

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks at a Black History Month Reception

February 20, 2025

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you. Wow. That's—this is some crowd.

How are you? Thank you, Leo.

This is some crowd.

Professional golfer Eldrick T. "Tiger" Woods. Pretty good.

The President. These are the best people, Tiger. And we have Adam Scott here also, winner of the Masters, one of the greatest golfers in the world. I've always tried to swing just like Adam. It never worked out that way. *[Laughter]*

And Tiger we know. And I just want to thank Adam and Tiger. And the commissioner of golf is Jay. Thank you very much for being here. Jay Monahan, head of the PGA. And we had some interesting discussions.

But let me ask you: Is there anybody like our Tiger? How are you? He's the great——

Would you want to just say a couple of words, Tiger?

Mr. Woods. No. *[Laughter]*

The President. Oh, he doesn't. He's much more comfortable——

Audience members. Tiger! Tiger! Tiger!

The President. Tiger! Tiger!

Mr. Woods. Hey, it's an honor to be here. It's an honor to be here with you, Mr. President, and to be—*[inaudible]*—here with all of you. Thank you so much.

The President. Thanks, Tiger.

And I want to thank all of you very much for being here. Welcome to the White House, and we proudly celebrate Black History Month.

How are you, darling?

Today we pay tribute to the generations of Black legends, champions, warriors, and patriots who helped drive our country forward to greatness. And you really are great. You're great people. What a great, nice group of——

Audience member. Yes, we are!

The President. I have some people in front of me every once in a while, with all the problems that are caused all over the world. They're not nice. They're not nice. And—but we're making—but we're making them nice, I can tell you that. And we're making them nice rapidly.

So we're pleased to be joined in this really beautiful afternoon at the White House by hundreds of incredible members of the African American community, many of whom are making history themselves, including one of the greatest athletes of all time, who you just said hello—the man who matched Sam Snead's number-one record for the most PGA Tour wins ever, and a man who has 15 majors.

And he's got a long way to go, too. I was with him a week ago. We played. I think—Adam, I think he's got some left, doesn't he? Huh? He's got a couple of majors left, maybe more than that.

But Tiger Woods, he's an incredible guy, an incredible athlete, incredible player. Thank you for being with us, Tiger. Thank you very much.

And he got the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which he proudly wore today. And it's—we have Senator Tim Scott here. What do you think, Tim? You never got the Presidential Medal. Maybe someday.

Senator Timothy E. Scott. Maybe someday!

The President. Maybe someday. You'd better believe it.

And also, Adam, thank you very much. Adam is, as Tiger will tell you, one of the greatest players and one of the great modern players. And he had 32 wins worldwide—and winning the Masters also. And he's something very special and a—a great representative of golfers and athletes.

Thank you very much, Adam. Even though he doesn't quite come from our country, he sort of does, right? He's here a lot. He comes from another nice place, like Australia, right? And they've been very good—very, very good to us.

Jay, thank you very much. Appreciate it very much.

We also have the head of Pfizer here, so I want to thank him. One of the great, great people. One of the great businessmen.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Thank you, Albert. Thank you. *[Laughter]* Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

I want to congratulate our newly sworn-in Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Scott Turner. Come here. I got to say hello. Come on up here, Scott. I had Tim Scott pushing him so hard, you have no idea. Had no choice. Is that right, Tim? No, Scott is—I've known him a long time, and Scott is a real champion.

Say a couple of words, Scott, please.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development E. Scott Turner. Thank you, Mr. President.

Well, hello, everyone. Is everybody happy to be here together?

Audience members. Yes!

Secretary Turner. Is everybody happy to be here together? Amen.

Well, first of all, you know, I want to thank President Trump for his confidence and appointing me to this position. I consider it a great honor and a great blessing. And I thank God for this, and I'm real humbled by it. And you can guarantee that every day, that I'mma lay it down for the people of America. All right. Yes, yes, yes.

And, Senator Tim Scott, thank you for your leadership. I really appreciate you. And for all of those who have gone before us and those of you who have such a great voice today, keep on speaking, keep on preaching for not just Black America but for all America. So we appreciate you.

And my sister Brooke Rollins and all of those here, Mr. President, we look forward to working with you, sir, and carrying out this great agenda.

We pray for you every day. God bless you, and I thank you. God bless America and thank you for President Trump.

The President. Thank you very much.

Secretary Turner. Thank you, sir.

The President. Congratulations.

And I see we have a newly—I think you just got in, right? They just confirmed you. And you—you did it very nicely. Brooke Rollins, she's the Secretary of Agriculture. It's a big deal. That's great, Brooke. That was a good vote you had, too, huh? You went——

Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins. Very good.

