

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

**Remarks at the Philadelphia Democratic City Committee Autumn Dinner in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

*October 15, 2024*

*The President.* Hello, Philadelphia!

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Hello, hello, hello.

*Audience members.* Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe!

*The President.* Well, thank you.

*Audience members.* Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe!

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

*Audience members.* Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe!

*The President.* Look, folks, you know, I represented Delaware, but I wouldn't have gotten elected without Philadelphia, and that's the truth.

Thanks to Bryan Bush, Sheet Metal Workers Local 19 for hosting us tonight and along with the leaders and members of other labor unions across the country.

Folks—and I want to thank my good friend Bobby Brady. You know, if you're ever in a foxhole and you're looking for help, you want him next to you, man.

You know, you've got great leadership in this State: Governor Shapiro, who I talk to all the time, and Lieutenant Governor—two of the best in the Nation. You've got two of the best U.S. Senators in Bobby Casey, from my hometown of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and John Fetterman, who is doing a tremendous job. He does better in short pants than most people do in long pants. *[Laughter]* You have an incredible, historic mayor in Cherelle Parker. Madam Mayor, thank you.

Folks, we're in the homestretch. Let me ask you: Are you going to reelect Bob Casey to the U.S. Senate?

*Audience members.* Yes!

*The President.* Are you going to elect Erin McClelland State treasurer?

*Audience members.* Yes!

*The President.* Are you going to elect Eugene—hey, where—is Eugene here?

*Audience member.* Debate. He's on the debate.

*The President.* He's in a debate. Well, I tell you what, you'd better elect him attorney general.

Are you going to elect my buddy Malcolm Kenyatta as the auditor general?

And most importantly, let me ask you: Are you going to elect Kamala Harris President of the United States of America?

Well, folks, look, 4 years ago, I picked Kamala to be my Vice President. I picked her because she is smart and tough. She was a first-rate district attorney in—out in California, an attorney general, and then U.S. Senator. But most of all, I picked her because she has character and she has integrity. Incredible.

And I must admit, I picked her because she had one endorsement that mattered most to me. My son Beau Biden was the attorney general of the State of Delaware, and I give you my word, when—before he left to—headed off to Iraq for a year, he said, "Dad, I met the next generation, man." He worked with her. He worked with Kamala. I'm not joking. As attorney generals, they worked together to take on the big corporations.

And, folks, he spent the next year stationed in Iraq with those God-awful burn pits the size of football field and 10-feet deep and incredible—used to incinerate everything from wastes of war to chemicals, tires—just like up in 9/11, all those firemen. Smoke thick with poison spread through the air and the lungs of our troops.

And Beau, like many others, shortly after he got home, he was diagnosed with stage 4 glioblastoma, which is a death sentence. He lasted for a——

*Audience member. [Inaudible]*

*The President.* Thank you, man.

He lasted for a long while.

But Beau was the attorney general of Delaware at the same time she was the attorney general of California. As I said, he told me—he told me: "Dad, she's an extraordinary leader. She's the next generation. Take a look at her, Dad." And she's been that and more to me.

I'm one of the few people in American history who has been Vice President and President, and I know both jobs—what they take. And I can tell you, Kamala Harris has been a great Vice President. She'll be a great President as well.

When I decided it was time to pass the torch to the next generation, I knew—I knew—who I wanted to replace me. I endorsed Kamala immediately. And if you've seen the campaign Kamala has run, it proves I'm right. The enthusiasm went off the charts. Her convention was great.

She beat Trump so badly in the debate he's scared to death to meet her again. That's a fact. Tough guy, right? Tough guy. Because he knows he'd lose again. That's a fact. He is a loser.

Look, now I'm proud of our record the past 4 years. Maybe you saw Rachel Maddow last night, who did a whole lot of—raised a lot of questions. If you're making business decisions about who's doing a better job on the economy, she said, "The Biden-Harris economy has been—not only left every other rich country in the world in the dust, it's left the Trump administration in the dust."

