

**Remarks at a Document Signing Ceremony and an Exchange With Reporters**  
*May 5, 2025*

*The President.* Well, thank you very much. We have some important signings today and some important statements to make about what we're doing in the world of medicine with Bobby and the group.

But maybe Will will do something which will be very enlightening, and I think people are going to like it, but it was a little gift that's being presented.

So, Will, do you want to take over?

*White House Staff Secretary William O. Scharf.* Yes, sir. So earlier today the House of Representatives transmitted this over for you. This is a record of the Electoral College votes in the 2024 election. It shows your total of 312 votes, and the letter opener at the bottom of this frame display is actually one of the letter openers that was used to open the electoral votes during the counting.

*The President.* Wow. That's great. How many votes did the other side get?

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* Less than you, sir. Significantly.

*The President.* By how much?

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* I don't want to get this wrong. It was 226.

*The President.* Oh. But the news said it was going to be the other way around, right?

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* The news said it was going to be a lot closer than it was.

*The President.* No, they said that it was going to be a lot closer than that. It wasn't close. So 312 to 226. That's pretty good, right?

Okay. That's good. Thank you very—thank them for me. That's very nice.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* Yes, sir. We'll tell the Speaker.

We have a number of Executive orders for your attention today, sir. The first relates to gain-of-function research. Gain-of-function research is a type of biomedical research where pathogens are adulterated, viruses are adulterated to make them more potent or to change the way that they function.

This Executive—many people believe that gain-of-function research was one of the key causes of the COVID pandemic that struck us in the last decade. What this Executive order does: First of all, it provides powerful new tools to enforce the ban on Federal funding for gain-of-function research abroad. It also strengthens other oversight mechanisms related to that issue and creates an overarching strategy to ensure that biomedical research, in general, is being conducted safely and in a way that ultimately protects human health more.

*The President.* It's a big deal. Could have been that we wouldn't have had the problem we had—right?—

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* A lot of people say that, sir.

*The President.* —if we had this done earlier.

[At this point, the President displayed a previously signed Executive order titled, "Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research."]

Thank you.

Okay. Go ahead.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* Many actions that you've taken so far in this administration, sir, are related to onshoring manufacturing and onshoring supply chains. One of the most important supply chain issues we currently face as a country is our pharmaceutical supply chain. This is an Executive order intended to promote domestic manufacturing of pharmaceuticals.

It streamlines the permitting processes that go into building domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing sites. It centers a lot of the environmental permitting process, which is quite significant, within the EPA. And it takes other actions designed to ensure that we're bringing pharmaceutical jobs and pharmaceutical manufacturing back to the United States of America.

*The President.* Okay. Good. That's what it's all about, right?

[*The President displayed a previously signed Executive order titled, "Regulatory Relief To Promote Domestic Production of Critical Medicines."*]

Very important.

We're going to have a big announcement next week on some of this kind of thing, but more related to costs, the cost of medicines and drugs, because we're being ripped off, as you know, very badly. We're being ripped off compared to the rest of the world.

Go ahead.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* Next, we have a series of proclamations for your attention, sir. This is a proclamation declaring National Mental Health Awareness Month. Mental health and that—that basket of issues has been a major priority for Secretary Kennedy since he got into office. It's been a major priority for your administration.

This is just a proclamation declaring this month to be National Mental Health Awareness Month.

*The President.* Okay.

[*The President signed a proclamation titled, "National Mental Health Awareness Month, 2025."*]

See, no autopen. Isn't it nice? [*Laughter*] Isn't it nice to have a President that doesn't need an autopen so that somebody that you have no idea who the person is—who's actually the President of our country? They ought to look into that autopen stuff. That's not right, what took place for 4 years.

Very important. Go ahead.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* Thank you, sir. Next, this is another proclamation declaring this week to be National Small Business Week. As you've said many times before, small business is actually big business. Small businesses are key drivers of the American economy. Your administration has taken quite dramatic steps to improve small business, to help small businesses. This is just a proclamation that—that recognizes those efforts and announces the—the National Small Business Week.

*The President.* Good. And before I go any further, I'd like to just—as you see behind me, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., is doing a fantastic job. Director Jay Bhattacharya, National Institutes of Health, and a very special person. I interviewed him personally. I liked him immediately. I interviewed a lot of people, but I liked him.

Dr. Martin Makary, likewise, the FDA Commissioner, who's really in there plugging hard, right?

*Commissioner of Food and Drugs Martin A. Makary.* Yes, sir.

*The President.* But we have some big things coming up. And Will, everybody knows. So I just wanted to thank all of you.

Vince Haley is around here someplace. Where's Vince? Vince is great. Come on up here, Vince. You should be up here. He's been with me for a long time. He's an expert on policy and speechwriting too, along with Ross, right?

*Domestic Policy Council Director Vince Haley.* Yes, sir.

*The President.* So great. It's great to have you all.