The President. You—she went through very easily, a little easier than some of our people. But they were all approved, every one of them.

And today, we just had Kash Patel approved, which is great.

So, Brooke, congratulations. Secretary of Agriculture. That's big stuff, right? That's big. So, you're going to do fantastically.

And congratulations also to a really good friend of mine. He endorsed me early, and he was one of the best surrogates you could have. The surrogate is when you walk around and—and go on television shows, and they go—try and beat you up, but he beat them up. There was—they didn't have a chance against Tim Scott. Senator Tim Scott from South Carolina. And he's now the longest serving Black United States Senator in the history of our country. I don't know, that's pretty good.

He's going to be around for a long time, right? He just got married. Congratulations on that too. Beautiful, beautiful wife.

Thanks, as well, to Congressman John James. Where's John James? Is he—hi, John. How are you? That's a star. Young star. I knew that 5 years ago, right, John? I sort of predicted it.

And I'm really proud to say that we now have more Black Republicans serving in the U.S. House than at any time since 1870. That's a long time—1870. So thank you very much.

And, Scott, you're going to be fantastic. I'll tell you, you're going to do a great job.

As you know, the—Americans are going to be celebrating something very important coming up: our 250th anniversary, our Nation's founding. And when we do, we're going to look forward to honoring the contributions of countless Black Americans who fought to win and protect and expand American freedom from the very, very beginning.

And some of my good friends are here today, and I appreciate you being. I'm not going to call out your names, because Tiger will get very bored. [*Laughter*] He'll say, "This is a little boring." This is a little boring if we do that. But I want to thank you all for being here. You are our friends.

Audience member. Thank you!

The President. And we appreciate this. And you, McGee, you have—you are my friend.

Audience member. U.S.A.!

The President. The last administration tried to reduce all of American history to a single year: 1619.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. But under our administration, we honor the indispensable role Black Americans have always played in the immortal cause of another date: 1776. We like 1776. In the

very first skirmish of the Revolutionary War at Lexington Green, an enslaved Black man named Prince Estabrook—you know Prince Estabrook? Yes.

Audience member. That's a good guy!

The President. —answered history's call and fought as the Minutemen alongside the other patriots of the very small Massachusetts town. Couldn't protect itself, but they did a good job.

Prince was wounded in the early morning battle, becoming not only the first African American soldier to fight in the revolution, but among the very first Americans to spill their blood. One of the first in the nation to spill blood in that very, very tough time.

Soon Estabrook joined the Continental Army and ultimately won his own freedom, along with that of his fellow Americans. His legacy will endure, and we're very proud to honor him today. It's a very important day in our country, and we honor him. First person to spill blood happened to be Tim [Prince; White House correction] Estabrook.

Today I'm pleased to announce that we will be including the statue of Prince Estabrook in our new National Garden of American Heroes. We have a—we're going to be doing a Garden of American Heroes.

And now that I think of it, I didn't have—I must tell you, you know, sadly, most of them—I guess all of them—are not with us any longer. I was going to put Tiger in the garden, but maybe you don't want to be in there. [*Laughter*] That's—I maybe should wait a little bit, huh? Like about 50—I think I'm going to wait about 50 years. All right?

But he's—Tiger is going to make it. Okay? But I'm a little afraid to tell him yes, because he'd be the only one that's living. I don't know, Tiger. [*Laughter*] Tiger is rejecting that offer, right?

Under the Executive order I signed last month, this new, beautiful outdoor statue park—it's going to be a statue park. It's going to be unbelievable. We're picking the final sites now. It's between various States that want it very badly. It will honor hundreds of our greatest Americans to ever live, including countless Black Americans, icons.

The garden will predominantly feature incredible women, like Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Billie Holiday, Aretha Franklin, and Coretta Scott King. And I will showcase extraordinary—it will be something very extraordinary. It's going to be producing—we're going to produce some of the most beautiful works of art in the form of a statue for men like Frederick Douglass; Booker T. Washington; Jackie—Jackie Robinson, what a great athlete that was; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Muhammad Ali. He was not a bad athlete. What do you think, Muhammad, not—not too bad. And the late Kobe Bryant. People love Kobe Bryant. And we're going to save Tiger Woods for another time. That's all that I can—I'm sorry.

During Black History Month, we pay tribute to these heroes and to so many others but not simply because they're Black heroes, but also because they are truly American heroes who inspire all of us, very much so. The theme of this year's celebration is African Americans and Labor, and we want to thank all of the Black workers, construction workers, and every other worker. They do a job like nobody can do. And we want to just thank them very much for their contribution.