Well, folks, that wasn't hard to leave him in the dust. *[Laughter]* I think he lives in the dust.

We created 16 million jobs, more jobs than have been created in a single term in all of American history. More people are working today than ever before. Wages for working people are higher than they have ever been before. And more people have health care insurance than before.

And what does Trump want to do if he wins? He wants to use his favorite word: "terminate." No, I'm serious. This guy means what he says, man. He wants to terminate the Affordable Care Act. He's been trying to succeed, and he failed every time.

If he does, though, 40 million Americans will lose their health care—40 million. And 100 million will lose their protections because they have preexisting conditions.

Trump likes to call himself "probusiness." We all know Trump is a failed businessman. He inherited \$100 million, and he got bankrupt—how many times? I can't keep track—including bankrupting a casino in Atlantic City, which is pretty hard to do. *[Laughter]* How's that possible? I thought the house always won. *[Laughter]*

Trump wasn't only a loser in 2020, he's a loser in everything he does.

Meanwhile, on our watch, businesses of all sizes are surging. A record number of small-business applications—19 million so far since we've gotten elected—and every single application is an act of hope.

Folks, remember when Trump got elected—if he got elected, the stock—he told—if I got elected, the stock market would crash? I just wish to hell I was—I was listed for 36 years as the poorest man in Congress, so I didn't have any stock. But any rate—[*laughter*].

But if he means the stock market crashed through record highs, he was actually right. It's the highest it's ever been in American history. And by the way, it must be irritating to a guy to turn to Fox News and hear the Biden-Harris stock market is stronger than ever in history.

Well, look, folks, unemployment is at historic lows for everyone, including Blacks and Latinos. We have the smallest racial gap—wealth gap in 20 years.

Wages have grown faster than inflation for more than a year now. Inflation is down to 2.4 percent. In fact, it's now back to prepandemic levels, and it's still going down—not up, down. And, along with it, interest rates are beginning to drop.

The data shows the benefits of economic recovery are benefiting working and middle class folks more than the top. New data from the National Labor Relations Board shows the number of workers filing for union representation has doubled since I became President—doubled.

*Audience member.* Thank you, Joe!

*The President.* You've got it, man.

*Audience members.* Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe!

*The President.* No, I——

*Audience members.* Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe!

*The President.* My grandfather would roll over in his grave if I wasn't—he'd say, "Joey"—from Scranton—he'd say, "Joey, you're union from belt buckle to shoe sole." [*Laughter*] He said it a little more colorfully than that. [*Laughter*]

The Biden-Harris administration is the first administration in five decades to increase union petitions. It's simple. They know, you know, Kamala and I know: Wall Street didn't build America. The middle class did, and unions built the middle class. And that's a fact.

And I make no apologies for being the most pro-union President in American history.

Folks, I mean it. Under our administration, we've made the most significant investment in public safety in history: \$15 billion to law enforcement through the American Rescue Plan. And not a single Republican voted for it. The result? Violent crime is down to a 50-year low. The murder rate is at the largest ever—reduction.

And Trump's response? Lie after lie that somehow the stats are fake. He says they're making up the numbers.

Not only that, for weeks, Kamala and I negotiated the strongest bipartisan border deal in American history. One of the most conservative Senators from Oklahoma and a progressive Democrat from Connecticut worked 4 weeks on it, got it passed, introduced it in the Congress. What happened?

We funded more agents, judges, high-tech machinery, and all the like. But Trump knew it was a good deal, so he called for it—he called—he got on the phone and started calling Republicans to say, quote, "You can't vote for this because it will help Biden and hurt me."

He's a great American, isn't he?

So Trump and the Republicans killed the deal. But Kamala and I didn't stop. We surged resources and increased enforcement. We took executive action. We worked with Mexico.

And despite what all Trump's friends say, there are fewer border crossings today than the day he left office—right now.

