

Remarks at the House Republican Members Retreat

January 6, 2026

The President. Thank you very much. I do love that song, but we've got to get to business. I love that song, but I want to thank you all.

You're special, special people. And I want to just say that, you know, I announced I was coming over here, and I said, "I love those Republicans," and I meant it. I said: "Except for maybe a couple. A couple I don't love." But the people in this room—I don't know if those couple are here. I don't know. I don't care if they're here or not.

But we love you, and you've been an amazing—you've done an amazing job. You love the country. You're doing what's right for the country. And I want to wish everybody a happy new year. The most successful House Republican majority in decades, and we did it with not a big majority. [*Applause*] Right? This was not a—that was not a big majority, but it's a unified majority, and it's people that know what it takes to make America great again.

So, together, we had 12 months of unprecedented success in 2025, and now we're going to make history and break records with the epic midterm victory that we're going to pull off.

It just doesn't seem to happen for people that win the Presidency. It's an amazing phenomenon. You know, you win the Presidency, and we sure as hell are having a successful Presidency. I will say that. But even if it's a successful Presidency, there's been nothing like what we're doing. [*Laughter*] We had a very good day 2 days ago too.

But even if it's successful, they don't win. I don't know what it is. There's something psychological, like you vote against—you can win by a lot. We won every swing State. We won the popular vote by millions. We won everything, but they say that when you win the Presidency, you lose the midterm.

So you're all brilliant people. Most of you are in this business longer than me. That makes me smarter than you—[*laughter*]—because look where I am, right? No, it doesn't. But I wish you could explain to me what the hell is going on with the mind of the public. Because we have a—we have the right policy. They don't. They have horrible policy. They do stick together. They're violent. They're vicious. You know, they're vicious people, and they stick together like glue.

They don't have a couple of the people that we have—a couple of people, not too many. Really, very few.

And that's why I want to just say that—before we go any further, I want to express our tremendous sorrow at the loss of a great Member—a great, great, great Member, Congressman Doug LaMalfa, who passed away yesterday, as you probably have heard. And he was the leader of the Western Caucus, a fierce champion on California water issues. He was great on water. He wanted—"Release the water," he'd scream out. And a true defender of American children. He was a defender of everybody. And our hearts go out to his wife Jill and his entire family.

You know, he voted with me a hundred percent of the time. And by the way, he wasn't a 3 o'clock-in-the-morning person. Do you know what I mean by that? [*Laughter*] Where the Speaker calls: "Sir, could you call up? Could you call?" I said, "What time is it, Speaker?" "Sir, it's 3 in the morning. Could you make a couple of calls?" "How many?" "Nine." [*Laughter*]

So I'd start calling. I'd start calling, 3 in the morning. I said—like—I shouldn't use any names. *[Laughter]* I'm just going to create problems. But, "Hi, Jim." And I'm not talking about Jim Jordan. I never had to call 3 in the morning for him.

But I'd said: "Hi, Jim. How you doing? I just called to say hello." You know, 3 in—"Okay, sir. Sir, you haven't spoken to me in 3 years, and it's now 3 in the morning, so I know what you want. You want my vote." And usually they're—almost always, they'd give it, but they wanted to be called.

And, with Doug, I never had to call. He was with us right from the beginning—I love those guys. I must say, I probably love them the best, you know, the guys that I don't have to call. They know we're doing the right thing.

I have a couple that are going to be with us all the way, but they just want the call. They want love. They need love. They're more insecure than a lot—most of you. *[Laughter]* It's true. No, most of you are secure people. Don't—you're all laughing. No, most of you are secure people.

I had a couple say: "Look, I could have Trump call me all the time. I just have to break his ass a little bit, and he'll be calling, calling, calling." But I appreciate those—we actually had a little party. We opened up a beautiful section of the White House in the Rose Garden, and we had a party for all of those people that I never speak to and vote for me.

And you know, I spoke to Doug, but I didn't speak to him about—I mean, never had a problem. And I was really—I was really saddened by his passing and was thinking about not even doing the speech in his honor, but then I decided that I have to do it in his honor. I'll do it in his honor, because he would have wanted it that way. He would have wanted it that way. He would have said: "Do that speech. Are you kidding me? Do the speech."

Big guy, but he was a fantastic person. Man, that was a quick one. I don't know. I don't know quite yet what happened, but boy, it's a tough one. He was just with us. He was our friend—all of us, every one of us.

And I also want to send our best wishes to Congressman Jim Baird and his wife, who are recovering from a car accident. They're going to be okay, but they had a pretty bad accident, and we're praying that they get out of that hospital very quickly. He's going to be fine. She's going to be fine. But it was a bad accident.

And I want to thank the man who has been central to so many of our triumphs. He really has been. He's the guy that would call me to make those calls all the time. He's always working. And he's a nice person. You know, he's a very nice person—he's a high-quality person. But I want to tell you, he's a very tough cookie. *[Laughter]* I've seen both sides. Not often do I have to see the other side, because he's just—by nature, he's a very fine, religious—I like that. He's a religious person. I like that.

I like religious people. It usually means they're more honest. Sometimes it doesn't happen that way. *[Laughter]* I've had the—I've had some real religious ones that did numbers on me, and I said, "I'm going to get them someday." *[Laughter]* They got me by surprise.

But it's usually good. Okay? Right? And his name is Mike Johnson—Speaker Mike Johnson. *[Inaudible]*

He has my complete and total endorsement. Stand up, Speaker.

So, you know, it—but it is true. You know, a lot of times they'll say, "I wish Mike were tougher." Tough. He's tough. He's tough as anybody in the room, actually. But can't be tough when you have a majority of three and now, sadly, a little bit less than that. I mean, a little bit less

than that, maybe. But you can't be Trump. You can't, "I want you"—[*laughter*]*—*you know, you make 10 enemies, 20 enemies, that's the end of that, right?

Everybody loves him. I would say there's one person he's given up on. I mean, I think he's—he just gave up on this guy, he's so bad. He never votes for us. But—no matter how good, he won't vote for us. There's a sickness there.

[*At this point, the President made a hand gesture toward his head.*]

You know, there's something wrong. [*Laughter*]

You can have the greatest bill, the greatest for the country—forget about for Republicans—great, great, great for the country, "I'm a no vote." We don't even bother calling him at 3 in the morning, do we, huh? [*Laughter*]

But I want to thank another guy who's as tough as they come, because he went through something that none of us have gone through. I went through a little shot, but I get that throbbing feeling every once in a while. But what he went through was incredible. And that's Steve Scalise. He got hit hard.

Where is Steve? Steve.

He's a tough cookie. He was dead. I went to the hospital. His wife was crying so much. She was a mess. Ai, yai, yai. She loves you. That's the only thing I learned about Steve, that he has a wife who loves him. Because I've gone to hospitals where guys are in bad shape and the wife couldn't care less. [*Laughter*] She's waiting to—she's looking for the next guy. Who's the next guy down the pike? Who the hell is the next guy? He's died. I said, "That's so bad." "Oh, yes, yes."

I had one where the dog died and the husband died at the same time. I said, "It's so sad." "Yes, I've loved this dog so much." [*Laughter*] She couldn't give a damn—and the guy left her a fortune. Can you imagine? He shouldn't have left her anything, but she was much more concerned. [*Laughter*] It's true. Oh, the dog, was devastating; the husband, he was like an afterthought.

Your wife loves you, Steve. She's a great wife.

Another one who has a great wife, Jacquie, is Tom Emmer. Right, Tom—look at you. You have a great wife, but you haven't been tested like these guys. You have been—we don't want to—we don't want to test her, right? She's incredible. She's a strong, beautiful, great person. She's a great person.

She actually liked me at the beginning. When we were having little fights—we weren't even having fights. We just didn't know each other. We didn't know each other. And I heard he said something negative about me. He was sort of right about the subject, but you're not supposed to say ever, even though you're right. [*Laughter*]

But Jacquie was saying: "I'm telling you, he's a great guy. He's good. He's going to be a great President. Bah, bah, bah." She was fighting for me. And now I love this guy. He's great. She—Jacquie is right about—she was right about both of us, I think, right? [*Laughter*]

But Tom has been incredible. He's incredible at what he does, and he's a great team player.

Your conference chair, Lisa McClain, is so strong and powerful and beautiful. And—thank you, Lisa. Thank you. Thank you.

And I think they're broadcasting—you know, we said, "We don't care if the press comes or not," so when I say that, that means they're broadcasting all this, and I'm—I'm letting my feelings out, because it's true. I feel that way about so many people in the room. I could say it about many

of the people in the room—some I don't know as well—but many of the people in the room. They're incredible people. You're incredible, what you're doing.