Tim, the contribution you've made—Tim, is incredible. Opportunity Zones, so many people—so many—he's the father of Opportunity Zone. I'm just the son. He's the father, because he came into the White House, the Oval Office, with this idea. And it's probably the number one economic development project ever in our country, and I want to give Senator Tim Scott the credit for it. Good job, Tim.

Of course, millions of Blacks were first brought here in slavery, and they were kept in that evil condition for, really, generations, but because of the steadfast faith and courage of so many

patriots of all colors, we abolished that horrific institution, expanded civil rights, and advanced America's destiny as one Nation under God, with liberty and justice——

Audience members. For all!

The President. ——for all.

Just a few months ago, the people in this room and millions of other Black Americans played their own part in the American story when you went to the voting booths and restored a nice, good, solid Government.

And there's a guy that really helped. There's a man that really helped. You really are great. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Audience member. Welcome back!

The President. I don't forget. I'm proud to say that we—we received—listen to this—more votes from Black Americans than any Republican President ever. Not even close. Almost—almost 40 percent of the vote.

Now, I'm not—I won't be happy the next time. Should I run again? You tell me. *[Laughter]* There's—there's your controversy, right there. There's your controversy.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years! *[Laughter]*

The President. Thank you. You'll be seeing that on—you're going to see—you're going to see that tonight, Tim, on television.

I want to thank just a few of the people who are with us today, and these are great friends of ours. Alveda King. Alveda—where are you, Alveda? Hi, Alveda. Thank you. You've been with me from day one, and I appreciate it. I won't forget it. She's a fantastic woman.

Alice Johnson. Where's Alice? Boy, are you incredible. I watched you on—last night on television. You were so good. You know, Alice was in prison for doing something that today probably wouldn't even be prosecuted. She spent 22 years in prison. Twenty-two years. She had another 22 years left. Can you believe it? And I pardoned her, and it was one of the best pardons. One of the best pardons.

You know what she was on—she happened to be on the wrong telephone line. Is that true? She was on a telephone call. And I'm not saying it was perfect, but it wasn't worth 40 or 50 years, Alice. And you've been an inspiration to people, and we're going to be listening to your recommendation on pardons. You're going to go over and you're going to be—you're going to—she's going to be my pardon czar. Okay?

And you're going to find people just like you that should not—this should not have happened. It should not have happened. So you're going to look and you're going to make recommendations, and I'll follow those recommendations—okay?—for pardons. All right? Thank you very much.

A man who is just incredible. This guy, I watched him on—I watched him when he was a Democrat, and then, one day, he had a change because he couldn't take it any longer. And does anyone ever hear of—did anyone ever hear of a man named Leo 2.0 Terrell? Where are you? Get up here. Get up here. This—I love this guy.

You know what he's doing now? He's with the Department of Justice. He's in charge of civil rights and lots of other great things. He's going to be working with Pam.

It's okay. Could he come up, please? Come on, Leo. Get up here.

Audience members. Leo! Leo! Leo!

The President. Leo 2.0. This guy is great. Hello, man. Thank you.

Senior Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Leo Terrell. Mr. President.

The President. Congratulations, huh?

Senior Counsel Terrell. You are the greatest.

The President. Oh, thank you.

Senior Counsel Terrell. Tiger, thank you.

The President. Thank you.

Senior Counsel Terrell. I just want to say we are in the presence of the greatest President of all time. He is the greatest President in our lifetime.

And I'll tell you right now, the Democratic Party should be a worry, because they take—took us for granted. No longer. We vote in our best interest. We want the same thing that every American wants: good job, we want a secure border, we want to pay lower taxes. And Mr. President Donald Trump is doing that.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Audience member. 2.0!

Audience member. Let's go, Leo!

The President. He's a great guy. No, I watched him. He was a radical Democrat. He became a radical Republican, right? He's great. He's in the Department of Justice, think of it, doing very important work at highest level.

Also, Sage Steele. Sage, where are you? Hello, Sage. Great job you do. You're doing—you're doing great. Thank you very much, Sage, for being here.

Michael "Harry-O" Harris. Michael. Hi, Michael. Thank you very much, Michael. Diante Johnson. Diante. Thank you, Diante. Lynne Patton, she's worked for me for a long time. Lynne, she's worked for us for a long time. Bob Woodson. Where is Bob?

And we're also joined by seven-time Mr. Olympia—oh, I want to see this guy—Phil Heath. Where's Phil? Phil Heath. I don't want to compare my muscles. Here he is. Thank you, Phil, very much. I appreciate it.

Will you come up here for a second? Come on. Get up. I've got to say. Come on. You. The—from—from day one—right?—from day one, he's been here. Get up. You've got to say just a word. Don't fall. If you fall, it's all over. [*Laughter*]

Tiger, you're not allowed to fall. You know, you could make a great speech, but if you fall going up, that's no good.