But let me say it again. There are fewer people coming into this country illegally as I stand right now than the day he left office. And we're going to—and look, I've got to say, and Kamala will say: She's going to do more for comprehensive reform. That's one of the main things that's got to get done.

So let's set the record straight. More people are working today in America than any time since Trump left office. That's just a fact.

More people have health insurance than when Trump was President. More people are earning higher wages. The stock market is even higher, 401(k)s are stronger. Violent crime is down. Murder is down. And fewer people are crossing the border.

And Trump calls that a hellscape? Talks about America being a failed nation. Where the hell is he from? *[Laughter]*

No, I'm serious. Think about it. A President calling America a "failed nation." It makes me angry.

I say America is winning. We're the most powerful nation in the world, the most respected nation in the world, and every other country in the world would like to be like—Trump says we're losers, but the only loser I know is Donald Trump.

Look, don't get me wrong. There's more work to be done. Kamala and I have specific plans to bring down the cost of housing, childcare, eldercare, and more. How we solve these challenges is going to—will help make the next President—who is President. Every President has to cut their own path.

That's what I did. I was loyal to Barack Obama, but I cut my own path as President. And that's what Kamala is going to do. She'll be—she's been loyal so far, but she's going to cut her own path: how to further economic growth, how to keep making it easier to start and grow a business, how to make a border more secure, how to make health care even more affordable, how to make housing more affordable, how to make childcare and eldercare more affordable, all of which, if we do, actually grows the economy and cuts the deficit.

Folks, Kamala will take the country in her own direction. And that's one of the most important differences in this election. Kamala's perspective on our problems will be fresh and new. Donald Trump's perspective is old and failed and, quite frankly, thoroughly, totally dishonest.

Look, what is—what's his idea for our economy? He says he wants to give another tax cut—a \$5 trillion tax—that's not a joke—a \$5 trillion tax cut for the wealthy. Last time he did a \$2 trillion tax cut and set the biggest debt—increased the national debt more than any other President has in any single term.

And by the way, to pay your taxes—his taxes to the wealthy, he wants to cut Social Security and Medicare.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* Not a joke. Not a joke.

In addition to terminating the Affordable Care Act, he wants to repeal what we did to lower prescription drug costs. He wants to bow down to Big Pharma again.

Kamala and I finally beat Big Pharma—and we gave Medicare the—Medicare the power to negotiate prescription drugs, like the FA does for veterans, Look—the VA.

And seniors with disabilities are now paying \$35 a month instead of \$400. And starting in January, all the seniors on Medicare will have a total prescription drug cost capped at \$2,000 a year, no matter how much they have to spend.

*[At this point, the President coughed.]*

Cancer drugs—excuse me.

*Audience member.* We're not going back!

*The President.* We ain't going back.

*Audience members.* We're not going back! We're not going back! We're not going back!

*The President.* And by the way, our Medicare reforms not only save seniors on Medicare money. Do you know how much they—know how much they save the taxpayers? One hundred and sixty billion dollars, that one passage. Why? Because Medicare is paying \$35 instead of \$400, for example.

Trump wants to take all that away. But Kamala wants to expand everything so it exists for everybody in the Nation. Look, she wants to cover the elder under Medicaid.

Trump would get rid of the \$369 billion Kamala and I passed—the most ever in the history of the world—to deal with climate change.

And by the way——

*Audience member.* No climate change.

*The President.* No climate change out there, right? *[Laughter]* I just spent a week—from Florida to North Carolina. It's devastating. You know why? Because the ocean water is warming, increasing significantly the threats of significant weather.

How does it make you feel, after the latest hurricane that have ripped through the country, knowing that we're going to cut back on—and I—just, look, Trump wants a new sales tax—a new sales tax on goods we—excuse me—on goods we import in significant numbers. Up to 85 percent of all the seafood we eat is imported, 60 percent of the fresh fruit, 40 percent of the vegetables. We import coffee, clothing, and so much more. And, according to all the economists, if his sales tax were to, in fact, pass, the average family would have an increase in their cost of \$400 a year—or \$4,000 a year—excuse me—\$4,000.

