

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2026

Remarks at the Freedom 250 Grand Prix Showcase

July 13, 2026

The President. Thank you very much, everybody. What an honor.

And we have that great music. We love great music.

We have Roger with me—won 20 Indianapolis 500's. That's not bad. He was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom by me when he won 17, and he just kept winning. It's not supposed to work that way, right? *[Laughter]* We thought he stopped, but he won. And he's amazing. He's been my friend for a long time.

But I'm thrilled to be here with some of the most extraordinary figures in the history of motorsports—and any sport, if you think about it—as we count down to the Freedom 250 Grand Prix.

This will be like no other race ever. I don't think anything will ever be—will ever top what we're going to be having.

It just happened with UFC. It got the highest ratings of any fight in history. This will get the highest ratings of any such race. It will be one of the most unforgettable racing events the world has ever seen. And we have the most talented people.

These people have a lot of courage, on my right. I don't want to do what they did. You could teach me, but it still takes something special, right? Go very—I know every one of you. What a—what a great job you've done.

I want to thank Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy, who's—phenomenal guy. He's doing a great job. Doing a great job.

And the very, very legendary Roger Penske, who is—I mean, there's nobody like him, I can't imagine, in the history of racing or maybe any other sport, to be honest with you. Roger Penske.

The president of Penske Corporation, Bud Denker. I want to introduce Bud. Thank you very much, Bud. What a great job.

CEO of FOX Sports, Eric Shanks. Thank you very much, Eric. It's going to get a lot of rating—are you prepared for this kind of rating? I don't know. It's going to be a big rating you're going to have.

The president of General Motors, Mark Reuss, and—say hello to Mary and everybody. She's—fantastic person. It's a great company. It's a hot company. We just ordered a lot of Escalades for security purposes. And we do a lot of business with General Electric [General Motors; White House correction]. And they're actually going now in the weapons-making business, and I think you do better with that than you did even in the cars. *[Laughter]* So I want to thank you very much, Mark.

And incredible IndyCar drivers Álex Palou, Felix Rosenqvist, and David Malukas. And I've watched all three of you recently do very well. Thank you. Very well.

Better you than me. I don't want to—*[laughter]*—I don't want to go 250 miles an hour with 2 inches separating my car. I don't want to do that. But what you've done was incredible, the last couple of races.

Unprecedented events will take place next month right here in our Nation's Capital. On August 22 and 23, it will be an awesome display of American patriotism and raw horsepower and ingenuity.

You're seeing—you're going to see cars at the level that they've never been at before, with cars racing more than 190 miles—and even higher than that—down Pennsylvania Avenue. It wasn't exactly designed for that, but what Sean Duffy's done with these incredible, brilliant people is really amazing.

It's going to be a sight for the ages. It really will be something special. And they're going to go all around the National Mall at speeds that are not quite—if we did that during the regular day, I think people would be put in jail, perhaps, for the rest of their lives, right? *[Laughter]*

It wasn't supposed to be that way, but it's going to be beautiful. It's going to be a beautiful thing to watch.

And this is the first racing event of its kind in Washington, DC's, history, happening as part of our great celebration of the 250th anniversary of American freedom.

The American people are invited to come watch this once-in-a-lifetime total event, and Roger and General Motors and FOX and everybody else.

I will say: It's free. We thought—they thought maybe we could—you know, they'd get so much money from—this is a ticket—you're probably having second thoughts. You said: "Well, wait. I could—we could have made a fortune." No, it's free. Totally free. And it's something they're doing for the country.

The country's doing incredibly well. We've never done this well. We're respected all over the world now and respected like never before.

We have—I was telling Roger before: We have \$19.2 trillion being invested in the United States of America by other people and countries. We've—no country in the world has ever had anything like that. And plants and factories and everything's being, right now, built—as we speak, being built all over the country. There's never been any country that's as hot as we are right now.

In addition to that, we have the strongest military in the world. You saw that with Venezuela. You're seeing that right now with Iran. For 47 years, Iran—47 years in a row, they were pushing people around. They're not pushing us around. We're pushing them around.

The Penske team held more than 80 meetings in 90 days on Capitol Hill to get this event to happen. This is over a period of years, and nothing happened.