We also have another one, Richard Hudson—chairman, NRCC. Richard is always in there, always with a smile. No matter what's happening, Richard. He always has a smile. He's always a very—just a positive guy—smart and positive. Thank you, Richard. Really appreciate it. You do a great job.

Republican Policy Committee chairman, Kevin Hern. Kevin? Where are you, Kevin? Thank you, Kevin. Thank you. Did a great job.

Every one of you. You've got to be proud of yourselves. And basically, the entire House Republican Conference, it's been really amazing what you've done, and we're going to give you some ammunition today.

I said, "I'd love to make a speech to you." The Speaker asked me, "Would you make a speech?" I said, "Sure." You think Biden would do that? "Would you make a speech?" "What?" First of all, his people wouldn't ask him to make a speech because it never worked out well, right? Could never find the exits. *[Laughter]* You finish—look—stair here, stair there, stair here. You could jump off the front if you had to. *[Laughter]* No matter what he did, he got himself into trouble.

So, basically, they didn't ask him to, but if he did, it wouldn't be good. But it's good with me, because, you know, we have so much ammunition. We have ammunition. The problem is the fake news. That's why I like being on. I'd much rather do live television than do nonlive because, like, when they say—as an example, in my speech, "peacefully and patriotically"—to the Capitol, "peacefully and patriotically."

Do you know that the "Unselect Committee" didn't report it, that I said those words? Do you know that the news never reported the words "walk or march peacefully and patriotically to the Capitol"? Do you know they never reported it? It's a scandal. The "Unselect Committee" never reported that.

They never reported that Nancy Pelosi was offered 10,000 soldiers—National Guard soldiers, whatever you want. "No, I don't want them." And the mayor—the mayors weren't ready. She was more honorable about it. But Nancy got caught when her daughter did a documentary. She said, "Documentary, yes." And she has her mother saying: "It's my fault. I should have taken the soldiers" or something like—I saw that in the documentary—I said, "Whoa, this was a major story." Has she spoken to her daughter since that? Do you know?

But we—but they just—you know, they are vicious people, even on the attack. And it was an amazing military feat that took place yesterday. Think of it. An amazing military—the people are saying—well, thank you. You know, people are—are saying it's—it goes down with one of the most incredible—it was so complex. A hundred and fifty-two airplanes; many, many—talk about boots on the ground. We had a lot of boots on the ground. But it was amazing.

And think of it: Nobody was killed. And on the other side, a lot of people were killed. Unfortunately, I say that—soldiers. Cubans, mostly Cubans, but many, many killed.

And they were—they knew we were coming, and they were protected, and our guys weren't. You know, our guys are jumping out of helicopters, and you're not protected, and they were.

But it was so brilliant. The electricity, for almost the entire country, was "boom," turned off. That's when they knew there was a problem. There was no electricity. *[Laughter]* Caracas said, "There's no electricity." It's not a—the only people with lights were the people that had candles. It was just off.

So we sort of got him a little by surprise, but it was a brilliant—it was brilliant tactically. It was an incredible thing.

But I watched where Schumer—he's such a bad guy. I mean, I've known the guy for a long time, and he's such a bad guy. You know, at some point, they should say: "You know, you did a great job. Thank you. Congratulations." Wouldn't it be good? I would say that if they did a good job. Their philosophies are so different, but if they did a good job, I'd be happy for the country.

They've been after this guy for years and years and years. And you know, he's a violent guy. He gets up there and he tries to imitate my dance a little bit—[*laughter*]*—*but he's a violent guy, and he's killed millions of people. He's tortured—they have a torture chamber in the middle of Caracas that they're closing up. But he's tortured people.

And now what they do, the radical left, they actually have people—and it's hard to get them; they're all paid people—most of these people are paid. You know they're paid when they have brandnew, beautiful printed signs by, like, the highest quality printer in the—and you have a woman, "Huh, free Maduro." And the sign is before we even did the attack. [*Laughter*] You know, it's "Free Maduro." "Why do you want him freed?" "I don't know, but he should be free." "Oh," she reads the sign. "What does that say?" "It says, 'Free'—"well, that's what I believe."

And you know, you see the signs—like, Lisa, we should all have quality signage like that. The one thing I want: I want their sign maker. [*Laughter*] The guy is great. He does beautiful signage.

You know, the old days was better when they used to write out their own sign. Wasn't it? [*Laughter*] They'd make a sign in the basement. They'd have an old, broken board holding up a sign, and it's made with a Magic Marker, sloppy as hell, and it meant something. But today, when you have that yellow and black—they should use different colors, a little bit, but the yellow is a beautiful shade of yellow. [*Laughter*]

No, I want to find out who that is. I want him to work for the Republican campaign. [*Laughter*] He's much better than our guy, whoever the guy is. [*Laughter*]

But the United States proved, once again, that we have the most powerful, most lethal, most sophisticated, and most fearsome—it's a fearsome military—on planet Earth, and it's not even close.

You know, I've been saying it for a long time: Nobody can take us. Nobody. We don't want it—to have it—we don't want to have the discussion, but you read all and you see everything else. Nobody could have done that. Nobody has our weapons. Nobody has the quality of our weapons.

The problem is, we don't produce them fast enough. We're going to start producing them much faster. We're going to be very tough on the companies. We have the best weapons in the world, but it takes too long to get them, including allies. When allies want to buy them, they have to wait 4 years for a plane, 5 years for a helicopter. We're not letting that happen anymore. We're telling our defense contractors, "You're going to start building faster." You know, a guy makes—I have a big problem with it. I'm the king—I have sold more Boeings than any human being on Earth. They gave me award: salesman of the year. I said, "What about salesman of the—in the history of Boeing?" I've sold more Boeing planes than any man in history, by—by far—probably over a thousand. Over a thousand planes.

I said, "That's the good news, but why should they wait 3, 4 years to get a plane?" They should build them—get them immediately. The F-35s, it takes too long to get them. The Apache helicopter—I mean, I had India coming to me, "Sir, I've been waiting 5 years." We're changing it. We're changing it.

India ordered 68 Apaches, and Prime Minister Modi came to see me, "Sir, may I see you, please?" "Yes." I have a very good relationship with him. He's not that happy with me, because, you know, they're paying a lot of tariffs now because they're not doing the oil, but they are. They've now reduced it very substantially, as you know, from Russia.

We're getting rich because of tariffs, by the way. I hope everyone understands that. They hate to report. We're going to have over \$650 billion poured into our country, or coming in shortly, because of tariffs.

You know, they're—they're finding all of these pockets of money. A couple of weeks ago, "Sir, we're off by \$39 billion." "Oh. Is that good or bad?" Meaning, do we have it or are we short of it? "Sir, it's \$39 billion that we can't account for." "That means we have an extra 39?" "Yes, sir." I said, "Well, what are you saying?" "We just don't know where it came from." I said, "Check the tariff shelf." [*Laughter*] "Sir, that tariff doesn't start until September." I said: "No, no, it started about a month and a half ago. Check it." Comes back 25 minutes later, "Sir, you were right. It came from tariffs."

This never happened to us before, where we find plus-39 billion—not million—plus-39 billion. They were missing.

We've taken in \$650 billion or in—short coming, and—and that's because I'm being nice. If I wanted to be—and we have national security because of tariffs.

And frankly, we have a big Supreme Court case. I hope they do what's good for our country. I hope they do the right thing, where the President has to be able to wheel and deal with tariffs. Now, if you have the right president, it's good. You have the wrong President, you know, that's—if you have the wrong President, nothing's good. Tariffs are the least of your problems. We found that out for 4 years.

We had the worst President. Did the worst job. They had the worst policy. How we have to even run against these people.

Now, I won't say cancel the election—"they should cancel the election"—because the fake news will say: "He wants the elections canceled. He's a dictator." They always call me a dictator. Who—nobody's worse than Obama and the people that surrounded Biden. Not Biden. I don't think it was Biden. He didn't know what the hell was going on. Okay? The election was rigged. He had no idea—he had no idea what happened. He still doesn't. The autopen.

And by the way, you ought to make a big deal out of the autopen. The autopen was your President, because most of the things were signed by autopen, and you're not allowed to do that.

I signed very little. Now I just sign everything, because it's just so crazy. But you know, like I had the other day: We elevated a general to four stars. I think you should sign that. You know, that's a big deal. A general did a great job, was elevated to four stars. And I had the gentleman, and I signed it in front of him, held it up. You know, you've got to sign that. You can't give it to an autopen.

And you can always tell an autopen. One thing: It has two little, tiny dots. You know that? Two little dots. You know what that's from? Two pins. They go bing, pah. Bing, pah.

They're wonderful things, but you've got to sign it. And the law is, you have to sign it. If somebody's, you know, telling the autopen person, he has to be authorized by the President of the United States. Well, he wasn't. The guy barely knew the President.

