

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a National Governors Association Dinner and an Exchange With Reporters
February 22, 2025

The President. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, everybody. It's a great honor to have you at the White House, a special place.

This is a beautiful evening. It's an evening I always look forward to. And welcome to the most important house, I think, anywhere—anywhere in the world. No matter where you go, there's nothing like it.

And this is America's Governors and spouses. And someday, somebody sitting in this room is probably going to be here for 4 or 8 years. We don't know who it is. I have some suspicions, but you never know, right? [*Laughter*] You never know, as the expression goes.

But it's a great honor to have you. It is an incredible place.

And let me begin by expressing our gratitude to the First Lady of the United States for hosting the dinner. She worked very hard on making sure everything was beautiful, and she's very good at that. Thank you very much.

You know, it's—time flies, and I just realized this is the fifth Governor's Ball that Melania and I have hosted. And thank you for doing such a great job, honey. Really great. Really beautiful. Made the evening beautiful.

We have many new faces among the Governors from our new administration, and we have a lot of people that have been just newly sworn in, and we have them with us tonight. And also, we have some people that I've become very close to.

Vice President Vance and Second Lady Usha Vance, I want to thank you very much. What a great start you've gotten off to. You've gotten off to a great start. Thank you very much, J.D. Really amazing. Usha, thank you very much. Really amazing job.

Congratulations, as well, to the eight new Governors attending tonight. And would you please stand up? We have eight brandnew, beautiful Governors. Good. That's great. Thank you very much. Thank you. It's a good-looking group.

I'm fortunate to have some of your most outstanding former colleagues as members of my team, and they're doing an incredible job, including former Governor of North Dakota, Doug. Where's Doug? Doug Burgum and Kathryn, thank you. Thank you. And he's looking for that energy, along with Chris, isn't he, huh?

And former Governor of South Dakota, Kristi Noem, who is doing an incredible job too. Thank you, Kristi. Great job. Thank you, Kristi. Great job.

The Governors and President have really a special bond, because we're all executives, and we have to get the job done for the people. And you're doing the job, and I'm doing the job, and we're working together.

And my number is right in your wallets and right on your person, because I am open to anybody, Republican or Democrat. If we can help, you're going to call me up, and we'll take care of it. You'll call the Secretaries. You'll call the Cabinet members. But if they don't do the job—and I think they will—you'll call me, and we'll take care of it. And that's Republican or Democrat, and I'll take maybe the Democrat call, even, first. How about that? Can I say that? [*Laughter*]

And I have a tremendous respect for the burdens that you bear: overseeing State police forces, directing disaster relief efforts, fighting for jobs and businesses, and so much more.

And what we're going to do is a little bit different than we've ever done this before. We're going to ask you, if you want—you don't have to, you know. It's a beautiful, elegant evening. We can sometimes make it unelegant by doing this, but it's always interesting. If you'd like, you get up and either ask a question or make a statement. And ideally, it's going to be a statement of unity, maybe, for tonight. *[Laughter]* But I—whether it is or not, we don't care. We've been through it all. Right, Ron? Huh? *[Laughter]*

Professional Golf

Governor Ronald D. DeSantis of Florida. Well, you mentioned unity, and I know you met with the LIV and PGA.

The President. That's right.

Gov. DeSantis. Are you going to be able to bring golf back together? *[Laughter]*

The President. Well, that's an interesting question. He's a very good golfer, and he asked that question.

I think there's a good chance that we'll do that. I do. I think there's a very good chance we'll—and it should be together. So that's an interesting question for you to ask. *[Laughter]*

So we're going to ask if you want to get up and say something as we progress.

This evening, we're not Democrats or Republicans. We're America's chief executives. And together, we have to make our country run and run properly.

We'd love your cooperation on energy. And we have some of the greatest energy people in the world in this room tonight, and they're working for the administration. Chris is here someplace. Where is Chris? Chris? Chris, thank you very much. Everybody knows him.

They couldn't believe that we got you, but he gave up a lot to do this, and he's said to be the best anywhere in the world. So thank you very much. We appreciate it very much, Chris.

