

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026

Remarks on Signing the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026, and an Exchange With Reporters

February 3, 2026

The President. Okay. Thank you very much. It's a very important day. We have a lot of important days.

But I'm thrilled to sign the Consolidated Appropriations Act to immediately reopen the Federal Government and fund the vast majority of operations through the rest of the fiscal year. I want to thank—and I have a list here, because the list is growing all the time. I—everybody wants to be a part of this, so I think I'm going to read the names. I think you deserve to have your names read. And if I don't read any, just raise your hand, and let's have it.

But I'll—I have to start with Speaker Mike Johnson, who's done an incredible job. Done really an incredible job. And we appreciate it.

Tom Cole, Ronny Jackson, Buddy Carter, Stephanie Bice, Ken Calvert, John Carter, David Joyce, Steve Womack. And on Steve Womack, I just—where is Steve?

Representative Stephen A. Womack. Right here.

The President. Where is Steve?

Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Michael Johnson. Right behind you.

Rep. Womack. Mr. President.

The President. Come here, Steve. I want to just say—he had a rough—that's a rough week or so, right?

Rep. Womack. Tough. Tough, Mr. President.

The President. He had an incredible wife who passed away, but she was an incredible woman, and everybody knows it—everybody up here. So we're just—we're with you all the way.

Rep. Womack. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. I'm glad you could be here.

Rep. Womack. We're grateful. Grateful for you.

The President. I understand. That's a rough deal. He went through a rough—he had a good marriage. Good marriage is better than a bad marriage—*[laughter]*—but it makes it a little bit tougher when something like that happens.

Robert Aderholt.

Representative Robert B. Aderholt. Right here. Thank you.

The President. Susan Collins. Hi, Susan. I heard you're doing good.

Cindy Hyde-Smith.

Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith. Right here.

The President. Cindy. Well, you always do good, Cindy.

Sen. Hyde-Smith. Thank you.

The President. Bill Hagerty. Hi, Bill.

Lindsey Graham, who's way up in the polls. Lindsey, what's going on with you? You're so high, I don't think——

Senator Lindsey O. Graham. It has a lot to do with you. Don't forget that. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well. Has the opponent dropped out yet? [*Laughter*]

Sen. Graham. We're getting there.

The President. Has your Democrat opponent dropped out yet?

Sen. Graham. You couldn't—[*inaudible*].

The President. Mario Díaz-Balart.

Representative Mario R. Diaz-Balart. Yes, sir.

The President. Thank you. Mario.

Katie Britt.

Senator Katie Boyd Britt. Yes, sir.

The President. Hi, Katie. What a job you're doing.

Sen. Britt. Thank you.

John Barrasso. He knows more about health care than any human being on Earth, I think——

Senator John A. Barrasso III. [*Inaudible*]

The President. ——when I need something. [*Laughter*] John is a great person too.

Shelley Moore Capito.

Senator Shelley Moore Capito. Here.

The President. Thank you, Shelley——

Sen. Moore Capito. Thank you, sir.

The President. ——very much.

Hal Duncan, Associate Director of the Legislative—of Legislative Affairs. Thank you, Hal. Great job. And Susan Ross Avcin and Betsy McDonnell, they were really instrumental, and they really worked hard.

So I want to thank you all. I don't want to—anybody I didn't mention? Oh, boy. That'll be nice because, you know, it's a little embarrassing when they stick their hand up. I think they just be quiet. It's probably easier. But I'm glad—[*laughter*]—I'm glad we got you in because you really have worked hard.

This bill is a great victory for the American people. Instead of a bloated and wasteful omnibus monstrosity full of special interest handouts, we've succeeded in passing a fiscally responsible package that actually cuts wasteful Federal spending while supporting critical programs for the safety, security, and prosperity of the American people.

And this group of people behind me and others—got a lot of votes—they really have done a fantastic job. Because closing the country—you know, we had a 5 point—it looks like 5.6, and it could have been 7. We lost a point and a half because of a 42-day shutdown, and that's the least

of it. But we would have been at 7. Can you believe it? Seven GDP. Nobody ever heard of a seven GDP.

So I'm glad we got this done, because this would be another point and a half or something, or maybe worse.

The bill officially ends all taxpayer subsidies for radical, far-left, woke programming on NPR and PBS or—just a waste of money. It slashes nearly \$10 billion in wasteful foreign aid spending—giving money to countries that don't need it. They have plenty of money. And we ended that. That was so important—\$10 billion. Think of it.