"How many times did you speak to the President," right? He said, "Two." And they just spoke about the weather. It was like this. But he was never authorized to sign.

And I think it's—what is it?—95 percent of the things were signed by autopen. You can tell because the autopen is a nice, clean signature, and his signature is a mess. The only thing he signed was—which is nice—was Hunter's pardon. *[Laughter]* That would—no, that's the only thing that we can find that he signed. Most of it, he didn't sign.

So somebody's sending papers to sign, and he wasn't the president. He—first of all, the election was rigged.

You ought to have voter ID. You ought to insist on it. You ought to insist on it. Can you imagine? In California, they not only don't have voter ID, but if an official at the voting booths—which they don't have, by the way, because it's all mail—if an official, a voting official, even asks somebody for voter ID—"Sir, we'd like to see your identification. Do you come from our country?"—they put him in jail for tampering with the election. Okay?

We got to straighten this out before it gets too crazy. California is more corrupt than any place. California is more corrupt than Minnesota, and I won Minnesota. *[Laughter]* Tom is going—I think so. Well, it's close. It can't be—proportionately, probably nothing's more corrupt. Right?

Audience member. We've got to win something, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, right. You've got—*[laughter]*. He says, "You've got to win."

I tell you what, I did great there three times. I was surprised. Three times. That—those elections are corrupt. They got you one time too, but—I heard. A long time ago, but they got you. But they've got to straighten those out. But we have to have voter ID.

And you know, when you confront a Democrat about voter ID, like in a debate or something—I said it a couple of times with Biden. It's just one—they're very embarrassed when they say, "We want voter ID, voter identification." This—the only reason somebody doesn't want that is because they want to cheat.

Our elections are crooked as hell. And you can win—not only win elections over that, and not only win future elections, but you'll win every debate, because the public is really angry about it. And you ought to—you ought to pass the SAFE Act, or whatever you're going to call—is—are we going to SAVE Act or the Save America Act? I think we're going to change the name a little bit. You're going to put that up for a vote. I think everybody in this room certainly should do it.

And it's a bad vote for them, because they're voting against things like voter ID and other things that are almost equal to voter ID. But when somebody says, "No, we don't want voter ID," that means they're crooked, and the public understands it. You win elections with that. But I think it would be really important—SAVE America Act—if you would put that up for a vote. It's got my total endorsement, and all it is, is commonsense things about the election. And they'll fight it like crazy because they cheat. That's the only way they can win.

When you have policy so bad, when you have policy with men in women's sports—men in women's sports—and they fight like hell for it. They still are. I saw the other day, a person that you know very well—a Congressman—was fighting like hell.

And you know, I was out the other day with somebody, and I was with an ex-football player—the guy was massive; his leg was like this—

[The President held up his hands.]

—and a young woman who plays flag football. And she's very good, supposedly, as an athlete. She's smaller than this guy's leg. *[Laughter]* Okay? And if they were playing football together, he wouldn't even have to run. He could just keep walking. They couldn't take him down. *[Laughter]* You know, the guy—he can't even believe it.

But there are so many. They had a race—a long-distance race. They had champion men, women. You know, one of those marathon deals. The man finished 5 hours and 14 minutes and 36 seconds sooner. He beat the champion woman by five hours. It's so demeaning to women. It's so ridiculous, right?

It's so ridiculous—the weightlifting—take a look at the weightlifting records. One record stood for 18 years, and it was broken by 112 pounds. They couldn't get one-eighth of an ounce. You know, they put—Speaker, they'd put an eighth of an ounce on. "And she's going to break the record for her mom," who's sitting in the front with her father. "I'm going to break it, Dad." And she's out there.

"We're adding one-eighth of an ounce to each side. This record has stood, ladies and gentlemen, for 18 years, but she's going to do it." She's looking to get into the Olympics, right? And she gets up, and they put a little, tiny thing, like this little thing.

And my wife—by the way, my wife, hates when I do this. *[Laughter]* She said—you know, she's a very classy person, right? She said, "It's so un-Presidential." I said, "But I did become President." *[Laughter]* You know? Somebody—she hates when I dance. I said, "Everybody wants me to dance." "Darling, it's not Presidential."

She actually said, "Could you imagine FDR dancing?" She said that to me. *[Laughter]* And I said, "There's a long history that perhaps she doesn't know." *[Laughter]*

Because he was an elegant fellow, even as a Democrat, right? He was—the attack by Japan. You know, he was quite elegant. But he wouldn't be doing this. But—*[laughter]*—nor would too many others.

But she says: "Darling, please. The weightlifting is terrible."

And I have to say this: The dancing, they really like. *[Laughter]* She said: "They don't like it. They're just being nice to you." I said, "That's not right. The place goes crazy." They're screaming, "Dance, please. Dance"—but the weightlifting—

But no, the girl gets up. "Hm."

[The President pretended to lift a weight.]

"Argh." And you see—I want to be more, but I have somebody watching. *[Laughter]* I want to be more effusive. I want to really—

[The President pretended to lift a weight.]

"Argh." *[Laughter]* But she gets it and—

[The President pretended to lift a weight.]

"Hhh—huh. Uh." Drops the thing, walks off the stage crying. Her mother is crying. Her father is crying—guy gets up. They said, "Have you lifted before?" "Little bit." And he walks up, bing.

[The President pretended to lift a weight.]

He could have gone—ding, ding, ding, ding.

[The President pretended to lift a weight.]

[Laughter] I think it was 112 pounds, right? It's crazy.

Or the beautiful boxer. They have boxing now. And that had a—have a young gentleman who transitioned, who's a very good boxer, but he wanted to be a woman. Which, you know, to

each his own—[laughter]—because I want to be very liberal when it comes to these subjects. I'm trying to get that vote. It's not an easy vote to get. [Laughter] It's very tough for me to get it.

But he transitioned, and he's—he transitioned, and the girl was a champion boxer from Italy. Remember? She got up. First round, he hit her—"poom"——

[*The President pretended to throw a punch.*]

——with a left. A left, for those—everybody here knows boxing—but a left—Lisa knows better than anybody—but a left is defense. He goes, "Poom."

[*The President pretended to throw a punch.*]

She's like, "Oh, my." She walked to the corner. Remember? She didn't go down, but she did everything else but.

She said: "I've never been hit like that before. I don't want to go out again." "You can do it. You can do it." Bing.

[*The President pretended to throw a punch.*]

She walked off. She said, "That's"—it's—he happened to win the gold medal, that young woman. He won the gold medal.

There were two transitioned people. They both won gold medals.

The whole thing is ridiculous. You have policy on your side. They don't have policy on your side. Right? You have policy.

And I saw this guy fighting like hell. The swimming record is just ridiculous, when you look at the swimming—any records. It's crazy. And it's so demeaning to women. Women are the, you know—and for a long time, they refused to talk about it. They were embarrassed to talk about it. Now they do talk about it. They talk about it openly.

But they have the worst policy on everything—open borders. "We want open borders." You know, they still want an open border. We did the greatest job ever on borders. And you know, I think they forgot it.

My guy said to me today—I have a great guy, Ross—he's the greatest—speechwriter. He said: "Sir, let's not mention the border. Nobody cares about the border anymore." Can you believe it? This was the biggest——

[*The President pointed to an audience member.*]

Hello.

This was the biggest thing there was. He says to me, "Nobody cares about the border because it has a shelf life."

I fixed the border. I fixed it in my first term, but now I really had to fix it. It was much worse, you know, when I came into office. Millions and millions of people were pouring into our country, and I fixed it. And my guy, who's incredible, says: "People don't want to hear it, sir. You've done that."

The problem is, people forget that I did it. They totally forget. They were talking about it the other day. "We don't like Donald Trump on this. We don't like Donald Trump on that." And somebody just out of the blue said, "Well, he did an unbelievable job on"—"who cares about that?" They're saying, like, "You know, that's been done."

What do we do about that, Mike? Everything you do—it's almost like, "what have you done lately" is the way you have to run your life.

In other words, I could have the most unbelievable 4 years—and I guess they're not—I'm—I'm not allowed to run. I'm not sure, is there a little something out there that I'm not allowed to run? But let's assume I was allowed to run. I could have—[laughter]—there's going to be a constitutional movement. [Laughter]

No, I could have the most unbelievable 4 years—everything was great—but in the last week, I made a little slipup on something, and you lose the election. It's like—so we have—we can't let them forget that we did such a great job on the border.

By the way, Venezuela—everyone, they're marching in the streets. They love it. Except in New York. I mean, where do they find these people? [Laughter] These people—and they're not like—these people are a mess. I know it's not nice to say that. These people are a mess. Where do they find these people? They're the worst looking people I've ever seen. [Laughter] They really—they got hats that are all frayed and all—that look like—they're all paid. They're all—they don't even know what they're talking—when the people—the reporters don't interview them because they know that it's—you know, the reporters—the press is so anti—it's hard to believe the press could be so anti, because it's all common sense.

