

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026

Remarks at the Congressional Picnic

May 19, 2026

The First Lady. Hello. Good evening. And welcome to the White House on this beautiful evening.

I have breaking news. Today the House passed the Fostering the Future Act.

Thank you, Chairman Smith, Chairman LaHood, Ranking Member Davis, and the House of Representative for voting unanimously to lift America's foster children above parties and politics.

Senators, we have momentum. Now it's your turn to bring the Fostering the Future Act across the finish line. Let's support our next generation and swiftly get this to the President for his signature.

The White House Congressional Picnic has been cherished American tradition for a great part of our Nation's 250-year history. Beyond politics, it provides an important social ritual where our Nation's leaders share a moment of lightheartedness as we transition into the warm summer months.

This evening's beautiful setting brings families from both sides of the political aisle together to enjoy Americana, the Marine band's wonderful music, great food, and some friendly gaming competition.

This great American social tradition remind us that some fun and laughter with our families can bring unity, especially with our children and loved ones by our side. I have seen firsthand how much can be accomplished when Republicans and Democrats come together with a shared purpose, particularly for the betterment of our children.

We experienced great bipartisan success with the TAKE IT DOWN Act. I saw the spirit of American unity shine once again during my recent engagement with the House Ways and Means Committee as we began to shape legislation to protect America's foster care community.

Young Americans deserve every opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed, and I believe we will continue making meaningful progress on their behalf. Make the most of this evening so that we can be impactful together with greater alignment in the future.

And now, it's my pleasure to introduce my husband, President Donald J. Trump.

The President. Thank you, honey. Great job.

The First Lady. Thank you.

The President. What a great job. I have to follow that. I hate it. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. Yes.

The President. I never like following our great First Lady, because it makes me look not so good.

I want to thank all of you for being here. It's amazing, actually.

And thank you, Melania. We're truly blessed to have such a First Lady. She's been so popular. You see that movie? It became number one. She then went to streaming; it became number one. And I say there's only room—remember this—for one star in a family, so I better get rid of that. [*Laughter*] That's not—that's not so good.

But she's been amazing, and people love her, as you can see by the results. And that was a big thing today. Congratulations on that vote. She had a bipartisan vote. I should use you for some of the things I want to try and pass. *[Laughter]*

But I join Melania in congratulating the House of Representatives on passing the Fostering the Future Act, which is a big deal, and—this afternoon to modernize foster care, an issue close to the First Lady's heart. And hopefully it will quickly pass in the Senate. I'm sure it will. It's great. It's a great thing.

And I want to thank everybody. We have a lot of Senators, we have a lot of Congresspeople, and I want to thank you all. And I'm thrilled to welcome you all to the White House this evening for a very special annual tradition, the Congressional Picnic. It's been going on for many years. And we're joined by many of the Members of the House and the Cabinet and Senate.

And I just want to say a special hello to the Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson. He's going to go down as one of the great Speakers. We've done a lot together. We've done a lot. Where are you, Mike? Where are you, Mike? Hi, Mike. There he is. He's a great guy, actually, and he's done—he's worked so hard.

I want to thank also John Thune, who's worked so hard, and he's been really a—he's a terrific person. He really is a terrific person.

And we have a lot of things to pass, but one of the things we did pass was the "Great Big Beautiful Bill," and that covered a lot of territory, I want to tell you. We said: "Let's do it all in one time," and it was 4 years' worth in one bill. Everyone said that couldn't be done. And I want to congratulate and thank the Senate, the House for the unbelievable job.

And while there are too many Members in the House and Senate, I'd like to—I see half of you right here, and I'd like to introduce everyone, but I want to let people enjoy themselves tonight, so—but we have so many represented.

This evening, it will be something very special to remember—that all of us here tonight continue a priceless tradition. This really is a great tradition. We represent the oldest and most extraordinary constitutional republic on the face of the Earth. And a special privilege and a unique responsibility it is. It's really something very special.

I'm standing here, and I'm looking at our great American flag, and it's hard to believe, but I put that in 2 months ago, that—and I put one on the other side. You know, this is—actually, in theory, this would be—I consider them both—we have two fronts. I've never figured out, nobody else has either, for—since, if you think about it, 1792, nobody has figured out which is the front and which is the back of the White House.

So, when I'm speaking here, I say "the front," and I—when I speak over there, I say "the front." It actually has two fronts, and I put two flags up. And it's a great pole, and it's a beautiful flag. And it's amazing that it wasn't up before.

We have another flag, slightly smaller, on the top of the White House, but it's a little bit on the smaller side. But everybody loves that pole. It's a beauty, and it represents so much.

And I want to thank the company that put it up. They're the best—I think they make the best. It's hard to believe. I have so many different developments all over the world. I always like putting the flag up. And I know a lot about flagpoles, and that's the best flagpole there is. Okay?

So, congratulations. We have two of them. We got actually two for the price of one. We negotiated a tough deal. But we have—finally, we have a really representative flagpole and flag up in front of our White House, so that's good.