It continues the closure of USAID and creates a brandnew America First Opportunity Fund for responsibly providing foreign assistance to nations where it actually serves American interests. So we have nations that do help us, and it serves our interests. So we have something to help them out with.

This bill also cuts funding to abusive and weaponized RS—IRS programs—I was a victim of that too. You probably read that. Did you read that recently, right?

Participant. Yes, sir.

The President. I was, I guess, the ultimate victim—that were used to harass American taxpayers. It builds on the Republican rescissions package passed last summer, which saved Americans billions and billions of dollars.

It fully funds our military; includes a well-deserved pay raise for all American servicemembers; and makes historic investments in the American shipbuilding industry, which is great. We're really starting to do something incredible with shipbuilding.

And I don't know if you saw that the United States of America, for the first time in over 30 years, beat Japan. We love Japan. Great country. But their power in steelmaking—that we produced more steel this year than Japan. Think of that. More steel than Japan, and Japan is a powerhouse at that. And we were pretty much dead when it came to steel.

So what do you think of that? To me, when I heard that—we did more than Japan.

It continues to fund deportation flights that are removing dangerous illegal aliens from our country. It continues historically successful efforts to reduce crime in our Nation's Capital. We have a very safe city right now. We have a city that is like a different world from what it was a year and a half ago, when you couldn't walk down the street without being hurt very badly. I want to say that in a nice way. Washington, DC, is a safe city.

And Memphis, by the way, is down—crime is down 77 percent.

Senator William F. Hagerty IV. Amen.

The President. And in New Orleans—I don't know if you heard these numbers, but in New Orleans, we started 2 weeks ago—4 weeks ago, max—and crime is down 68 percent. It's going to be down to practically nothing within the next month. Pretty amazing.

But it all helped cut the number of murders in D.C. by 80 percent—and we have numbers coming up—newer numbers. We're down 97 percent in murders. A horrible thing to even be talking about: murders in DC. But we were—a lot of people were being killed in Washington, DC, if you can believe it. And now we have a very safe, very—I don't know if there's any such thing as crime-free, but pretty damn—pretty close—in January, compared to 12 months ago.

So we have close to 90, 95 percent down—crime—in Washington, DC. It allows all of you people to walk to the White House instead of getting into an Uber and getting mugged, even as the Uber progresses. Okay? *[Laughter]*

And it continues funding for the Department of Homeland Security until later in the year.

And finally, I extreme—I am extremely pleased to announce that this bill includes a newly designated—oh, wow, movie star—Melania Trump Foster Youth to Independence Initiative.

So she really loves the children. And she's had a tremendous success.

So it's the number-one documentary in 19 years. Can you believe this? What do I get out of it? [*Laughter*] I get nothing out of it.

Now I have—so I had a top model. Now I have a top movie star.

But we have a great First Lady. She loves children, and she had a tremendous vote on this.

And I want to just say: Melania Trump Foster Youth to Independence Initiative within the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which will support America's foster youth and provide them critical resources as they age out of the foster care system.

And the First Lady loves children, and she's been very much involved with children and helping them out and making them better. That's what she wants to do—wants to help them, and she wants to make them better, and she does a great job of it.

She's respected, and her movie got really incredible reviews. She's done a—we're all proud of her, actually. It's amazing. Not easy to do that. Not easy to do it.

So I just want to thank everybody for being here. If you would have some questions—I might just ask, before you do that—these are all outstanding politicians—the top. My opinion, the top in the whole world. But that's, you know, one of those things. I like to build it up a little bit, but they are, they're the top politicians. They're the top political minds.

And if you have any statement—does anybody have a statement that you'd like to make? We'll start on the left side. Anybody? How about, Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Johnson. Well, this is a big thing, Mr. President. Thank you for your leadership in helping us steward this through. For a long time, we've wanted to get back to regular order in the appropriations process, and you're standing up here with the best appropriators in the business and have served in many years. And we forced the muscle memory back. We're getting back to that regular order process.

Twelve separate appropriations bills. We've gotten them to your desk. And this is a big thing. It seems like a small thing, but it's a big thing.

And we're spending less money year over year. And with all the innovations and things that you said there, this is good for the country, and America is back.

The President. Yes.

Speaker Johnson. The hat is appropriate.

The President. That's right.

Speaker Johnson. It's the right slogan.

The President. This is a new hat. We just came out. "America is back."