You know, it's not: "We're conservative. We're conservative"—whatever. Doesn't matter. It's we're all commonsense people. It's not even conservative. It's common sense. But the press has no credibility whatsoever.

Think of it: I got 97-percent bad stories on one network, 93 percent on the other, and I won in a landslide. You know what that means? The press has no credibility. That's all it means, and we got to keep it that way.

So I don't talk too much about the swimming, the weightlifting, the boxing. I don't talk about it. You know why? I want to start bringing it up about a week before the election, because I don't want them to correct themselves. I don't want them to say, "You know, we've decided that we don't want to have men playing in women's sports." That would be a devastating blow for us, because that's—you know, they say, "It's an 80/20." No, no. It's about a 98/2 issue. [Laughter]

"We've decided that we will not have open borders where the entire world, from the Congo"—prisons from the Congo, these are extraordinarily tough people. These are people that make our motorcycle gangs look like fine young men. [Laughter] Okay? Our motorcycle gangs are wonderful people by comparison.

No, they come in from prisons in the Congo. They come in from prisons from all over the world—but in particular, Venezuela, Tren de Aragua. Tren de Aragua comes in. And Tren de Aragua, they say it's the worst gang in the world. It makes our gangs look like little sweethearts. It makes our gangs—you want to take them out to dinner, they're so nice.

They cut off the fingers of people. One guy makes a phone call in Colorado—the Governor stinks in Colorado. He has no control. So Tren de Aragua—they don't want to do anything about it, so ICE has to go in and take them out because the Governor doesn't want to do anything.

But they make a phone call. "They've taken over my building." The landlord is calling. They took over his building. So the Governor doesn't want to do anything, but he calls the police, the guy. They come in, "Did you call the police?" This is Tren de Aragua talking to the man that owns the building. "Did you call the police?" "Yes." Boom, they cut off his fingers. "If you call them again, the next time, your hand comes off." Can you believe? The guy's walking around, his fingers were cut off.

And these are the animals that we're throwing the hell out of here. Washington, DC, is now the safest city in the country. And you people know that better than anybody, because you—you

were—I mean, think of it. You're in Congress. You're respected people. You're afraid to walk outside.

Washington, DC—now, we had a terror attack 4 weeks ago, and one person's looking down from Heaven, and the other one is actually recuperating and going to make it, I think, but really badly hurt. Really badly hurt. Most positive mother I've ever—"No, my son's going to be fine, sir." My—the mother was telling me that the night of the attack.

I went—just like I went to you, I just—I spoke to this incredible woman. "Sir, everyone's praying for my son. He's going to be fine." The doctors thought she was, you know, just hoping against hope. There was no chance.

And 2 weeks ago, he got up and started walking around. It's amazing, actually. So maybe some really—looks like he could be okay. He's going to have pretty bad aftereffects. But that was a different—that was a terrorist attack on people that are doing a great job, and it could have been anywhere.

But we haven't had a murder. You know, we would have, on average, two murders a week in Washington—I don't even like talking about it. Two murders a week in Washington, DC. We have—we haven't had one in 7 months. People can walk out now. You can walk down with your wife down to the restaurants, which are booming, by the way.

I mean, if you go back to before I got in—and we did a pretty good job 4 years ago, but it was never this—you know, in my first term. So, when we were—during the first term, we were pretty good, but you know, it wasn't like that big of an issue. It became a big issue because people were being mugged all over the place.

We had a couple of people working in the White House that were killed. We had one guy waiting for his wife in a car. They said, "Get out of your car." He said, "Well, I'm waiting for my wife." They blew his head off. And the wife is walking up to the car. Animals.

And then they get angry when I say, "They're animals." Nancy Pelosi: "They're not animals. They're human beings." No, they're not.

This is another thing. That's a ninety—that's a 98/2 issue also. No, they're animals, and we've taken them out. We've took out over 2,000 people, brought them back to their countries from where they came, or they're in prison now in Washington, because it's not just like—we have—you have to take the bad ones out.

Two percent, 3 percent of the population causes 90 percent of the crime. Think of it. Two percent of the population in Washington, DC, causes 90 percent of the crime. So, when you get rid of the 2 percent—we took out over 2,000 people, got them out of the country or in prison. Some were so bad that we didn't want to send them back to their countries, because they'll come back in, even though it's hard now. But you know, they're pretty smart. They're sick, but they're smart.

But you're now living in one of the safest cities in the country. It's a great thing. You can walk to the restaurants. Restaurants are booming. New restaurants are opening—they were all closing. You wouldn't have had a restaurant—and I don't know about you, but to me, those soldiers standing there look so good. I don't—I'm not going to feel safe walking down the street without them. I don't think you would either. Even though, you know, we took out all—so many criminals, I just feel better. To me, they're beautiful. I look at these soldiers and you feel safe. You feel safe. I don't think if we took them out—even if the crime wasn't much, it would definitely be more.

We did a great job in Chicago. They don't want to talk about it. We—you know, against all this—this slob of a Governor, this stupid slob who—who—the family threw him out of the business; he was a dope—and—the Pritzker family—but they threw him out of the business.

And the mayor, he's a low-IQ person. Extremely low IQ.

We should give everybody, like, these competency tests, right? The cognitive—they call it "cognitive." You know, I'm the only President that went for cognitives. I think every President and Vice President should be forced to take cognitive exams, mental tests. Like, are they intelligent? Wouldn't it be nice?

Do you think Walz could pass a cognitive test, as an example? *[Laughter]*

Audience member. No!

The President. Do you think Kamala could? I don't think Gavin could. He's got a good line of crap, but other than that, he couldn't pass. *[Laughter]* I mean, he's a guy who didn't want to have water coming down the—from the Pacific Northwest. Why? You know, they have a little tiny fish, this big. It's a little, tiny fish. Not doing well. You know why? No water. "They're sending water. It's too much. It's killing the fish." So they cut it off, and then they have 25,000 houses burned down. They don't know why.

No, I think—I believe in it. I'm the only one that took a cognitive test. I do medical—it's the worst. If I don't do a medical exam, because I've had times where I went longer because, you know, I'm busy—if I don't do a medical exam, they say: "Trump is not doing an exam. There must be something wrong with him."

If I do the exam, they say: "Huh, why did he do this? Why did he do this part of an exam? That's—he did too much. There's something wrong with him." Do you remember, I—there was a period, Mike, where I had—32 days in a row, I did one press conference—two, three, sometimes four. I'd do them behind the desk. *[Laughter]* Just do it. I'd do press conferences. But I do many press conferences.

I went 32 days, and then one day, just one day—this is 32 days in a row. Must be some kind of a crazy record. Then one day—do you remember?—I didn't do one because I took Kai, my very brilliant golfer—beautiful young lady who swings the club so beautifully. *[Laughter]* She's a great scratch golfer and loves playing. "Grandpa, would you take me to play golf?"

So I ran—you know, I play golf in, like, record. I play speed golf. *[Laughter]* It's better that way. You know the expression: Miss it quick. *[Laughter]* No, I play speed golf, but I'm a good golfer. Everybody knows I—anybody that I've beaten in this group—but I play—I love to play golf, but I don't get to play much.

But I took off 2 hours, and the press couldn't find me, but they knew I was there because they—you know, they follow me. And I was getting—"Are you okay?" Guys are calling me up—some of the guys in this room—"Sir, are you okay?" "Yes, what's the problem?" "There's a report, sir, that you're no longer with us." *[Laughter]* Remember that? No, the report was that I was no—I wanted—I don't want to use the "d" word. That's such a horrible word. "Dead." I don't like that.

"There's a report, sir, that you're no longer with us." I said, "Well, I just did a 280-yard drive. This isn't bad." *[Laughter]* And you know, it's one of the—and it—it took me a couple of weeks to get that one straightened out.

The new one is they did a report in the fake news New York Times where—I worked this day from early in the morning until late in the evening, but we don't give out a full schedule. It's like you've got—who the hell wants to give out a schedule to these people? But it's all work.

And this one—in particular, this day was brutal. I never got to leave the seat. I couldn't—you couldn't do anything. It was just one after another after another. And this went on from early in the morning until late in the evening. And my people gave out a report. "He had lunch." They show a report, "Lunch with somebody," and they did a story. "Donald Trump is slowing down. He only had lunch, and then he went back up." And I said, "Oh, that's malfeasance, whoever did"—right? No, it's terrible.

I was actually more angry with my people than I was with the New York Times. But they wrote a story, and it takes you a period of time to recover from these hits. And it's almost no matter what you do, but you have to keep a positive eye.