Bobby, do you have anything to say? We signed some very important documents having to do with health. Do you have anything to say?

[*The President began to sign a proclamation titled, "National Small Business Week, 2025."*]

*Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.* Mr. President, gain of function—this is an historic day, the end of gain-of-function research funding by the Federal Government and also controls by private corporations on gain-of-function studies. This was the kind of study that was engaged in by the United States military and intelligence agencies beginning in 1947. By 1969, the CIA said that they had reached nuclear equivalency, that they could kill the entire U.S. population for 29 cents a person.

[*Secretary Kennedy continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

In all of the history of gain-of-function research, we can't point to a single good thing that's come from it. And today, I commend President Trump for his courage and his vision in ending U.S. bioweapons research.

And, Jay, I'd love you to talk a little bit about it.

*The President.* Yes. Jay, please.

*Director of the National Institutes of Health Jay Bhattacharya.* Sure. This is a historic day. The conduct of this dangerous gain-of-function research, which aims at taking pathogens and making them more virulent, more transmissible in humans, many scientists believe is responsible for the COVID pandemic. The conduct of this research does not protect us against pandemics, as some people might say. It doesn't protect us against other nations. What it does is it—there's always a danger that, in doing this research, it might leak out—just by accident, even—and cause a pandemic.

[*Director Bhattacharya continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

And I'm really, really proud to be here with President Trump, who signed this order——

*The President.* That's great.

*Director Bhattacharya.* ——ending this research for and, for the first time, putting in place a real regulatory framework to make it go away forever.

*The President.* So it can leak out, like from Wuhan. And a lot of people think that. I think I said that right from day one. It leaked out, whether it was to the girlfriend or somebody else. But a scientist walked outside to have lunch with a girlfriend or was together with a lot of people, but that's how it leaked out, in my opinion, and I've never changed that opinion.

So it can leak out innocently—stupidly, incompetently, but innocently—and half destroy the world, right?

*Director Bhattacharya.* That's right. That's right, Mr. President. It's——

*Secretary Kennedy.* Mr. President, there are, I think, three leaks from BSL-3 and BSL-4 labs, our highest rated laboratories, almost every week. There's no laboratory that does this right. There's no laboratory that's immune from leaks.

And this is going to prevent those kind of inadvertent leaks from happening in the future and endangering humanity. The COVID outbreak cost 20 million lives and cost the world at least \$25 trillion, and this Executive order is precaution against us being involved in those—that kind of research in the future.

*The President.* That's great. Very honored to do this.

Marty, what do you have to say?

*Commissioner Makary.* It's unbelievable to think the entire nightmare of COVID was likely preventable. And you had good instincts early on, Mr. President, in suggesting it came from the Wuhan lab. That is now the leading theory among scientists. It was 5 miles from the hospital where it first broke out.

So it's crazy to think that this entire nightmare was probably the result of some scientists messing with Mother Nature in a laboratory with technology exported from the United States that is inserting a furin cleavage site.

So I hope this does some good in the world, Mr. President. Thank you for doing it.

*The President.* Anybody have any questions on that?

Yes, please.

### *Government Accountability Efforts/Mental Health Programs*

*Q.* On your proclamation designating this Mental Health Awareness Month, can you speak to concerns people are having regarding your administration cutting a billion dollars in mental health programs from schools?

*The President.* Well, we're looking very closely at waste, fraud, and abuse, of which there's tremendous amount—people on that shouldn't be on, illegal immigrants on, people that came into the country illegally. We have many of them, and we're looking for that.

But for the population that's supposed to be there, it's perfect. And they want us to do that. They don't want to have the waste, the fraud—and the fraud is big, by the way—or the abuse.

Question? Yes, please.

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President. I actually have a question for Secretary Kennedy, if you don't mind.

*The President.* Go ahead.

*Q.* You mentioned the anthrax attacks of 2001. At ZeroHedge, we're working on a piece revisiting that, and I've heard you speak at length about how that was likely a conspiracy from the inside of the Bush administration.

[*The President finished signing the proclamation titled, "National Small Business Week, 2025."*]

*Q.* So, with your new current position, would you consider relooking into that, given the questions that I've heard you raise in the past?

*Secretary Kennedy.* Well, we're not at this moment going back. I mean, the—you know, the FBI has already done an extensive investigation. They said that the anthrax was Ames anthrax that came from a U.S. lab. The—their accusation was that it was released by a scientist called Bruce Ivins, who subsequently committed suicide. There are many people who believe that Bruce Ivins was falsely accused and that it was somebody else in the lab.

It's not something that we're currently investigating, but it's something that the FBI—the fact that it came from a U.S. lab has—is something the FBI determined.

*The President.* Yes, please.

*Q.* There have been several MAHA-aligned bills being proposed throughout the country, and I wanted to know what your thought was on that and the progress that Secretary Kennedy is making, first.