And look, it's a surprise that we've got a guy who can't afford to say the word "union" wants to get overtime on hard-working folks taken away.

*Audience member.* Because he's a scab!

*The President.* No, no. He's doing it again. That's what he says. He said—he and his allies say they support workers and the middle class. Give me a break.

Look, this is from the same guy who calls himself a great protector of women.

*Audience members.* Boo!

[*The President made the sign of the cross.*]

*The President.* Come on.

*Audience members.* Fire Trump again! Fire Trump again! Fire Trump again!

*The President.* And, folks, look, this is the same guy who has been held liable for \$83 million for sexual abuse and defamation. Same guy, for getting rid of *Roe v. Wade*. The same guy who has three other major cases waiting for him when he loses.

*Audience member.* Thirty-four felonies!

*The President.* And by the way, 34 felonies. And so far, he hadn't gotten sentenced. He got the sentence kicked back, but I want to watch that sentence. [*Laughter*]

Look, Donald Trump is not running for you, he's running for himself. I think he's running to stay out of jail.

What's he got left? Trump's whole came down—come down to demonizing immigrants, calling immigrants "animals," saying they don't have the "good genes," saying they poison the blood of our country. It's sick.

You know, it's designed to prey on our worst fears. It's un-American. Think about it.

Trump hides all his racism—or used to. But now it's just out front. He has the same ideas on race as the 1930s. Trump's ideas on the economy are from the twenties. Trump's idea on women are from the fifties. And, folks, this is 2024. We can't go back.

*Audience members.* We're not going back! We're not going back! We're not going back!

*The President.* We've made too much progress. We have to keep moving forward.

And, folks, for all the talk about issues and policies—it's all important, the real measure of a President is character, integrity, judgment, temperament. Because here's what I can tell you: Every President is confronted with crises no one saw coming. And in that moment, what matters about a President is the President. Does he have—does she have integrity, a code of honor that they live by? What belief system guides their decisions? How do they handle pressure? How do they respond when things don't go their way? Will they uphold their oath and honor the Constitution?

With Donald Trump, we know the answer. Just ask yourself: How did Donald Trump handle COVID—the crisis when he saw it coming?

How—we know from Bob Woodward's book how Trump lacks character and can't be trusted. Trump deliberately led the American people to believe that it wasn't a dangerous thing, COVID. I remember how he told us to inject bleach. Remember that? Bless me, Father.

In the middle of the COVID crisis, this guy gave Putin—when it came out recently, he gave Vladimir Putin COVID tests that were desperately needed by Americans, and he—at home, and he gave it to Putin. Trump cares more about kissing up to Putin than he cares about your sons and daughters.

You know, we lost over a million people in COVID. Think about how many we could have saved if it wasn't for his pure incompetence and selfishness.

Think about the 2020 election Trump lost. Kamala and I beat him by 7 million votes, but Trump couldn't accept it, despite the rulings of more than 60 courts, including the Supreme Court.

He embraced the Big Lie that threatened the lives of elected officials and poll workers. He sent violent mobs to the U.S. Capitol on January 6 to stop a peaceful transfer of power.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* He sat in the dining room over by—off of my present office, the Oval Office, and did nothing for 3 hours as police were being attacked and killed, lawmakers were forced to hide for their lives.

According to the report, when Trump saw—told the mob was looking for Mike Pence to hang him, you know what Trump's response was? "So what?"

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* Let me tell you something. You can't be pro-insurrection and pro-American. If you can't denounce January 6, you have no business being President.

And look, Trump hasn't changed. I would argue he's gotten worse. Clearly, he lost the election in 2020. He snapped. No, I mean it. He's become unhinged. Look at his rallies.