Look, CNN is thrilled. Look at her. She's—never smiles. [*Laughter*] I never see her smile. Someday, I'll see her smile.

Representative Earl L. "Buddy" Carter. Mr. President—

The President. Yes.

Rep. Carter. —could I mention that there is significant health care reform in this bill?

The President. Good.

Rep. Carter. PBM reform—something that you have been—

The President. Right.

Rep. Carter. —working on, and we appreciate and applaud your efforts. Bringing drug prices down for citizens here in America. Not only that, but we extended telehealth, and—and also we are addressing maternal mortality in this bill.

Rural health care has been a big part of your focus, and we appreciate that, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Buddy.

You know, a very big thing, I think for all of us, is most favored nations on drug pricing.

So, for 30 years, I've been talking about it—more than that. And it's—basically, we now will take medical—prescription drugs will come down to the lowest price anywhere in the world. So, if a country is selling a pill for \$10 and we're selling it for \$130, which is not much of an exaggeration at all—we were paying the highest drug prices anywhere in the world—now we'll be paying tied with the lowest price. We're—it's most favored nations. We will have the lowest price anywhere in the world.

So a pill that was for \$130 will be down to \$20. So you can make a case that that's 80, 90 percent, or, like the press likes to hear, it's about 80 percent. But we're going to get reductions like nobody's ever seen.

And frankly, the Republican Party should be able to win the midterms on that alone. That's the biggest thing there is. Most favored nations. We're going to be bringing the price of drugs down.

When I—in my first term, I got it down one-eighth of 1 percent, and I was so proud, because it was the first time in 28 years that drug prices came down. And now we're talking about bringing it down by 80, 90, 75, 68. I mean, we have—I have numbers in the back that nobody can believe—most favored nations.

And remember, the Republicans did that. The Democrats did not do that. Republicans did it.

And that's going to have a huge impact, also, on health care, because medicine—I mean, it's a big chunk of health care. And if you're bringing something down from \$100 down to \$20, \$18—because we were subsidizing the entire world, and frankly, I had to get the countries to go along with it, and I had to threaten tariffs against them if they didn't approve. And the health care companies—who weren't easy either, but they said, "It doesn't matter, because he'll never get the countries," because they didn't really want to do it. And I got the countries. I got every one of them.

And really, it's—people can't even believe it. But for the people standing behind me, you should—you—if you use that alone, you should win. We should win the elections coming up.

Anybody else? How about on this side?

Sen. Hagerty. You mentioned the IRS, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, please.

Sen. Hagerty. Their—

The President. Go ahead.

Sen. Hagerty. —their behavior has been atrocious, if you think about leaking your tax returns, the tax returns of others, and never any accountability. I must have questioned Janet Yellen four times, five times under oath about this and never an answer.

We stripped \$10 billion from the IRS in this bill that you just signed.

And today, I launched an investigation with my staff on all of these contractors that are associated with the ones that allowed your information to be put out. These contractors that hire activists to come in and do their work, these corporations here in America that bring activists in to do their work, that's going to come to an end.

The President. They did leak my tax returns. It was terrible. The good news is, I paid a hell of a lot of tax. [Laughter] I paid tens of millions of dollars. I said: "Where are my accountants? I want to talk to my accountants." [Laughter] So—but they did. They leaked my tax return. They didn't do it in a nice way. They tried to—

Sen. Hagerty. Yes.

The President. —get something out of it. No, they're bad people.

Sen. Hagerty. Accountability is coming, though. You think about the phone companies that leaked our telephone records, several of us here.

The President. Right.

Sen. Hagerty. Accountability is coming, though. You think about the phone companies that leaked our telephone records, several of us here.

The President. Right.

Sen. Hagerty. Verizon leaked my telephone records. You think about what—what's happened across the country. This is going to come to an end.

The President. And we should have voter ID, by the way. We should have a lot of the things that I think everybody wants to see. Who would not want voter ID? Only somebody that wants to cheat. Think of it. We don't have voter ID, and the Democrats don't want it. And the reason they don't want: because they want to cheat. Because there's no reason in the world.

And I love that debate. Lindsey, I love saying, "Well, why don't you want voter ID?" And you watch them say, "I don't know. I just"—

Sen. Graham. Make them vote.

The President. I know. It's a terrible thing. So, anyway.

Anybody else?

Sen. Barrasso. Well, Mr. President—

The President. Please.