But we have a fake press. We did a thing that's so incredible on medicine that nobody has ever done it: reducing—favored nations—most favored nations, we reduced the cost of medicine at levels that have never even been dreamt of before.

We should win the elections on just that thing. If we did nothing else and went home, go home, we did favored nations, where we're bringing down the price of a pill.

As an example, in London, the pill sells for \$10. In New York, it sells for \$130. That's 13 times as much. Most favored is I want to pay what the lowest nation in the world is paying. Everybody knew about it, but nobody had the guts or the stamina to do it or the respect from other nations, but I do.

And then you also had to get the drug companies. The drug companies were not easy, but they were much easier compared to the other nations. So the other nations used to tell the drug companies, "We're not going to pay more." You keep—they kept it, for years, the same price. Everything was—we just kept going up, up, up.

And finally, I had the drug companies, and I said: "Listen, fellas, you can't do this. You can't do it anymore. I'm not going to let it." "We're going to do it, and it's"—"You're not going to do it." And I did things to them that were brutal, but I really found out it was the nations that were so tough.

So, when France was told that the pill will go from \$10 to \$30, it's a big increase, right? But it's not really. And that ours would come down from—\$12 or \$13 down to \$30. So theirs would go from \$10 to \$20 or \$30, and ours would go from \$13 down to—meaning \$130 down to \$20 or \$30. So it's a huge drop for us.

Now, depending on the way you calculate it, it could be thousands of percent down. It could also be 90 percent and 80 percent. You know, there's two ways of calculating—I don't know if you know. They said, "Donald Trump exaggerates"—no. There are two ways of calculating it. But calculate it at 80, 90 percent. But the other way is more accurate, like 900 percent, because that's what it really is. But there are two ways, but use the—be generous, 90 percent.

The—there hasn't been a reduction in 28 years, except for the one year where I got it down one-quarter of 1 percent, and I had a news conference. I was so proud of myself. The drug prices—prescription drugs are going to be down by thousands of points. Thousands. On that one item, you should win this election.

The New York Times barely wrote about it. The other papers barely wrote about it. Nobody even knows that the drug prices—now, people will say, "How did"—you don't mind if I don't read this crazy teleprompter, do you? Because, you know—do you mind? Because I have—I have—it's called "standard."

But these things are so important because you guys got to get elected, because if you don't get elected, we have a country that's going to go to hell. So we can't play games. "Ladies and

gentlemen, the sun will rise tomorrow, and when it rises, we will all"—we don't need this bullshit. We need to talk about favored nations.

And your numbers are coming down at levels that nobody has ever seen. We inherited high prices. We inherited a mess. We inherited the greatest inflation in history. And you know what was knocking it down? The bad economy that we inherited. We inherited bad.

We now have the hottest economy in the history of our country. We have \$18 trillion being invested in the United States. You have—every one of you have car plants, AI plants, plants of all different types are up because of tariffs.

I hope we get the good ruling from the Supreme Court. I only hope we do because it's given us tremendous national security.

So let me just finish up, because, you know, I weave. I love to weave. If you ever weave and don't come back to the point, then that's a problem. Then you say—but when you weave and you go here and boom, boom, boom, always coming back, then you're in good shape.

But what's happening is, by doing what I did, we're getting numbers that are so low. But what did I do to the countries? I said, "France, your health care for prescription drugs is going to go up triple." It's going from \$10 a pill—just as an example—I call it the fat drug; you could say the fat drug—Ozempic. Ozempic is \$80 in London, and it's \$1,300 in New York. The fat drug.

A friend of mine called me up. He said, "What the hell is going on?" A very rich guy, but he—I said: "The fat drug doesn't work on you. Why are you even taking it?" [*Laughter*] The drug has failed miserably. But he's a very loud, boisterous—he's not a bad guy, not a great guy, smart as hell, but he's a very rich guy. This drug, he could have paid millions for it, and it wouldn't have mattered.

But he said: "In London, I'm paying 80 bucks. In New York, I'm paying, like, many times more than that. What the hell is"—that's because of what's happened, because the nations held us back.

So the drug companies—I had made a deal with them. "You're going to do it?" They said, "Whatever the nations agreed to." The nations were a bigger problem than the drug companies.

So I said, "You're telling me they would?" "They'll never agree, sir." I said, "A hundred percent, they will. A hundred percent." They said, "Sir, the smartest guys"—Eli Lilly, Merck, Pfizer—all genius—they're all making numbers you wouldn't believe.

Defense contractors are making more. That's why I'm going to say, "You're going to—you're making \$45 million a year, and you can't produce a freaking helicopter for 7 years?" We're going to talk to them about that.

But I said to the—France—I called up—as an example, France—just as an example. I like him. He's a nice guy. Emmanuel. You know Emmanuel Macron?

[*The President imitated an accent.*]

Macron.

I love the French accent.

[*The President imitated an accent.*]

Emmanuel.

[*Laughter*] I said, "Listen, you're going to have to raise your prices a little bit because we're paying 14 times more than you." That's a lot, right? We're paying numbers—in other words, we're making up for all of this deficit.

[The President imitated an accent.]

"No, no, no, no, no. Donald, I will not be able to. Mr. President, please, excuse me."

Most people call me "Mr. President," except for people that don't respect me. They call me "Donald," which they—probably a lot of them do. *[Laughter]*

But they said, "No, no, no, no."

Putin calls me Mr. President. Xi calls me Mr. President.

Emmanuel goes, "No, no, no. We will not do that." "Yes, you will, Emmanuel. A hundred percent." Because I was told they wouldn't do it.

And this is—you can take Emmanuel and add a Hans. You can add a Ludwig. You can add every name in the book. It's all the same. The answer is: No, we're not going to double our drug prices, not for you or anybody else. I said: "Yes, you are. A hundred percent." "We are not going to do it." "No, no, no. You didn't listen. One hundred percent, you're going to do it, and you're going to like it." *[Laughter]* They go, "I don't understand." "I've told you five times. Why do you keep saying you're going to do it," because I'm always right about—Trump is right about everything, right?

I said—the hat: Trump is right about—I have been right about everything. Got to keep it going. Is there wood up here? Hold it. *[Laughter]* Ah.

[The President knocked on the lectern.]

I always like to—just in case. *[Laughter]*

Trump was right about everything.

I said, "So you're going to do it, Emmanuel." "No, I'm not." I said, "Okay. Here's the story, Emmanuel. If on Monday you haven't agreed to every single thing that we want, I'm putting a 25-percent tariff on everything coming out of France, including your wines, your champagnes, and everything else."

[The President imitated an accent.]

"No, no, no, no. You cannot do that."

I said: "I can do that, and I will do that. Even for national security, I'll do that, but this is for medical security, and one hundred percent."

"Now, let me explain. The tariff I'm imposing on you is 42 times more expensive than what I'm asking for you in return. So you can either have a 25-percent tariff added on to you"—like I did with China on fentanyl. I put a 20 percent penalty tax on China, and it's drying up, because the tax is far more than they make with fentanyl.

But with the other nations, I said, "You're going to do it." And you know what he said? "You can't do that to me." I said: "Yes, I can. Don't worry about it. It's not going to be that bad. You just have to explain it to your people—your 39 million people," that, by the way, don't vote by mail. They vote on paper ballots. They tried voting by mail, and there was fraud all over the country.

We're the only country that votes by mail, essentially. You know that, right? You know, Speaker, that's another thing. We're the only country that's stupid enough to vote by mail.

Even Jimmy Carter's commission said, "Don't do it."

But just to finish, so that you won't say, "He wanders." *[Laughter]* Emmanuel said to me: "Donald, you have a deal. I would love to increase my prescription drug prices by 200 percent or

whatever." [Laughter] "I would love to do it. It would be such an honor. Whatever you want, Donald. Please, don't tell the population. Please, Donald. I beg you."

Every country said the same thing. "No, no, no. We will not do this." Some were strong. Some were very nice. Some were rude. But they all said one thing: "No, we won't."

And within, I'd say, on average, 3.2 minutes—[laughter]—they were all saying, "We would be honored to quadruple our drug prices." [Laughter] "Sir, we would be honored to quadruple our prices, if that's what you like. We want to make you happy." Okay. "Therefore, I will not charge you a tariff, and you're going to increase your drug prices by three times what they were paying 2 days ago. Right?"

And we have now favored nation. You think Biden could do that? I don't think so. Think Biden ever thought of it?

Now, everybody's wanted favored nations, but everybody knew it was impossible to get the countries to agree to it, because they wouldn't have done. And they've been doing this for 40 years or whatever it is. We were subsidizing the entire world.

That's just one of the many things we're giving. But you should take that thing. That's going to save—now, that also—when you add that to health care, your drug prices are much lower than what you projected. So we're going to reduce health care by a lot.

One other thing on health care: It's never been our issue. It should be our issue.

