

Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Republican Members of Congress

May 20, 2025

The President's Legislative Agenda

Q. Mr. President, what's your message to the holdouts?

The President. Well, it's not a question of holdouts. We have a tremendously unified party. I don't think we've ever had a party like this. There's some people that want a couple of things that maybe I don't like or that they're not going to get, but I think we're going to have tremendous—not luck. We have tremendous talent.

This man has done an incredible job as Speaker. You know, we had a majority of one. We were one heart attack away from losing the House. Okay? Now we have seven. That's a big—because we won some elections, as you probably noticed, and we're going to win a lot of elections.

We have an economy that's roaring. We took out \$5.1 billion—if you take a look, \$5.1 trillion—with a "t," not a "b"—\$5.1 trillion out of the Middle East. And they're investing more than that. It's going to be, ultimately, more than that.

But 180 wide-body Boeing aircraft. They—they're spending money at levels that nobody's ever seen. Usually, a President goes for a trip, and he loses money. In other words, he gives money. We went for a trip, but we took out \$5.1 trillion. Nobody has ever seen anything like it, and that's just the beginning.

So I think we're going to—I think we're a very unified party. The Senate is doing great. John Thune is doing fantastically. He's a great guy. And we're going to have a bill—the "One, Big, Beautiful Bill," I think it's going to be—it's the biggest bill ever passed, and we got to get it done.

Tremendous tax cuts for people, tremendous incentives, tremendous regulation cuts—all these regulations that are so horrible.

And now you found out—and find out what happened, because, Biden—look, it's a very sad thing what happened. But I really—we're going to start looking into this whole thing with who signed this legislation. Who signed legislation opening our border? I don't think he knew.

I said: "There's nobody that could want an open border. Nobody." And now I find out that it wasn't him. He autopenned it. Who was operating the autopen? This is a very serious thing. We had a president that didn't sign anything. He autopenned almost every—he opened the borders of the United States of America. And I kept saying, "Who would do such a thing?"—allowing criminals to pour in from all over the world—not just South America, all over the world. They came in from Africa. They came in from Asia. They came from the Congo. The prisons in the Congo in Africa—these are rough, rough people—the prisons from the Congo are empty. You know where they are? They're in this country.

Who would sign this? Nobody would sign it. No sane person would sign it. You know who signed it? Radical-left lunatics that were running our country and the autopen signed it. And they didn't want him, and they were disappointed in getting him, because they wanted Bernie Sanders. And then after about 2 weeks, they said: "Wait a minute, this is a gift. He'll do anything. We're going to use the autopen." And they used the autopen on everything.

He didn't approve this stuff, because when Joe Biden was with it, he would never have approved it. You take a look, he would have never approved open borders.

Go ahead. Another one.

Tax Code Reform

Q. Are Republicans still grandstanding, in your view?

The President. Oh, yes, sure. You have a couple that will grandstand. But I think even the grandstanders should—look, the alternative is a 68-percent tax increase, and you can blame the Democrats for that and one or two grandstanders. We only have one or two. But we have tremendous support.

But you'll have a 68-percent tax increase, or you'll get a massive tax decrease. You'll get a tax cut the likes of which we've never had before. This is bigger than any Ronald Reagan tax cut. It's even bigger than the tax cut that I gave because, as you know, that's being extended and increased.

So this is the biggest tax cut in the history of our country, or you'll get a 68-percent tax increase. And if that happens—I mean, what Republican could vote for that to happen? Because they wouldn't be a Republican much longer. They would get—they would be knocked out so fast. But we're going up to—details.

This is a—I'm a cheerleader for this party, and I'm a cheerleader for the country—much more importantly, for the country. But I'm a cheerleader for the party, and we're going to go up, and I think we're going to have a very good discussion.

There are one or two points that some people feel strongly about, but maybe not so strong.

The President's Legislative Agenda/Medicaid and Medicare

Q. On one of those points, do you consider some of the proposals on the table, like—*[inaudible]*—provider tax as a benefit cut? How are you viewing those?

The President. No, we're going to look—we are looking at one thing. We're not doing any cutting of anything meaningful. The only thing we're cutting is waste, fraud, and abuse. With Medicaid, waste, fraud, and abuse—there's tremendous waste, fraud, and abuse.

There's incompetent things putting—we have illegal aliens that are multiple killers, with multiple murder records getting Medicaid. I don't think anybody minds if we cut that.

The Democrats, on the other hand, are going to destroy it, because they're going to leave these people on. We're cutting three things: waste, fraud, and abuse. We're not changing Medicaid, and we're not changing Medicare, and we're not changing Social Security. And if I wanted to do those things, I would have done it during my four years that we were—

[At this point, several reporters began asking questions at once.]

State and Local Tax Deduction/Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson

Q. Mr. President, what's your message to your fellow New Yorker Republicans who are hung up on the SALT issue?

The President. Well, SALT is a very interesting thing, because the Governors of New York and Illinois—you know, the big J.B. is going nowhere—probably right now, he couldn't be the worst governor in the country—but Illinois and Gavin Newsom, those are the people that want this, and they're Democrat States. They're all Democrat States.

You know, Ronald Reagan tried very hard to get this passed—was unable to do it—the way we have it, where basically everybody is treated equally. He tried it so hard, and he never got it done. He was always disappointed. He never got it done.

We got it done. Now people want to change it. So we're going to be talking about that.

But the biggest beneficiary, if we do that, are Governors from New York, Illinois, and California. And those Governors are the ones that blew it, because they weren't able to get it.

So I think we're going to be explaining that these are all very blue States that I don't really believe—if we had honest elections, I don't actually believe—I think I would have won California. I would have won New York. I even think I would have won Illinois. I think if they—we have to—you know, we're going to start this after—I was talking to Mike, and he—again, I'm his biggest fan. I love this guy. He's the only guy who could have walked in with a one—think of it. You can't be a guy like me and have a one majority. You have to be a guy like him: a nice person. He's very religious. He prays. He's a man of God. And so am I, but he's really to a new level. I will tell you, he is a great guy. They love him in Louisiana, and they love him in—he—that's the only kind of guy.

Somebody said, "Oh, well, we want somebody that"—if you put a certain personality in there, you would have never—look at the—look at what he got passed—what he's gotten passed. And just so you understand, he's got this passed too. And I don't think there's anybody—I could give you guys that are so tough, you guys would run if you ever look at them. If you ever saw some of these guys, you would not ask them questions. You'd be afraid to. This guy did something that I don't think there's anybody that's more well-suited to be Speaker of the House, especially under a case like this.

Remember, we had a majority of one for 6 months, and that was a very frightening thing, because the Democrats have really hurt our country. And we are going to go into very much.

So remember what I said: the autopen. This Government was illegally run for 4 years.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9 a.m. at the U.S. Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen C. Hochul of New York; Gov. Jay R. "J.B." Pritzker of Illinois; and Gov. Gavin C. Newsom of California.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Republican Members of Congress, meeting with President; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, U.S. Capitol.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Hochul, Kathleen C.; Johnson, J. Michael; Newsom, Gavin C.; Pritzker, Jay R. "J.B."; Thune, John R.

Subjects: California, Governor; Government accountability and transparency, strengthening efforts; Illegal immigration; Illinois, Governor; Medicare and Medicaid programs; Members of Congress, meeting with President; New York, Governor; Senate majority leader; Social Security program; Speaker of the House of Representatives; Tax Code reform.

DCPD Number: DCPD202500618.