Come on.

Newsmax "The Pulse" Program Host David J. Harris, Jr. Wow. Wow.

The President. You are great.

Mr. Harris. Are you kidding me? Mr. President, it has been an honor of a lifetime to support you, to try to wake up as many people to the lies of the Democrat Party and the nonstop manipulation of the mainstream media. That's why I now have my show on Newsmax, so I can champion you. And I'm thankful that we've been able to champion him and get him across the finish line for another amazing 4 years.

And let me say, I know God has chose you. He anointed you for this position. He kept you alive so you could be here today. And we prayed for that. We prayed for you. We continue to pray for you, and we're thankful for your service and your sacrifice. Mr. President, Donald J. Trump, honor. God bless you. Thank you.

The President. From day one. I like those guys from day one. Tiger has been there from day one too. Let me tell you, this guy is amazing.

In 4 weeks, our new administration has achieved more than most administrations achieve in 4 years. We brought our country back. It's 4 weeks. Today is our fourth week. It's the end of the week. We start our—we are now starting our fifth.

And I think we've done more in 4 weeks, well, certainly the last administration did in 4 years. They actually went negative. They actually went in the wrong direction.

Together, we're going to be fighting long and hard for Black Americans and all Americans. We're going to be fighting for all Americans.

We've secured our border, and we're stopping the invasion of our country. You know, our border right now is more secure than it's ever been, and we had the record. Four years ago, we had the record. We had the lowest number in history. And now the numbers, Tim, are even lower than they were then. And we're honored.

They were allowing people to come in from all over the world, from prisons and jails, mental institutions, insane asylums. Gang members, they had drug dealers. They had everybody dropping in, and we had this ridiculous open border policy. They'd drop in.

And I'll tell you, the people that were affected the most were Black people. You were affected the most in terms of the crime, in terms of the drugs and everything else.

And we have the border shut down. We allow people to come in. We want people to come in, Tim, but we want them to come in legally. They're going to come through legally.

So we're protecting American workers, including millions of Black workers, and we have a thing called reciprocal tariffs. If they charge us, we charge them. This is opening up. We just signed the bill, and we're going to take in billions and billions of dollars. And we're making our country very healthy again and very rich again. We want to be very rich again. We've been taken advantage by everybody.

And you've been watching DOGE, where we've—where we found billions—tens of billions of dollars of fraud and waste and abuse, and that's just the beginning. And Elon Musk has done an amazing job, I have to tell you. His and his supergeniuses. You know, these are seriously high-IQ people, and nobody is going to talk them out of anything. They go in, and they find—they're finding billions. I mean, literally tens of billions of dollars, and we just started. And I think that's going to have a big, big impact, Brooke, right?

So we want to just really say—and I have to say to you, I look at this turnout, I look at the love in the room—this is just love in the room. And I remember the first time I did this, my first administration, one of my first meetings, there wasn't this large a crowd, Tiger. This room—we had about five people in the front. *[Laughter]* We had maybe five—five Black people right in the front, right about there. *[Laughter]*

I said, "Is anybody else coming? Is this it? Are we open?" *[Laughter]* I don't even think Tim Scott—I know Turner wasn't there. I don't think Tim Scott was there either. I'm not sure. *[Laughter]*

But that's all changed, and we got the highest vote, and one of the big reasons I'm President today is because of the Black vote. And I just—and I always appreciate it.

So this is a very special time. It's Black History Month. We love you all. We're going to work with you. We're going to make America greater than ever before. We're going to do it together.

And I want to thank you all for being here. It's an—incredible honor.

And to my great golfing friends, I want to thank them, in particular, because they really are—they make a lot of money. They don't have to be up here with me. Tiger doesn't have to be here. Adam doesn't have to. They don't need this. But they love you, and they love our country.

Thank you all very much. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:07 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Albert Bourla, chairman and chief executive officer, Pfizer Inc.; Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Kashyap P. "Kash" Patel; Mindy Noce, wife of Sen. Scott; Alveda C. King, founder, Alveda King Ministries; Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi; Sage M. Steele, former cohost of ESPN's "SportsCenter" program; Michael R. "Harry-O" Harris, founder of Godfather entertainment and cofounder of Death Row Records, whose prison sentence was commuted by the President in January 2021; Diante Johnson, founder and president, Black Conservative Federation; White House Director of Minority Outreach Lynne M. Patton; Robert L. Woodson, Sr., founder and president, Woodson Center; and White House Senior Adviser Elon R. Musk. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on February 21.

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