We had a very nasty vote from a couple of people. I guess, Collins. I guess, Lisa Murkowski. And I guess a man named John McCain. Remember? Thumbs-down.

[The President gave a thumbs-down.]

You remember.

He said, "I'm all"—for 10 years, he campaigned. I don't want to be nasty, but for 10 years he campaigned on Obamacare. "We're going to destroy Obamacare. We're not going to do it, and then we're going to terminate it." And then——

[The President gave a thumbs-down.]

It was a little surprising.

We could have had health care—good health care. Obamacare is bad, and the people understand it's bad. And the premiums are horrible.

But one thing I've learned—I've learned a lot about health care. I found health care so—sort of, like, not of tremendous interest, but it was very important, and I've made it of tremendous interest.

So I made a statement a couple of months ago because I saw the numbers. I said, "Boy"—because, you know, I like to see what's going on. That's one of the reasons we—by the way, we set an alltime record again today. We have the highest stock market in the history of our country, by far, every single month. That's another thing you should campaign—you know, they like to demean that. They—you know, the Democrats—"Well, that doesn't mean anything. That's just fake"—no, no. That means jobs and it means 401(k)s, because a lot of people have 401(k)s. And they have——

[The President addressed an audience member.]

Hello. Best lawyer in the room. [Laughter] The best.

Have 401(k)s, and they have 401(k)s like—I had a young policeman. I told this story twice about—it was the same thing. This was a recent case. I had a case years ago—because I had a great economy. You know, we had the greatest economy in history during my first term.

My first term was a tremendous success, but, again, nobody wants to talk about that. We rebuilt our military. We did things that nobody could have done. We did a great job.

This term is blowing it away. It's blowing every term. There's never been a President that had a year like this, especially a starting year. And we should win based on that too. All things.

But the 401(k)s. So there's a policeman, and he comes up, and he was guarding me, along with lots of other people. "Sir, I want to thank you." "What?" "My wife thinks I am the worst investor in the world. And for the last year, I have—she thinks now I'm Warren Buffett. [Laughter] She said, 'You're smarter than Warren Buffett. You're a better investor than Mr. Warren Buffett,' sir." I said, "How's your 401(k)?" "It's doubled. It's going up. It's going up." Oh, I said, "Just relax."

But 401(k)s are through the roof. Those are us. Those are the people.

We have the highest stock market in history: 47 days out of 11 months—we have just a piece of the last month left for the first year—47 days out of 11 months, we hit a new record. Well, we hit one last night. We hit another one today, I understand. But we hit one last night, a new record—brandnew record. All exchanges, not just, you know, Dow. Dow was up, but all of them.

We have another record. Forty—that's the 47th time in 11 months that we've hit an alltime high. And the future—because we have more money coming into our country than any country has ever had, by far. The record was about \$3 trillion many years ago by China. We've got \$18 trillion pouring into our country. You know why? Because of tariffs. Because if they build a factory, they don't have to pay any tariff. But if they make it in another country and they send it in, they have a very big tariff to pay. So they can't pay that tariff, so what they do is they come in and they're building.

By the way, this is what China did to us for many years. It's just reversing it.

Other than we have—we have a great product. We have a great—we were losing our product though.

Tell you what, if I had lost this election, if you had Kamala—it's the same thing: Joe and Kamala. I call them equals. If you had Kamala come in, I believe that our country would have been Venezuela on steroids. I used to say that during the campaign, "If I don't win, we're going to have Venezuela."

So we have \$18 trillion coming in. I think we could hit \$20 trillion by the time the year is up. Right? It's less than 1 year: \$18 trillion.

The record is \$3 trillion. Three trillion dollars is a lot of money. Eighteen trillion is not even thinkable.

That's all investment. That's building factories. That's building plants.

You know how many car factories we have? Half of you guys are having car factories where—

[The President gestured toward an audience member.]

—you are. Louisiana is doing great. Georgia, right next to you, is doing great.

Hello. Nice guy. All nice people.

Actually, in this room, I can't see anything. Is there anybody I'm supposed to dislike in this room? *[Laughter]* I think they—I think the—a couple of people maybe didn't show up. There's only one that I really dislike. I mean, I really—the same person that Mike gave up on, because there's something wrong with him. He's a sick person. But there's only one, really. The others, I just have to—you just have to understand them. You know, they have some problems too, but you just have to sort of go with them and understand them; feel sorry for them; advise their family, "Are they okay," because what we're doing is right.

But \$18 trillion, car plants being built.

I was in Japan. Somebody admonished me, "He shouldn't be traveling." I don't like to travel. I don't like to travel, but when I travel, I make a lot of money for the country. Not for me. For me, I don't make—I don't care. It's all—I have a much higher purpose. I have plenty of money. I don't need money. I don't want money. I want to make money for the country and—like I did with Intel.

Intel came in. They had a problem. I said, "I can solve the problem, but I think you should give the United States 10 percent of your company." He goes, "Whoa." I said, "Yes, I think—I think in—I can help you with the problem, but you've got to give the United States"—not me. Sometimes I'll say, "Give me," but when I say "me," I'm talking about—I'd love to accept it, but I don't think that law enforcement would like that. Right? I'm very cognizant of law enforcement, perhaps more than anybody in history. *[Laughter]*

Actually, a friend of mine, who's really smart said, "You know, you've got to be the most honest guy in history, because you have been examined—your books, your records." I have a big business. Every record—I had—these Democrats hired the biggest accounting firms, the biggest law firms, the biggest—I went through years of abuse, and here I am. They didn't find anything wrong.

Remember, "We want his tax returns." For years, "We want his"—finally, the Supreme Court, shockingly—I'm the only one. This couldn't happen to anybody else. "You have to give your tax returns," right? I gave my tax returns. They're from here to here.

[The President gestured by pointing toward the floor then moving up toward the ceiling.]

It's a big business. It's a great business, and it's—I built a great business, like much bigger and better than anyone even understands.

But I gave my tax returns. They go from here to the ceiling, practically. They got them. Headline: "Trump to give tax returns." Supreme Court ruled I had give them my tax returns. Can you believe it? Everyone said: "You're not supposed to. He's not supposed to do that." And by fighting, they think you're trying to hide something—you know, naturally.

I gave them my tax returns. That's the last we ever heard. *[Laughter]*

They hired the biggest accounting firm in the world, most powerful lawyers in the world. They spent millions and millions of dollars going over those returns. There hasn't been one story that I did anything wrong.

So this friend of mine, who's highly sophisticated—rich guy, smart guy—said, "There's nobody that I know that could have gone through an examination like that and not ended up in prison."

Nobody ever had to suffer like I did. Nobody ever did that to anybody else.

You know, there was an expression, "Andrew Jackson was the most abused President in the history of the United States." You know who second was? This was before me. You know who the second was? Abraham Lincoln. But he had a civil war, so we have to give him a pass.

But Andrew Jackson was treated horribly—he was a great general and a good President—so bad that his wife died. I mean, his wife died. They would have—horrible.

But I just saw a report came out the other day: I blow them away. I blow—he never got impeached twice. I got impeached twice on nothing, on a perfect phone call. Remember? Perfect phone call.

Tim Scott, who's a great guy. Great, wonderful guy. South Carolina. Straight guy, right? He is a good guy, good person. He's an honest person. He read a transcript. Thank goodness I had a transcript. Essentially, the call was taped, because they tape calls. I didn't even know. I said, "Was that call taped?" "Yes, sir." I said: "Oh, well, bring it down. I don't even know."

And we read the transcript. It was perfect. It was so good. I told Ukraine not to cheat, and if you see any cheating, report it to the Attorney General of the United States. That was my call. They said, "He was trying to intimidate." I—intimidate? [*Laughter*] All I said is, "Don't cheat."

And we have a signed agreement that Ukraine can't cheat. You know that. We've—it's the only—like, the only country we have actually a signed—they violated the agreement many times, I will tell—you'll find out. I was right about that too.

But I—nobody's gotten treated—but this guy said to me, "For you to have escaped"—but the one thing—and I'll just end it, because Jim Jordan back there, world-champion wrestler, 128-and-1. Whatever happened to the one guy, the Russian? [*Laughter*] He lost to a—how dare you lose to a Russian? [*Laughter*]

Do you know the more impressive record for Jim? Because I'm a big sports person. I love sports. Jim went to high school as—in high school, he was considered, like, the top wrestler, but he was undefeated in high school. Now, what that means is that, as a freshman, he was beating seniors.

Is that true? Were you actually undefeated—seriously, were you undefeated in high school? That means as a freshman, he had to beat seniors, Steve. Nobody could—because there's such a difference between a freshman and a senior. To me, that's more impressive than anything.

But I'm also impressed with his fight. Now we have to close the deal, Jim. We've got to close the deal. Close that deal.