Last night—last night—his rally stopped taking questions because someone got hurt, and guess what? He stood on the stage for 30 minutes and danced. [*Laughter*] I'm serious. What's wrong with this guy? [*Laughter*]

Listen to him. How he's going to—after the institution of democracy, if Trump is elected again, he says he'll use the Justice Department to attack his political enemies. He says he'll fire 500,000 civil servants and replace them with Trump loyalists.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* He just said he could use the U.S. military to go after U.S. citizens he disagrees with. He said it.

He still refuses to accept the results of 2020, and he's refusing to accept the results of the 2024 election if he loses again.

Look, folks, every generation faces a moment where democracy has to be defended. This is our moment. I believe it in—I believe it in my core. When we beat Trump in 2020—when we beat Trump in 2020—we saved American democracy. Now we have to do it again in 2024.

Folks, let me close with this. More than anything in this election, we have to decide who we want, what we want America to be. Who is America?

Kamala will be a President who believes in an America that still stands for the core proposition that stated in this Nation—started this Nation right here in Philly, where the Declaration of Independence was signed, where the Constitution was written, and where we determined the power of our institutions of government are determined by the power of the people. The power based—the very idea of America: We're all created equal, deserve to be treated equally throughout our lives.

We've never fully lived up for it, but, unlike Trump, we've never walked away from it. And I'll be damned if we'll walk away from it now.

Folks, we've got a lot of work to do, especially here in Pennsylvania, especially in Philadelphia. How you go and what you turn out is going to determine the outcome of this election.

We have to talk to our friends, our families, our neighbors, our coworkers. We have to beat back the lies with truth. And most of all, we have to vote and get out the vote.

Philadelphia, are you ready?

Well, let's get this done, and let's remember who we are. We're the United States of America. And nothing—nothing—is beyond our capacity when we work together.

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

Thank you.

*Audience members.* Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe! Thank you, Joe!

*The President.* By the way, I married a Philly girl.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:44 p.m. at the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation (SMART) Workers Local 19 training center. In his remarks, he referred to Bryan J. Bush, president and business manager, Sheet Metal Workers Local 19; former Rep. Robert A. Brady; Lt. Gov. Austin Davis and Democratic candidate for State attorney general Eugene DePasquale of Pennsylvania; former President Donald J. Trump, in his capacity as the 2024 Republican Presidential nominee; Rachel Maddow, host, MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show"; Sens. James P. Lankford and Christopher S. Murphy; Bob Woodward, associate editor, Washington Post; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; and former Vice President Michael R. Pence. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 16.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Philadelphia Democratic City Committee Autumn Dinner in Philadelphia, PA.

*Locations:* Philadelphia, PA.

*Names:* Biden, Jill T.; Brady, Robert A.; Bush, Bryan J.; Casey, Robert P., Jr.; Davis, Austin; DePasquale, Eugene; Fetterman, John K.; Harris, Kamala D.; Kenyatta, Malcolm; Lankford, James P.; Maddow, Rachel; McClelland, Erin; Murphy, Christopher S.; Obama, Barack; Parker, Cherelle L.; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Shapiro, Joshua D.; Trump, Donald J.; Woodward, Bob.

*Subjects:* 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; 2024 Presidential election; Border security; Climate change; COVID-19 pandemic; Crime rates; Economic improvement; Federal deficit and debt; Health insurance, access and availability; Household income and wages; Illegal immigration; Immigration reform; Inflation; International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation (SMART) Workers; Job creation and growth; Labor movement and organized labor; National Labor Relations Board; Natural disasters, climate change impacts; Pennsylvania, Democratic Party event; Pennsylvania, Governor; Pennsylvania, Lieutenant Governor; Pennsylvania, President's visit; Prescription drug costs, reduction efforts; Racial equality, improvement efforts; Russia, President; Small businesses, promotion efforts; State and local law enforcement, Federal support; U.S. Supreme Court opinion overturning 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade; Vice President.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD202400918.