Sen. Barrasso. —you said you wanted to make America safer and more prosperous, and we—

The President. Right.

Sen. Barrasso. —and we have done it. More prosperity means more money in people's pockets, and they notice that every time they go to fill up with gas, and they're going to know it when they get their tax returns that, this year, are going to be at least \$1,000, if not more, greater than it's been in the past. And that's a result of the work that you've done with this whole group.

And in terms of America being safer, a number of us were at the border 2 weeks ago.

The President. Right.

Sen. Barrasso. The border is secure. No one is coming across, not the 10,000 we saw every day—

The President. Amazing.

Sen. Barrasso. —with Joe Biden. And the American people still, in overwhelming numbers—Republicans, Democrats, and Independents—all say illegal immigrant criminals need to be deported. And, Mr. President, you're doing that.

The President. And no tax on tips. [Laughter]

Sen. Barrasso. No tax tips on overtime. No tax on Social Security.

The President. No tax on Social Security. No tax on—think of it.

Sen. Barrasso. More money in people's pockets.

The President. Think of it. And that was all the "Great Big Beautiful Bill," as I call it. The "Great Big Beautiful Bill," to me, that's what it is. And people are starting—and people are starting to realize it now.

Speaker Johnson. Yes, they are.

The President. They're starting to see it. And—

Sen. Barrasso. They're going to see it in their pockets.

The President. —a tax deduction on your—if you borrow—buy a car, if it's made in America—only if it's made in America. The rest, we don't care about so much. But you buy a car, and you get an interest deduction. You borrow money, you get an interest tax deduction. And that is—you take interest, you deduct it against your—your tax.

So, to me, that's unbelievable for the people, unbelievable for our car companies, which is jobs.

Anybody else over—yes, please.

Representative Kenneth S. Calvert. Yes, Mr. President, the biggest part of this bill is our national security.

The President. Right.

Rep. Calvert. And thank you. The men and women who serve this country are grateful to you.

We gave them a pay raise. We're building more ships, as you said. Planes, missiles. We need to defend this country, and you're doing a great job in leading us in the right direction.

The President. Thank you very much.

Katie, go ahead. You were going to say something?

Sen. Britt. Yes, no. Mr. President, this is just unprecedented leadership. The fact that you got everyone to come together and actually get these bills across the finish line—you heard it from the Speaker, but that hasn't happened in a long time.

So 96 percent of the Government being funded, your priorities put in place, Mr. President, so that we can make the country safer, we can make it more prosperous.

And not only can we make America great again, but we can tell people now: America is back.

[At this point, Sen. Britt held up a red hat reading "America is Back."]

The President. Yes, it's a great—it's a great—we'll never forget MAGA, and we're all with MAGA, but I thought this was very appropriate, right?

Speaker Johnson. Love it. Love it. It says everything.

The President. Cindy Hyde. Come on, say something.

Sen. Hyde-Smith. Well, there's a little hospital in here—a rural hospital in Maple, Mississippi—

The President. Right.

Sen. Hyde-Smith. —called Franklin County Hospital. It would have closed the end of this month without this bill. Thank you. Thank you from everybody in Mississippi, especially Franklin County.

The President. And we've covered the rural very well. Nobody ever thought it was, possible because we had a lot of opposition from the Democrats, as you know. But nobody thought it was possible. That's great.

How about it? Anybody back there? Tom?

Representative Thomas J. Cole. It's the best budget for Native Americans ever, Mr. President. Yes.

The President. Thank you.

Rep. Cole. Appreciate that help.

The President. So we'll sign. And then, if you would have some questions of anybody up here.

Rep. Aderholt. And let me just piggyback. You—this—rural America is taken care of in this bill, and I mean—as Cindy says. So thank you from all America, but especially rural America.

The President. Thank you. Thank you, everybody.

[*The President signed the bill.*]

So I probably won't hold this up. And I think holding up one little page doesn't do it justice—[*laughter*]—because in there, it's a lot of stuff.

But it's signed.

Thank you very much.

Go ahead, please.

Iran

Q. Thank you. On Iran, are the negotiations still happening this week?

The President. Yes.

Q. Where will they be? And what do you need to hear from Iran?

The President. They're all over. But they are negotiating. They'd like to do something. And we'll see if something is going to be done. They had a chance to do something a while ago, and it didn't work out. And we did Midnight Hammer. I don't think they want that happening again. But they would like to negotiate. We are negotiating with them right now, yes.