*The President.* Sure.

*Q.* And second, when you—no, I'm sorry. Let's answer the question first.

*The President.* Bobby, you want to go ahead with that?

*Secretary Kennedy.* I mean, we've had a wave. I think we have MAHA legislation now in 36 states. In the past two or three weeks, I've been to Arizona, to Utah, to West Virginia, to Indiana, signed SNAP waivers to get candy and soda off of SNAP, to change the school lunch program so that we're feeding our kids food instead of food-like substances that are made in laboratories, and to do—and a number of other initiatives that are being passed by—that are being driven by local MAHA movement, inspired by the President, and that are being signed into law by various Governors.

And we're very, very grateful for that. We've invited—Brooke Rollins and myself have invited the Governors of all the States to apply for SNAP waivers so we make sure that the substance—that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is actually paying for nutrition and not sodas. Ten percent is now going to soda. There's no nutrition in a soda.

### *Legal Challenges to the President's Agenda*

*Q.* And at the same time, you have, like, 19 attorneys general suing you and the Trump administration. Like, what do you make of that?

*The President.* Who are they?

*Q.* You have attorney generals——

*The President.* Are the Democrats?

*Q.* Yes, they are Democratic.

*The President.* Are they Democrats, like crooked Democrats—like really crooked Democrats? Is that who's suing? They know what—they know what they're doing. They just——

*Q.* And what do you think of the progress that——

*The President.* They're just hurting our country, that's all. These are——

*Q.* What's your view of the progress?

*The President.* These are very dishonest people. They've lost their way. They've lost their confidence. They have no confidence. They have no idea what they're doing. They don't even know what they're suing for, so it's just one of those things.

Yes, please.

#### *Potential Additional Tariffs*

*Q.* Mr. President, on the pharmaceutical side, have you made any determination on kind of what those tariff rates may look like and the timing of those tariffs?

*The President.* I have. I'll announce it over the next 2 weeks. Okay?

Will, please.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* Oh, sorry, sir.

*The President.* Do you have anything to say about this, Marty, what we just discussed?

*Commissioner Makary.* We have had this crazy system in the United States, where American pharma manufacturers in the United States are put through the ringer with inspections, and the foreign sites get off easy with scheduled visits, while we have surprise visits in the United States.

Well, a scheduled visit is no inspection. So we are, at the FDA, delivering on this promise in the President's Executive order and switching from announced to surprise inspections overseas. And we're also not going to have our inspectors hanging out for 3 or 4 weeks. They're going to get in and out, and we're going to do more inspections with the same resources as a result.

*The President.* Good.

Jay.

*Director Bhattacharya.* I mean, I think it's very, very important that Americans have a drug supply, a pharmaceutical supply that they can count on. It's—we saw during the COVID pandemic that the reliance on overseas production of pharmaceuticals led to—to shortages of essential medicines, and that's happened over and over again.

Making the American—making America produce the drugs that it's long been able to produce is a huge priority, and this Executive order the President just signed is going to make that possible.

*The President.* Vince, you're a big policy person. You've done so great for me for so long. What do you think?

*Director Haley.* Well, sir, you've always said it's vitally important that we have national self-sufficiency when it comes to critical pharmaceuticals. We learned that in 2020. It's a—it was a key campaign promise. We've seen shortages in the past of critical cancer drugs, people on chemotherapy. We have to produce those here at home, and this is an important contribution to doing that.

*The President.* Good. Thank you.

Any questions of them? Okay.

Will.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* Just two more, sir. We have a slate of 39 Senate-confirmed senior officials of your administration. This slate includes a significant number of new U.S. attorneys. Those will be the top prosecutors——

*The President.* Yes.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* —in judicial districts around the country, will prosecute crime and help advance your agenda.

*The President.* Great.

[*The President signed the nominations document.*]

Okay. That's a lot of people, and they're very good people, I hope. [*Laughter*] Who knows? But I hope so. [*Laughter*]

Okay. Thank you.

*Staff Secretary Scharf.* And then, lastly, sir, we have another proclamation. This week is National Hurricane Preparedness Week. This is an issue that's particularly important, obviously, to your home State of Florida. This is just a proclamation recognizing National Hurricane Preparedness Week 2025.

[*The President signed a proclamation titled, "National Hurricane Preparedness Week, 2025."*]

*The President.* Okay. Thank you.

Okay. Thank you very much. I want to thank you.

So we're going to be having some conferences next week. I'll also be going to Saudi Arabia and other places. We'll be going to U.A.E. and Qatar. And some of you will be going with us, so you'll have an interesting time.

But I think we're going to have another conference next week, which will be very important, having to do with the world of the medical. And I think it will be very productive. These are really very important that we signed today.

And thank you very much for being here. Thank you very much. Thank you. Please.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:51 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to White House Director of Speechwriting Ross Worthington. Staff Secretary Scharf referred to Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on May 6.

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