But I—but the right—so, you know, I respect—I saw Jim, and the first time I met Jim, I looked at him and I said, "That's a tough-looking guy." But I noticed the ears. They were a little rough. [*Laughter*] They were a little bit of a rough. Some people would say a little cauliflower on that ear. And I said, "Jim, have you wrestled before?" "Yes, I did." "Where?" Was it Ohio State?" "Something like"—he was an All-American at Ohio State. I said, "Yes, I could sort of tell." I look at the ears, and I can sort of tell.

But have you had plastic surgery on your ears, Jim? No? [*Laughter*] Because they look better now than they did the first time. They've healed over the years. [*Laughter*] They've healed.

Actually, now you're wrestling with probably much tougher people: the radical-left lunatics. Right?

But, anyway, so I just want to leave it by this: I want to say that you are great people. We have all of the policy. We have wonderful—I—just stay together. You've got to—we got a few people that make life very difficult. They don't have that.

I used to say, "They don't have a Mitt Romney in their midst." I mean, Mitt Romney was very difficult. You know, he'd always—he was almost like for them. He was a very—on the Senate side. But we have a couple of people that are really bad. I mean, they're bad, but maybe they'll straighten out. Maybe somebody in the room can sit them down and straighten them out,

because what we're doing is the right thing for the country. We're not Republican or Democrat or any—we're doing the right thing for the country.

Every—if you look at what we're—we're trying to solve the health care problem. We're trying to get better health care at a lower price. I mean, that's a good thing, right?

And the one thing I learned—and just in concluding—and I said it, like, a month and a half ago, and it was the number-one thing in the country. Even the fake news covered it. They tried to put a negative spin on it, of course. I said, "I read a story about insurance companies making a fortune." A fortune. Their stocks were up 1,700 percent. Who invested recently in a stock that's up 17? And that's because the money that they're getting from Obamacare is massive—and the Government, generally. That means they're making a fortune.

And as soon as that—because I'm—like, I have a natural—I don't want to say it again, but I have a natural business instinct. I do. I've always done things—I've done some things that people said, "You're crazy," and I made a lot of money with. I've done a lot of things that were good. I have an instinct, right?

Somebody said, "He's got the best political instincts of any politician in 150 years." I said: "No, I don't. I really don't believe I do. I think I have good instincts. I have common sense." But they said they—it was a very complimentary statement, but I don't believe that's necessarily right. But I do have good policy. I have good common sense, and maybe they wield that into instincts. But—and I did become President, so can't be that bad. And I never did it before.

Don't forget, I ran for President—I had a politician telling me very strongly—they said, "Sir, I've run for office 20 times, and I've won 17, and I know what I'm talking about." This was at the very beginning of my first time. I said, "Well, I've only run once and I won, but I won for president." [Laughter] He said, "You've got me on that one."

He's actually sitting in this room right now, that son of a gun. He knows who I'm talking about. He was giving me a hard time, but he's turned out to be a decent person—not the best in the room, but a decent person. [Laughter] He's not my—he's not my favorite in the room, but he's decent.

But we have one thing that's really strong.

Uh-oh, it's the fake news. [Laughter] Pulitzer Prize, right, Doug? Pulitzer Prize. He got one for the bullet. He had the bullet, but he got—how many Pulitzer Prizes?

New York Times Photographer Doug Mills. Three.

The President. Three Pulitzer Prizes, and all talented guys. These are great guys. I don't like the people back there as much. [Laughter] These are the ones that take the pictures. Make me look thin, for a change, Doug. [Laughter] You're making me look a little bit heavy. I'm not happy about it. [Laughter]

But one thing I did see and find out in the last 2 months: When you tell the people that we want the money to be paid to the people so the people can buy their own health insurance and health care—it is—it's like—and I just said it.

And I said it because I read a story in the front page of a certain paper that I don't even mention because it's so stupid paper—it's so bad. It's gone so—so far off—the Wall Street Journal—I don't mention it. I refuse to tell you which—I refuse to tell you that it's the Wall Street Journal. [Laughter] They've lost their way. This is not the Wall Street Journal of old.

But I read a story on the Wall Street Journal, and it said that the insurance companies are making so much money. They weren't demeaning them or anything. And I guess, as an investor, you're happy. When I read that, I said, "Wait a minute, they're making that kind of money?" And

they're making it because of stupid politicians, I hate to say—that we allow them to make it. If you guys can get in a room—because, you know, we don't have that as one of our issues.

It's the only thing they have. They're lousy at it. They came up with Obamacare. We tried to fight it. We almost had it won, but we didn't get three votes. We should have gotten them.

But here's—you want to turn this thing? You work on favored nations, you work on borders, you work on all of the things that we talked about. But now you take the health care issue away from them. And they want to fight it. You know why? They're all owned by the insurance companies. And they cannot fight it successfully. There's nothing they can do.

That's like, almost, the voter ID thing. When they try and fight—I watched a guy trying to explain why we shouldn't have voter ID the other day, and the guy was a fool. He looked like an idiot. This is the same kind of an issue.

Let the money go in a health care account or however you do it. Let the money go directly to the people. Now, you have to be a little flexible on Hyde. You know that. You've got to be a little flexible. You've got to work something. You got to use ingenuity. You've got to work. We're all big fans of everything, but you've got to be flexi—you have to have flexibility.

I came out with a statement: Let the money go not to the big, fat cats in the insurance companies that made 1,700 percent over the last short period of time. Let the money go directly to the people where they can buy their own health care. And I don't think—I'm not sure that I've ever said anything that was more impactful. You know, I say a lot of things and have a lot of good ideas.

And this was an idea that—I mean, the whole world went crazy. The whole country went crazy—the world went crazy with envy. If you can somehow do that—Mr. Speaker, Tom, all of you, Steve—if you can do that, you're going to have—this is going to be your issue.

And the other thing is fertilization. They're trying to hit us on fertilization. They were dead on fertilization when I got a call from a very wonderful young Senator from Alabama saying they had just lost a case, and the case—I've never been met with such scorn. Friends of hers were just going crazy. And I said, "Explain the issue to me." And it was on IVF, the fertilization. A judge ruled against and said all fertilization places have to be closed down, like, immediately. It would have been a disaster. And fortunately, I picked it up, and we became—we own the issue.

But now, I understand they're trying to make a case on fertilization. You can't let them do that. Very important issue. All of these issues are very important issues.

But you can own health care. Let—figure it out. Let the money go directly to the people. It goes in a health care account. It does—there are numerous things you can do, but you have to let—no money for the insurance companies.

You know, I'm going to meet with the insurance companies. I said, "I'm going to meet with them." Because I met with the prescription drug companies, and that's when I found out what was going on with the fact that we were paying 10 and 13 and 14 times more money than Europe and other places. I learned that at the meeting. Now, I'm going to meet with them in a few days. I'm meeting with them all—14 companies. I'm meeting with them all.

I'm also meeting with oil companies. Let's go. Huh? You know—you know what that's about. We've got a lot of oil to drill, which is going to bring down oil prices even further.

But if you can come up with health care—remember this—where the money goes to the people, you have just owned—they can't fight it. They're owned by the insurance companies. You guys don't get money from the insurance companies. They do. They get a massive amount of

money. It's their biggest donor. They're going to try and fight you, but they can't win the fight. If you explain it, "The money goes directly to the people," that's going to be your issue.

The other thing is energy. Your energy prices have come so far down since I'm president, and nobody wants to—I saw on television, "Energy prices are down 3 percent." No, they're not down 3 percent. They were \$3.50 and \$4. It's now nine—\$1.99 a gallon in many stations—many stations—and it's going down further. And that's like a massive tax cut.

And that's the other thing: tax cuts. No tax on tips, no tax on Social Security, no tax on overtime. Now, think of this: no tax on tips, no tax for seniors on Social Security, no tax on overtime.

You're allowed to deduct if you buy a car and you take out a loan on the car. For the first time ever, middle-income people—all people can deduct, but they never got a deduction before like this. They never—it's only for rich people. They got them. They have so many deductions.

You're allowed to deduct the interest against your taxes. Nobody thought it was possible. It's going to be phenomenal for the car companies, but it's even more phenomenal for the people. It's like getting a—you know, it's like paying half for the car.

All of these things—you have so much ammunition. All you have to do is sell it. Taxes. But the one thing: They know about the taxes. The "Great Big Beautiful"—I call it the "Great Big Beautiful Bill." I think it's even better. But the "Great Big Beautiful Bill" is just that. There are so many goodies in the bill. You have to get the word out, because the people in the back of the room won't do it.

That's why I love live television, because they can't—well, sometimes they'll turn the camera off, but they're embarrassed when they do that. You know, if we're going too strong and doing too well—if the lights go off, you know you're doing well. [*Laughter*] If the lights are on, you've got yourself a problem. Okay?