Q. Mr. President, Mr. President—

Q. Where will the meeting be? It seems like they're changing——

The President. I can't tell you that. There really—there's more than one meeting.

Q. Mr. President, Mr. President——

Yes, please.

President Gustavo Petro Urrego of Colombia

Q. Mr. President, how was your meeting with Gustavo Petro earlier today? And did you come to any agreement on counternarcotic efforts?

The President. Yes, we did. We worked on it, and we got along very well. He and I weren't exactly the best of friends, but I wasn't insulted because I never met him. I didn't know him at all. And we got along very well. And we are, we're working on that. We're working on some other things too, including sanctions. And yes, we had a very good meeting.

The President's Impression of President Gustavo Petro Urrego of Colombia

Q. So you—[inaudible]—an agreement?

The President. I thought he was terrific. You know, he was very good. We got along great.

Border Security/Illegal Immigration/Minnesota/Crime Rates

Q. Mr. President, can you give us any update on how the talks are going for potential changes to the Department of Homeland Security? Have you agreed to any specifics?

The President. None. Well, we have a secure border. In fact, we have nine months now where nobody has come into our country illegally. Now, I don't know if I can believe that, cause, you know, you go from 25 million people to nobody. But the Democrats do that. You know, they're leaning left, the people that do that report.

And for nine months, they have said nobody has come into our—it is a strong, great border. We do have people coming into our country, but they're all coming in legally. You take a look at that, and look at what was going on a year and a half ago on our border, where criminals were coming in, drug dealers were coming in, people from mental institutions were coming in. The worst—you know, they say the worst—I don't even know if I like the term, but the worst of the worst was coming into our country, and now we have virtually no—our country is—it's beautiful to see.

Even if you go down—you know, some of you, I think, were down there just a couple of weeks ago.

Sen. Barrasso. Yes, sir.

The President. And you couldn't believe it, right? Because you were there 2 years ago.

Sen. Barrasso. Before. Yes, 10,000 a day.

The President. And 10,000 a day. And now you—you didn't even see anybody.

Sen. Barrasso. Nobody.

The President. Nobody comes up. We're saving lives, because nobody comes up. They have to come through the jungles, and they're dying of all sorts of problems, including murder. And we have nobody coming in, and we're getting people out that we—we're getting—we have 11,888 murderers who came into our country. We're getting them out. We're getting them out fast.

And the only place where there's a little bit of a problem—and I will tell you this: Minnesota, their crime—because of us, because we've taken out thousands of criminals—their crime is down. Not because of anybody else. It's because of us. Their crime is down.

But, all over the country, wherever we're involved, we're getting criminals out of our country, and the crime rate now is the lowest it's been since 1900. That's 125 years. And that's despite the fact—with an open border, stupid policy—25 million people, in my opinion, came into our country, and many of those people should not have been allowed to come into our country.

[Several reporters began asking questions at once.]

Ukraine/Russia

Q. On Ukraine, Mr. President. Yesterday you were talking about how Vladimir Putin had agreed to a pause during the cold weather. Overnight, those attacks have started up again. Apparently, the worst—

The President. I know. It was Sunday. It was Sunday to Sunday. And it opened up, and he hit them hard last night.

No, he agreed—he kept his word on that. It was—it's a lot. You know, 1 week is—we'll take anything, because it's really, really cold over there. But it was on Sunday, and he went from Sunday to Sunday.

Q. Are you disappointed he didn't go further or go longer?

The President. Yes, I would have liked him to. I want him to end the war. I spoke to him. I want him to end the war.

Election Administration

Q. Mr. President, what exactly did you mean when you said that you should nationalize elections? And which 15 States are you talking about?

The President. I want to see elections be honest. And if a State can't run an election, I think the people behind me should do something about it, because, you know, if you think about it, a state is an agent for the Federal Government in elections. I don't know why the Federal Government doesn't do them anyway. But when you see some of these States about how horribly they run their elections, what a disgrace it is, I think the Federal Government—when you see crooked elections, and we had plenty of them—and, by the way, we had them last time.

But go to 2020. Look at the facts that are coming out. Rigged, crooked elections. If we have areas—take a look at Detroit. Take a look at Pennsylvania. Take a look at Philadelphia. You go take a look at Atlanta. Look at some of the places that tremendous—horrible corruption on elections. And the Federal Government should not allow that. The Federal Government should get involved. These are agents of the Federal Government to count the votes. If they can't count the votes legally and honestly, then somebody else should take over.