I also want to recognize the incredible congressional spouses, families, and children who make enormous sacrifices so that their loved ones can serve—so that their loved ones can get beat up by the fake news, so that their loved ones can also beat up the enemy. [Laughter] And they do that. They do. They're warriors. It's not easy.

And I want to give them, the spouses, a very special hand today. Thank you. Thank you, darling. Thank you very much. Thank you. You do, you put up with a lot. It's not easy.

But on the eve of the 250th year, there's so much for our country to celebrate regarding our—really, the party. We have a party that's really at a point that I don't think we've ever been at. And America is thriving, America is winning, and America is respected, perhaps like it has never been respected before.

If you go back 2 years, we were not respected. We were a dead country. I'll tell you what, we were a dead country. And today we're the hottest country anywhere in the world. There's nobody even close.

And the day—I don't know if you saw the numbers today, but the stock market is at an alltime high. We had 67 alltime highs. So, we've been here for a little bit more than a year now, and we had 67 alltime highs. And I want to say that, in our first term, we finished the term out—despite COVID and all the other things, we had a great—we had really an amazing period of time, and we finished at the highest point in the history of the stock market. And now we're blowing it away. We're blowing everything away.

And we're going to end that war very quickly. They want to make a deal so badly. They're tired of—this should have happened for 47 years. Somebody should have done something about it. And it's going to happen, and it's going to happen fast.

And you're going to see oil prices plummet. They're going to come down. There's so much oil out there. They're going to come plummeting down. But even with that, the stock market is at an alltime high. Jobless claims recently hit the lowest level in—since 1969. The best numbers since 1969. And more Americans are working today than at any time in the history of our country. Think of that.

And we have a war. We have something happening that I—you know, we just hit—it was very interesting. Two and a half months ago, we hit the best numbers that we've ever hit as a country. Jobs—the best. Everything was the best. Stock market—the highest. And I called my people in. I called them in. I said: "Congratulations, everybody, but we're going to have to make a little journey down to a place called Iran. We have to stop them. They have nuclear on their mind, and we're not going to let them have a nuclear weapon."

And we've done a hell of a job, and we're—I think we're going to be finished with that very quickly, and they won't have a nuclear weapon. And hopefully, we're going to get it done in a very nice manner.

Factory construction, as you heard today, also is up. Housing starts are up, and consumer spending is up. All things—we have an economy—people aren't seeing it yet. When we inherited—when we started, we had the highest inflation in the history of our country.

And we actually had, just before the war, before the energy forced other things up, but—up or down—we had the best numbers. We had—inflation was at 1.6 percent for the last 3 months just prior to the war. And now it's—you're going to see numbers like that again.

We inherited high prices, and we got the prices down, and we got them down to numbers that, in some cases, people have not seen before.

But think of it. Inflation at 1.6 percent. Manufacturing right now is booming. American companies are purchasing core capital goods at the highest amounts ever in the history of our country.

Our previously wide-open border is now the most secure border in the history of the United States of America. And last year, last—remember, we inherited a mess. And last year, we had the largest drop in murder rate ever recorded to the lowest level in 125 years. That's the year 1900. Think of that.

And working alongside many of you—and you are unbelievable—the Senators, the Cabinet members—we have such a great Cabinet—and all of the Congressmen and women, you're the most incredible people. But working alongside of many of you here, we passed that very important—

And again, remember, I went to John, and I went to Mike, I went to a lot of the Senators and Congressmen and women, and I said: "We can try and do this at one time, get 4 years' worth." That's why we call it the "Great Big Beautiful Bill." "We can do it at one time, give it a shot. But everybody says it's impossible to get approved."

Well, we got 4 years' worth of goodies approved in a period of time and at a period of time that they said would be impossible. And we're lucky we did. And it's gotten a little bit harder as time goes by. In fact, the only one that gets things approved now are Melania and her friends. She gets them approved. Bipartisan. I'm going to have a—I'm going to talk to her later. I'm going to say, "What are you doing?" But it's great. It's great stuff.

But what we did do is we got something done, and we've got—we're getting a lot approved. We're getting a lot. You're going to be seeing that too. You've been watching it. Amazing. With really small majorities, we've gotten record-setting numbers approved.

And when you add no tax on tips and no tax on Social Security—all of the things. Think of this. No tax on tips, no tax on overtime, no tax on Social Security for our great seniors. And that's just the start.

A deduction. You buy a car, and you get a deduction for the first time on the interest you're paying on your loan. If you're borrowing money, you take out a loan, you get a deduction. It's never happened before. We have so many different things.

One other thing I have to say, because it's affected so many people: Estate taxes, or the death tax. You love your children. You want to pass on your estate to your children. Well, in the old days, meaning not so long ago, your children would have to go out and borrow tremendous amounts of money to go and take care of the farm or the small business, whatever it may be.

But it especially affected those in small business but, more than anything, farmers. And they'd go out—the children would go out, borrow money from their bank, wouldn't be able to pay it back. Bad, bad things happened to them. Many of them couldn't handle life, actually.