See that little red light? If that light goes on—if that light—that's bad, isn't it? If that light goes off, you know that you're doing a good job, because you're fighting the Democrats and you're fighting the fake news.

And it's amazing that they can be so stupid. And they don't have credibility anymore, and you can beat them. I mean, I—it's the old thing that—you know, "never fight the news," but you have no choice because it's almost like they've become radicalized. But you are fighting the news. But you can beat them. That's why I'm standing here.

I mean, I had Kamala. I was beating Joe by 30 points, and then they changed him. That's like a fighter in the ring. He's losing, and then, so, "Let's put somebody else in to take his place." Very unfair. They changed in the middle of the election. They said, "He's going to lose, so let's give somebody else." And fortunately, she was just as bad as him. Probably slightly—I don't know, would you say as bad or worse? Close. Pretty close.

But it took 6 weeks. There was a honeymoon period. Six weeks. Took 6 weeks to find out that she didn't have what it takes.

But you got to win the midterms, because if we don't win the midterms, it's just going to be—I mean, they'll find a reason to impeach me. I'll get impeached.

We don't impeach them. You know why? Because they're meaner than we are. We should have impeached Joe Biden for a hundred different things. They are mean and smart, but fortunately for you, they have horrible policy. They can be smart as can be, but when they want open borders, when they want, as I said, men in women's sports, when they want transgender for

everyone—"Bring your kids in. We're going to change the sex of your child. Just send them our way."

In some cases, like in Minnesota, they don't even tell the parents. Is that right? And nobody believes it when I say that. I think we have six States. Nobody—am I correct? Okay, Tom Emmer said yes, so—but it's true—where the kid comes back—they keep the kid. They operate on the kid. They don't tell the parents. It's not believable.

We have great, solid, commonsense policy. They have horrendous policy. What they do is they stick together. They never have a no vote. They impeached me. I never knew I was going to be impeached. I get a phone call, "You just got impeached." I said, "What does that mean?" It took them 10 minutes. They impeached the President of the—who did a damn good job. I rebuilt our military, Space Force. I got everything. I did a lot. They impeached me for nothing—twice—for nothing.

Fortunately, you were on our side, and we were unanimous. And the second time, the few people in this little group, like Rice and this—they're all gone. Every one of them is gone, except one that we're going to sort of let ride with. Some guy that has a State that you might as well just let him ride.

But think of it, everyone's gone. Everyone's gone. It makes me feel so good. I don't want to feel vicious, but I'm so happy that everyone—and they're seriously gone too. They lost in landslides. This guy named Rice, he lost by 48 points, right? Remember him?

Representative Russell Fry. Russ Fry, Mr. President.

The President. Oh, no, there he—there he is. What a job you did, Mr. Fry—Congressman Fry. I looked around for somebody—it's true. This was a good choice. We've made some bad choices too, because you have to do it.

I said, "Who the hell can run against this guy Rice?" It was a Trump plus-40 district. They had riots around his house that night. You know, he voted—"I vote to impeach." And that night, they had riots. So they said, "Who the hell"—"Just give me somebody. A warm body." [Laughter] And then—no, no, it has to be a living, breathing person. And then, if I could get a genius, it would be good. And we got a guy who was so good. He's been so—I think. Are you happy with him? I think so. Stand up, Russ. He's great.

I said, "Where does he come from?" He's like a senator, State senator, or something. I said, "All right"—I spoke to him one time. I said, "You're accepted." But little did I realize how good he was good—you did a great job. You've done a great job, and the people love him. So he has done a great job.

I just want to say this. I'm—I haven't read one word on this thing. [Laughter] Who the hell else could do this? And I think I gave you something. It's just a road map, and it's a road map to victory. You have so many good nuggets. You have to use them.

If you can sell them, we're going to win, because we've won two races in like 50 years. It's—for whatever reason, I don't know why, but just don't fight it. It doesn't make sense. There have been two—and they were unusual circumstances.

So, whether it's a Republican or Democrat, whoever wins the Presidency, the other party wins the midterm. And it doesn't make sense, because we've had the most successful year, probably in the history—they say—and now you add what happened, essentially, yesterday, we've had the most successful first year of any President in history. And it should be a positive. And make it a positive.

So, with that, I leave you. I do. And I started by saying I love you all, and I'll end by saying I love you. You're amazing people. What you do for this country is incredible.

And thank you all very much. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Danise Baird, wife of Rep. James R. Baird; Rep. Thomas H. Massie; Jennifer Scalise, wife of House Majority Leader Stephen J. Scalise; Rep. Nancy Pelosi, in her former capacity as Speaker of the House of Representatives, and her daughter Alexandra; Mayor Muriel E. Bowser of Washington, DC; Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer; former President Nicolas Maduro Moros of Venezuela, who was captured, along with his wife Cilia Flores, in a U.S. military operation in Caracas, Venezuela, on January 3 and exfiltrated to the U.S. for criminal processing in New York City; R. Hunter Biden, son of former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.; Algerian Olympic boxer Imane Khelif; Italian Olympic boxer Angela Carini; Taiwanese Olympic boxer Lin Yu-ting; White House Director of Speechwriting Ross Worthington; Gov. Jared S. Polis of Colorado; Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe, USAF, a member of the West Virginia National Guard, who was shot in an ambush-style attack during a patrol near the White House in Washington, DC, on November 26, and his mother Melody; Kristina Gill, wife of former Commodity Futures Trading Commission Chief of Staff Mike Gill, who died on February 3, 2024, from gunshot wounds sustained during a carjacking in Washington, DC; Mayor Brandon Johnson of Chicago, IL; Gov. Timothy J. Walz of Minnesota; former Vice President Kamala D. Harris, in her capacity as the 2024 Democratic Presidential nominee; Gov. Gavin C. Newsom of California; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; President Xi Jinping of China; Sens. Susan M. Collins, Lisa A. Murkowski, Timothy E. Scott, and Katie Boyd Britt; Warren E. Buffett, chairman and former chief executive officer, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.; and Lip-Bu Tan, chief executive officer, Intel Corp. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on January 7.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : House Republican Members Retreat.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Baird, Danise; Baird, James R.; Biden, Joseph R., Jr.; Biden, R. Hunter; Bowser, Muriel E.; Britt, Katie Boyd; Buffett, Warren E.; Carini, Angela; Collins, Susan M.; Emmer, Jacqueline; Emmer, Thomas E., Jr.; Fry, Russell; Gill, Kristina; Harris, Kamala D.; Hern, Kevin R.; Hudson, Richard L.; Johnson, Brandon; Johnson, J. Michael; Jordan, James D.; Khelif, Imane; LaMalfa, Douglas L.; LaMalfa, Jill; Lin Yu-ting; Macron, Emmanuel; Maduro Moros, Nicolas; Massie, Thomas H.; McClain, Lisa C.; Mills, Doug; Modi, Narendra; Murkowski, Lisa; Newsom, Gavin C.; Obama, Barack; Pelosi, Alexandra; Pelosi, Nancy; Polis, Jared S.; Pritzker, Jay R. "J.B."; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Rice, Thomas; Romney, W. Mitt; Scalise, Jennifer; Scalise, Stephen J.; Schumer, Charles E.; Scott, Timothy E.; Tan, Lip-Bu; Trump, Kai M.; Trump, Melania; Walz, Timothy J.; Wolfe, Andrew; Wolfe, Melody; Worthington, Ross; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; 2024 Presidential election; 2026 midterm elections; Border security; California, death of U.S. Representative; California, Governor; China, President; China, synthetic opioid supply chain; China, trade with U.S.; Colorado, Governor; Deaths, Rep. Douglas L. LaMalfa; District of Columbia, law enforcement improvement efforts; District of Columbia, Mayor; District of Columbia, shooting of National Guard servicemembers near White House; Economic improvement; Election security and integrity, strengthening efforts; France, President; Gasoline costs; Health care costs and affordability; House majority leader; House Republican Conference; House Republican Members Retreat; Illinois, Governor; In vitro fertilization and reproductive assistance services; India, Prime Minister; India, trade with U.S.; Manufacturing industry, domestic investment; Minnesota, Governor; National Guard; National

Republican Campaign Committee; News media, fairness and accuracy; Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Prescription drug costs, reduction efforts; Republican Policy Committee; Russia, President; Senate minority leader; Speaker of the House of Representatives; Tariffs; Tax Code reform; Tax relief; Transgender athletes, efforts to restrict participation; U.S. military readiness, improvement efforts; Undocumented immigrants, deportation of criminals; Venezuela, Tren de Aragua criminal organization; Venezuela, U.S. capture and exfiltration of President Maduro; Wall Street Journal; White House Director of Speechwriting.

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