Q. But the Constitution says it should be States that—

The President. Go ahead.

Q. —administer elections, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, they could—

Q. That's what the constitution says.

The President. You know what? They can administer the election, but they have to do it honestly.

Immigration Enforcement Actions/Federal Law Enforcement Practices

Q. Are you open to negotiating on warrants when it comes to ICE? This is an ask from Senator Schumer.

The President. Meaning?

Q. Requiring search warrants for ICE and immigration officials.

The President. I haven't even thought of that. I'm not thinking about search warrants for—Lindsey—

Sen. Graham. Can I add something here?

The President. Yes, Lindsey Graham is going to answer that one.

Sen. Graham. Yes. No, it makes no sense. If we have to get a search warrant to get 15 million people out, Schumer is telling me he doesn't want them out. It's the most ridiculous idea.

They do have some good ideas, I think, but I've got a better idea—it's your idea—end sanctuary cities.

On immigration, I know what I'm talking about. I've got the scars to prove it. They're playing—y'all are playing like Biden didn't exist. Y'all won't tell the American people about Laken Riley. It's a one-sided debate.

For 4 years, our border was obliterated. They let them come in by the tens of millions, and they want to go back that way. We're not going. So, Mr. President, stick to your guns.

If you got reforms that make ICE better, more professional, talk to me. But you should embrace what I'm suggesting.

As long as 12 States have sanctuary policy, they'll keep coming. Unfortunately, you won't be president forever. These magnets of illegal immigration have to go. There is no upside to sanctuary city, unless you're a complete radical nutjob. The cops hate it, fraud around sanctuary cities, and you're going to get more illegal immigration.

We're going to have to debate. I've been trying to solve this problem, but what the Democrats are doing is they're not getting to the underlying problem. It's not Stephen Miller. It's not Kristi Noem. It's not me. It's not you. It's policies that have been on the books that don't work.

So, if you want to debate on how to solve this problem, show up next week. I'm going to take President Trump's idea that it's time to end the insane policy of sanctuary cities.

The President. Press it. Press it. Yes.

Sen. Graham. We're going to take it to the floor, and we're going to vote, and people in November are going to get to see who they trust to keep the border secure: Schumer or Trump. I'm with Trump.

The President. And by the way, I hope you're going to press that very hard. [Laughter]

Sen. Graham. I think I might.

Q. Mr. President—

The President. And the other thing: We are not—we are not—well, we are with you. I think everybody is with you. It's a sanctuary for criminals. That's who it is.

They could make our lives so much easier. All they have to do is hand over their criminals, hand over people that came into our country illegally that are murderers—they came out of jails; they came out of mental institutions—that are drug dealers.

I don't—I can't believe, in Minnesota, that they want to have murderers walking all over the streets. I just don't believe it. Maybe somebody says it's good politics—I don't think it's good politics. I think it's really bad.

The other thing we can't lose sight of is you probably have, in Minnesota—and it's worse in some places, like California—\$19 billion in fraud. And we're going to find out—and, you know, we have—we're very deep into that investigation, but we're not going to forget that. A lot of people think that a lot of this nonsense that's going on is to try and, you know, hide what's going on with respect to the fraud. They have 19—at least \$19 billion. You know, you're hearing 9. Now I'm hearing it's 19, and it's probably much more.

So it's—you know, they talk about incompetence. I think it's not incompetence. I think it's just pure fraud. These are dishonest people. They're bad people. I think they hate our country. And we're going to get to the bottom of it.

But don't let this hide the fact that you have tremendous fraud. And you know, if we find the fraud in this country, you'll have a balanced budget without even cutting anything.

You'll literally have a balanced budget.

Yes, please.

Venezuela

Q. Mr. President, on Colombia, are you planning to work with President Petro to fight guerrilla groups and terrorist organizations in Venezuela?

The President. Well, they want me to do that, and we will. We're getting along very well in Venezuela with the leadership. Very, very well. You know, we took in 50 million barrels of oil. It's right now heading to Houston. And we're getting along very well with them, but we're going to work with them, yes.

Department of Justice Files Concerning Deceased Convicted Sex Offender Jeffrey Epstein

Q. Mr. President, a few months ago, you had in your office here Peter Mandelson, the British Ambassador. You were shaking hands with him over a trade deal. He's today being forced to resign from the House of Lords, the upper house of the British Parliament, over his links to Jeffrey Epstein. Just wondered if you had any reaction to that since, obviously, he was here before.