We also want your assistance on public safety, especially removing foreign terrorist organizations from America, removing some really bad, bad guys and bad people from America, and we're going to get them out for you. We'll be doing you a big service, and we'll get them out. We're bringing them back to the states where they came from.

We don't have one country that says no. We had a lot of them that said no, but that was about—lasted about 2 hours, then, all of a sudden, they were all saying yes. But we'll get them back, and we'll get them out, and we'll make your State a lot safer.

And on deregulation, we'll be creating maximum deregulation and maximum numbers of jobs. And I think it has a lot to do—one has a lot to do with the other. I want you all to succeed so that our country will succeed, and I'm always just a phone call away.

By special coincidence, this evening marks the 293d birthday of our first President, George Washington, whose portrait hangs in the East Room. And the father of our country, he was a great general. He was unmatched, really, as a general up until that time. And he was also a great executive and a true statesman. George Washington.

By force of will and determination, he was also the ultimate national unifier. He was a great unifier. In fact, he could have stayed longer. They wanted him to stay longer. And he said: "No, we don't want to do that. We want everybody to have a chance. We don't want to"—he was very,

very popular, and he refused to stay longer. And that, in itself, was possibly, at the early stages of government, the very important fact.

In his farewell address, George Washington counseled Americans that our shared national identity under one great political union is, quote, "the main pillar in the edifice of our real independence, the support of our tranquility at home, our peace abroad, our safety, our prosperity, and that very liberty which we so highly prize." Beautiful words.

We don't use words like that that much nowadays, do we, huh? *[Laughter]* I don't know what happened. We don't use—we should. We should. We should be able to start.

The elected leaders in this room are the living embodiment of the union to which President Washington referred. You're really doing a fantastic job. I won't say—because the press is up there going crazy tonight, but I won't say how good some of the Democrats are, but some of you are doing a really good job. Others are doing good, and some I'm not so sure about. *[Laughter]* But you do. You have some very great talent on the other side, I have to say, and we all appreciate it and we respect it greatly.

So tonight let us all recommit ourselves to strengthening America, making it something even more special than it has been. And we're going to be one united Nation. And maybe, together, this is going to be the evening that we start uniting. We're going to unite, we're going to hold each other close, and we're going to fight for our country.

And I want to just make a comment that we have a very special room that most of you haven't seen, and some of you might have been here with me last time, the last time we were together, which was actually 5 years ago. Can you believe it? I missed you for 4 years very, very badly.

That was a long journey back, Melania, wasn't it? *[Laughter]* It was a long, tough—that was a nasty journey. Don't ever try it. *[Laughter]* But it is unique, but it was a long journey. A long, nasty journey.

But here we are, and we're going to do things that, hopefully, nobody else has really been able to do.

But we have a room called the Lincoln Bedroom. I think it's, like, maybe, to me, the most important room in the whole country—the most important bedroom, definitely. And it's incredible. Just the way he left it. And he was Abraham Lincoln, after all. And we have it upstairs.

And right after we're finished with the meal, I'm going to take whatever group wants to go up. We can handle quite a few. We walk up the stairway—the big, beautiful, grand stairway, and at the top of that stairway is the Lincoln Bedroom and the Treaty Room, where we signed virtually every land acquisition.

And we are looking at a few of them, by the way, just in case you're not—*[laughter]*. We're looking at a few. I don't—I won't name them tonight, but I think we know what we're talking about. Maybe more than we even think.

But we'll meet here right after the end of the meal, and we'll walk up together, and you'll see something that actually is really amazing and real history, with the Treaty Room and the Yellow—Yellow Oval. It's a room that was copied by the Oval Office one-quarter of an inch. Taft wanted it to be exactly that way. It was 100—more than 100 years younger than the Oval Office, and—the Oval Office is younger. And when they built it, they loved the room that you'll see upstairs so much, and it's almost an exact copy. The Oval Office is almost an exact copy.

And you'll see some things that are really, really interesting. And, again, as we progress tonight, if you feel like it, just come up. We're going to leave the mike on, which is usually a mistake. *[Laughter]* That's usually not a good thing, but we're going to leave the mike on, and you may ask a question or you'll make a statement.