And we got it. There's no estate tax, there's no death tax on your farm, on your small business. Nobody thought that was possible. So, if you love your children, you can leave your business to your children, you can leave your farm to your children, and they'll be very happy.

Now, if you don't love your children, don't bother. Then it doesn't matter what I'm saying. It's just a big waste of time. But if you love—think of it. You have no death tax. You have no estate tax. You can leave it to your children. And we love that. It was so important to me.

We've restored the American strength on the world stage. We're respected all over the world. You might have seen I was in China a few days ago with President Xi, and it was some display. We had a great time, but we also got a lot of business done. A lot of great business for our

farmers with soybeans—record purchases of soybeans and lots of other things. And they're buying many, many Boeing airplanes, and they're buying a lot of other things too. We had a great relationship. I've always had a great relationship with President Xi.

Together, on a bipartisan basis, we passed the Laken Riley Act to get dangerous criminal aliens off our streets. We love Laken.

We passed the GENIUS Act to keep America at the forefront of finance and new technology.

And working with Melania and the group, Congress passed the TAKE IT DOWN Act to protect our Nation's children. So, that was something.

And everyone here tonight has a lot to look forward to. So that—in the coming months we're going to have some very amazing events.

One of them is going to be right there, where you're standing. It's good. The hardest ticket I've ever—I have never seen anybody want anything so much as people want those tickets. It's a one-of-a-kind UFC—that's going to be something—UFC event on the South Lawn. Right there, we're going to build an arena. It's going to hold probably, I would say, 4,000, 5,000. The great Dana White is putting it on. You know, we'll get it up to the max.

And behind you, in the park—the beautiful park, beautiful open piece of land—we're going to have anywhere from 75,000 to 100,000 people, all free of charge. We're building eight giant screens back there.

So, we have a small arena here that we're building. Never happened before. And in the back, we're going to have close to a hundred thousand people watching the fight. They're going to be all championship fights. It's going to be great.

We also have, is—as you know, the Indy. Roger Penske is doing the Indy around the Capitol, and that'll be in August. That's going to be unbelievable. They've been trying to—he said he's been trying to do that for 25 years. He's made 129 trips to Washington. He was never able to do it. Then he met me. One trip. Took a half an hour, and we got it done. And it's going to be fantastic.

And we have then, of course FIFA—Gianni. Good old Gianni. He's great. He's doing a fantastic job. Gianni Infantino. We have the FIFA World Cup and our Great American State Fair on the National Mall and the Freedom 250 Grand Prix here. And then on July 4, we have an unbelievable display.

And don't forget, we have a thing called the Olympics coming up. I got the Olympics during my first term, and then I got FIFA during my first term. And I said: "Oh, I won't be able to see it, because it happened now."

But then strange things happened with an election, and I didn't get to serve the 4 years that I was supposed to serve. I don't want to say it. I don't want to be controversial. The election was rigged. *[Laughter]*

And we came back, and we did something very special. And I ended up getting the Olympics and getting FIFA, and we got 250 too. I want to take credit for 250 years, but that, I'm not going to get away with. But we're going to have an amazing period of time. So, we have exciting things happening.

I just want to leave by saying: Our country is so strong; our military is the greatest in the world. You saw that with Venezuela. You see it now with Iran. We wiped out their navy. The navy is gone. The air force is gone. Their anti-aircraft is gone. All of their materiel that they use

for warfare is gone. Just about everything is gone. I don't want to say their leaders are gone, because it's not very nice, but that happens to be true.

And we're—they're not going to have a nuclear weapon. They cannot have a nuclear weapon. We won't be able to put up with that, and we're not going to put up with it.

And just to say one final thing: In the history of the world, there's never been anything like happened over the last short period of time. Eighteen trillion—with a "t"—dollars is being invested in the United States. There's never been anything close.

As an example, the previous administration, in 4 years—the previous administration, in 4 years, had less—substantially less—than \$1 trillion. We have \$18 trillion in 11 months. We haven't gotten the results from the eight—from the last month, from the 12th month. But think of that. Eighteen trillion.

In the history of the world, there's been no country with anywhere even close to that number. And all of that money is going to building factories. And I mean car plants, auto plants. Everything is coming back. AI plants. We have everything coming back. We've never had a situation like it. We're building plants, thousands of plants all over our country.

Eighteen trillion dollars. It's many times greater than another country—a certain other country that I just visited. If you go—I won't mention names. If you go back 10 years, that had the record at \$3 trillion. We're at \$18 trillion. There's never been anything like that in history.

So, I just want to thank you all. You're spectacular people. The political people out there, I love you all. And we're going to have one hell of a time for the next few years, and hopefully, the next few years will lead to greatness for many, many years to come.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 7:25 p.m. from the Truman Balcony at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Senate Majority Leader John R. Thune; Dana F. White, Jr., president and chief executive officer, Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC); Roger S. Penske, founder and chairman, Penske Corp., and owner, Penske Performance, Inc., automobile racing team; and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) President Giovanni V. Infantino. He also referred to H.R. 7432. The First Lady referred to Reps. Jason T. Smith, Darin M. LaHood, and Danny K. Davis. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on May 20.

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