The President. I didn't know about it. But I really don't know too much about it. I know who he is. It's too bad. You know, it's too bad.

You know, speaking of Epstein, though, I will say this: A reporter named Wolff and Epstein conspired—this just came out yesterday in the millions of pages of documents, how crazy this is—conspired against me in order to fight like hell to make sure I lose the election. That's the only thing that was mentioned about me.

Now, about Democrats, some really bad stuff. But about me, that Wolff, whoever Wolff is—he wrote a book, couple of books—and Epstein conspired against me. Did you know that, Mr. Senator? Did you know that?

Sen. Hagerty. I did know that, yes.

The President. They conspired against me so I lose the election——

Sen. Hagerty. Well, I read it. I didn't know it before the—it was reported.

The President. Or worse. So that takes care of Epstein, as far as Trump is concerned. But you got a lot of Democrats out there that are very much involved with Epstein. But I'll be honest with you: You've got to get back to running the country too. Millions and millions—every week.

You know, when Epstein was alive, nobody cared about him. When he's dead, they care about him. But it's really a Democrat problem. It's not a Republican; it's a Democrat problem.

The only problem Republicans have is that we have to get back to, number one, running our country, and then number two, very importantly, letting the public know what a great job we're doing.

We have the greatest economy in the history of the world. We have \$18 trillion being spent. The record was \$3 trillion many years ago, not by us, by another country. I won't say the country.

Yes, please.

Q. Have you filed, Mr. President——

Apparent Kidnapping of Nancy Guthrie in Catalina Foothills, Arizona

Q. Sir, have you been briefed on Savannah Guthrie's mom missing in Arizona?

The President. I think it's terrible.

Q. Would you commit to more Federal agents, like, helping out on the search or anything like that?

The President. Sure. I'm going to call her later on. I think it's a terrible thing. I always got along very good with Savannah. A very unusual situation, but we're going to find out.

Q. Have you heard anything?

The President. Yes, what do you want?

Department of Justice Files Concerning Deceased Convicted Sex Offender Jeffrey Epstein

Q. On the Epstein files, you talk about Democrats who were in there. Elon Musk was also in there and so was your Commerce Secretary, Howard Lutnick—in correspondence that he had with him. Did you read those new files that were published——

The President. No, I didn't.

Q. ——by the Department of Justice?

The President. I didn't. I have a lot of things I'm doing. A lot of things I'm doing. I don't know—you mentioned two names. I'm sure they're fine. I'm sure they're fine. Otherwise, it would have been major headlines.

Q. A lot of women who were—are survivors of Epstein's are unhappy with those redactions that came out. Some of them—entire witness interviews—are totally blacked out. Do you think that they should be more transparent?

The President. Well, they're also unhappy with the fact that they thought they released too much. You know, I heard that. And you tell me something else. No.

I think it's really time for the country to get onto something else, really. You know, now that nothing came out about me, other than it was a conspiracy against me, literally, by Epstein and other people. But I think it's time now for the country to maybe get onto something else——

Q. But what would you say to people who feel like they haven't gotten justice, Mr. President?

The President. ——like health care and something that people care about.

Yes, what——what did you say? Go ahead, CNN.

CNN

Q. What would you say to the survivors——

The President. You are so bad.

Q. ——who feel like they haven't gotten justice?

The President. You know, you are the worst reporter. No wonder CNN has no ratings because of people like you.

You know, she's a young woman. I don't think I've ever seen you smile. I've known you for 10 years. I don't think I've ever seen a smile on your face.

Q. Well, I'm asking you about survivors of Jeffrey Epstein, Mr. President.

The President. You know why? You know why you're not smiling? Because you know you're not telling the truth. And you're a very dishonest organization, and they should be ashamed of you.

Q. These are survivors of a sexual abuser——

Health Care Reform

Q. Mr. President, you mentioned health care, and the bill that was just passed does not include your health care savings account. So this is a question for you and maybe for Mr. Speaker, as well.

The President. I'm so proud of the health care savings accounts, because it's going to happen. And hopefully, instead of insurance——and I hope this happens, and I hope you guys can do it: Let the insurance companies not do quite as well. You know, they're going up 15-, 16-, 1,700 percent. Think of it. The money should be paid directly to the people.