And I'd like to ask Scott Turner, who's our Secretary of HUD—he's a great young man, and he's a tremendous, tremendous talent. And I'd like to ask you to say grace.

Thank you. Thank you, Scott. Congratulations.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development E. Scott Turner. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. President. Let's pray together.

Father, we're so grateful to have this opportunity to gather together, Father, for such a time as this, Lord. Father, we thank you for President Trump. Lord God, we thank you for the First Lady. We thank you for Vice President Vance and the second lady. Lord God, I pray that you would be an iron dome of protection around them and their families.

Lord God, we thank you that you are a sovereign father and you're a good, good father. And tonight, Father God, I thank you for the Governors that have gathered here. Lord, thank you for their service. I pray you would give them wisdom and clarity and understanding. God, I pray you will be with them and their families.

Lord God, I pray and thank you for my colleagues in the Cabinet, Father God, that are here tonight. Lord God, we know that you have ordained this time before the foundations of the world. And, Lord God, we thank you.

Father, we thank you tonight that as we gather and as we fellowship, Lord Jesus, that you would be glorified. And, Father, as President Trump, Father, as the leader of this Nation, Lord God, as he, every day, Father God, leads and serves, Father, I pray that you would give him great favor. God, I pray that you would open his eyes to see like he's never seen before, that you would open up his ears to hear your voice, and, Father God, you would give him divine insight and divine, Father God, just wisdom as he leads and serves this country.

And, Lord, tonight we pray that the joy of the Lord would be our strength, because we are happy tonight, because you saw fit to bring us together.

We love you. We honor you. And, Lord, thank you for this food that we shall receive. I pray you would bless it to nourish our bodies, that we may build your kingdom. And bless the hands that prepared it and those that will serve it.

We give you the glory in Jesus's name. Amen.

Audience members. Amen.

Secretary Turner. Bless you.

The President. Good job. *[Laughter]*

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

President Andrzej Duda of Poland

Q. *[Inaudible]*

The President. *[Inaudible]* He's a fantastic guy. He's a great friend of ours, Poland. The meeting was excellent. Couldn't have been better.

Ukraine/Russia

Q. How is the deal coming on, the deal for critical minerals in Ukraine?

The President. I think all of them are coming along good. We're doing well with Russia, Ukraine. We're going to get this country out of a lot of big messes. It's in a big mess, and we're going to get it out.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Michael K. Braun of Indiana; Gov. Michael Kehoe of Missouri; Gov. Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire; Gov. Larry Rhoden of South Dakota; Gov. Kelly M. Armstrong of North Dakota; Gov. Patrick J. Morrissey of West Virginia; Gov. Jenniffer A. González-Colón of Puerto Rico; Gov. Nikolao Pula of American Samoa; and Secretary of Energy Christopher A. Wright. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on February 24. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : National Governors Association dinner, remarks and question-and-answer session; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Armstrong, Kelly M.; Ayotte, Kelly; Braun, Michael K.; Burgum, Douglas J.; Burgum, Kathryn; DeSantis, Ronald D.; Duda, Andrzej; González-Colón, Jenniffer A.; Kehoe, Michael; Morrissey, Patrick J.; Noem, Kristi L.; Pula, Nikolao; Rhoden, Larry; Trump, Melania; Turner, E. Scott; Vance, James D. "J.D."; Vance, Usha Chilukuri; Wright, Christopher A.

Subjects: American Samoa, Governor; Bipartisanship; Federal regulations, reduction efforts; Florida, Governor; Former President George Washington, 293d birthday; Golf; Illegal immigration; Indiana, Governor; Job creation and growth; Missouri, Governor; National Governors Association; New Hampshire, Governor; North Dakota, Governor; Oil and natural gas, domestic production; Poland, President; Puerto Rico, Governor; Russia, relations with U.S.; Secretary of Energy; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Secretary of the Interior; South Dakota, Governor; Ukraine, relations with U.S.; Undocumented immigrants, deportation of criminals; Vice President; West Virginia, Governor.

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