what do—*[inaudible]*?

*[Several reporters spoke at once.]*

*The President.* On the peace process, we're continuing to try to do what we've tried from the beginning to make sure that both the people in northern Israel as well as southern Lebanon are able to go back to their homes and go back safely. And the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, our whole team is working—the intelligence community—to try to get that done. And we're going to keep at it until we get it done. But we've got a way to go.

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*Q.* Is it realistic?

[Several reporters spoke at once.]

*The President.* Shh. Hey.

*Middle East/U.S. Diplomatic Efforts*

*Q.* Is it realistic to get to a cease-fire deal, or have too many bad things happened that make it difficult?

*The President.* If I ever said it's not realistic, we might as well leave. A lot of things don't look realistic until we get them done. We have to keep at it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:37 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Cabinet meeting; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Austin, Lloyd J., III; Biden, Jill T.; Blinken, Antony J.; Harris, Kamala D.

*Subjects:* Cabinet meeting; Continuation appropriations; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Infrastructure improvements; Israel, military operations in Gaza; Lebanon, Israeli airstrikes and military operations; Secretary of Defense; Secretary of State; Vice President; White House Initiative on Women's Health Research; Women's health issues.

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