You know, trillions of dollars goes out. The money should go to the people. They should buy their own health care. It can be in a health care, you know, account——savings account, any account you want to make. The money should go to the people. The people should buy their own health care. And they're going to save a lot of money, and they're going to have much better health care. And it's very simple.

The problem is, the Democrats are owned by those insurance companies. They're owned——lock, stock, and barrel. And the Democrats will never vote on it, because I——the Republicans should get that through. And you know how you get it through? The filibuster. Get rid of the filibuster and start voting.

Yes.

Former President William J. Clinton/Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton/Prior Investigations of the President/2024 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, today we heard that the Clintons set deposition dates to testify before the House Oversight Committee. Any reaction to that, related to the Epstein——

The President. Ah, I think it's a shame, to be honest. I always liked him. Her, eh. [*Laughter*] You know, she's a very capable woman. She was better in debating than some of the other people, I will tell you that. She was smarter. Smart woman. I hate to see it in many ways. I hate to see it.

But you know, then I look at me. They went after me like—you know, they wanted me to go to jail for the rest of my life. Then it turned out I was innocent, very innocent. You know, I had a friend that said—a very smart friend. He's a very wealthy man, knows the life—streetwise guy. He said, "You have to be the most honest person anywhere in the world, because there's never been anybody who's been examined up and down."

You know, I have hundreds of thousands of pages of documents, millions of pages. Millions of pages. With all of that, they found absolutely nothing wrong.

Remember? "His tax returns. Oh, his tax returns." They fought for years and years. And then the Supreme Court—I was surprised—they ruled I had to give them my tax returns. I'm the only one that had to ever do that. But I had to give my tax returns. I gave them my tax returns. They hired the best accounting firms in the world. They found nothing.

And this friend of mine said, "You have to be the most honest person in the world." He actually said, "You know, I"—mean—referring to him—"I'm a pretty honest guy, but I could have never withstood that."

They've gone through millions and millions of pages, and here I sit, winning an—an election in a landslide, winning the popular vote, winning all seven swing States, winning 86 percent of the counties in the United States. That's why those maps that you see are all red.

And so they tried to put me in jail. And I shouldn't feel this way, but I feel badly that they have to go through that. But then I say—but they did far worse than me. They wanted to put me in jail. Think of it. I was a very good player. We had a great first term. Rebuilt the military, biggest tax cuts ever, biggest regulation cuts ever.

But you know, I will say this: I think I can say—what do you think, Lindsey?—my second term is blowing my first term away. And my first term was really good.

Sen. Graham. Reagan plus.

The President. Reagan plus. Yes. Well, whatever. [*Laughter*] Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:22 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Terri L. Williams Womack, wife of Rep. Womack, who died on January 18; South Carolina Democratic senatorial candidate Annie Andrews; Hal Duncan, Associate Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of Management and Budget; Susan Ross Avcin, Chief Clerk, House Appropriations Committee; Elizabeth A. McDonnell, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; United Kingdom's former Ambassador to the U.S. Peter Mandelson; journalist and author Michael Wolff; Savannah Guthrie, cohost of NBC News' "Today" program, whose mother Nancy Guthrie was apparently abducted from her Catalina Foothills, AZ, home on February 1; and former White House Senior Adviser Elon R. Musk.. Sen. Barrasso referred to former President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Sen. Hagerty referred to former Secretary of the Treasury Janet L. Yellen. Sen. Graham referred to White House Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy Stephen Miller. H.R. 7148, approved February 3, was assigned Public Law No. 119–75. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on February 4.

Categories: Bill Signings and Vetoes : Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026, signing remarks; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Aderholt, Robert B.; Andrews, Annie; Avcin, Susan Ross; Barrasso, John A., III; Bice, Stephanie I.; Britt, Katie Boyd; Calvert, Kenneth S.; Capito, Shelley Moore; Carter, Earl L. "Buddy"; Carter, John R.; Clinton, Hillary Rodham; Clinton, William J.; Cole, Thomas J.; Collins, Susan M.; Díaz-Balart, Mario R.; Duncan, Hal; Graham, Lindsey O.; Guthrie, Savannah; Hagerty, William F., IV; Hyde-Smith, Cindy; Jackson, Ronny L.; Johnson, J. Michael; Joyce, David P.; Lutnick, Howard W.; Mandelson, Peter; McDonnell, Elizabeth A.; Musk, Elon R.; Petro Urrego, Gustavo; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Trump, Melania; Womack, Stephen; Womack, Terri L. Williams.

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