And when they came to see—they said, "When they came to see the President"—what, did we work it out in about 15 minutes? It was done. And we picked a better track. We actually picked—they went into something that was not as good.

And—well, they were dealing with Democrats. What can I tell you? But it wasn't as good.

And I said to the group—I said, "Is this the exact track that you want?" And they said, "You just can't do better than Pennsylvania Avenue, when you think of it." And that's going to be the straightaway. It's going to be fantastic.

This event is following in the footsteps of that event that I just mentioned, the UFC event, which we hosted. Dana White, who's a fantastic man. What he's done—the great job. And this will be equally as breathtaking.

The air show that we're going to have is going to be—along with the cars—going to be something. We did the greatest air show, I think, ever on July 4. They've never seen planes at that level. It was, really, quite a time.

And then we had an event. And there was rain, and everybody was told to leave. There was lightning, and they didn't leave. And I said, "We can't not do it." So we went back. I said, "Everybody, let's come back."

And we ended up—we had 425,000 people when we started, and they were—think of that. *[Applause]* It was a number much bigger than ever anticipated.

And then everybody was told to go home, and I heard about that. I said, "No way." So, we called them all back. We ended up with 152,000 people. It was—it was actually made hotter—this was made better and hotter by bad weather, believe it or not. I said: "I don't care if I have to make the speech at 2 o'clock in the morning. It doesn't matter."

But on our 250th anniversary, America deserves the greatest celebration in the history of our country—in the history of the world, and I think this is it. And this is really a big part of the crescendo.

So, next month, these exceptional sportsmen, drivers, athletes—they're great athletes. Nothing—nobody can do—they're born with something very special. They're born with an ability to press that pedal all the way down to the ground. Most people can't do that. Very few people can. But their beautiful cars are going to make freedom roar. This will be a freedom that's roaring like never before.

So I'd like to now just ask Sean Duffy—this guy—Sean is exceptional. And, you know, what people don't know: He was the world record in going up logs—going up to the top of these stupid trees. *[Laughter]* I never saw anything like—and Sean had—how many years were you the champion of that? Five.

Secretary of Transportation Sean P. Duffy. Five.

The President. For five years, he was the world champion. He was a lumberjack. Who the hell knew that about Sean Duffy? And that—because—I like champions. He was the world champion for 5 years. Going up a tree and coming down. He said, "Going up wasn't bad—bad. Coming down was very dangerous."

Secretary Duffy. Very dangerous.

The President. He broke his back a couple of times. Little things like that. But he was the world champion at that—climbing the tree—for five separate times. And you know, I respect—we respect great champions and athletes.

So you wouldn't believe it. That's my man. I hear—I've known that for a long time. And he's married to Rachel, who's an incredible woman. She's a very big—success on television. And we love their family. We love him.

So I'd like to ask Sean to—say a few words.

Secretary Duffy. Sure.

The President. And then Roger Penske's going to speak, and then we're going to be given a display of how to turn—how to put tires on a car very quickly.

So you're going to have a good time. Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

Secretary Duffy. Well, first, thank you, Mr. President.

As the Secretary of Transportation, lumberjack sports—we used to move logs down rivers. One of the first modes of transportation. So it's fitting. Thank you for the job.

But it's great to be here with two legends—one legend in Presidential history, but another legend, Roger Penske, in motorsports history—for this great day.

[At this point, Secretary Duffy continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]

And, again, just finally, Mr. President, thank you for your leadership. You don't do anything that's small. Everything you do is big. It's huge. It's the best. It's the greatest.

Whether it's the UFC fight or a IndyCar race in the Capital, we appreciate your leadership. America loves you, and thank you for making this happen.

The President. Thank you very much. Great job.

Penske Corp. Founder and Chairman Roger S. Penske. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and welcome everybody here today. It's an honor for me, Mr. President, to be here and be part of this celebration.

When you think about 250 years of this country, it's an amazing time. It's a great place to live. It's a great place to work. And I think we're fortunate to have the most important office in the world give us the green light and then the checkered flag to have this event in August.

Think about it. Over 250,000 people signed up to come to this event, and we will be able to accommodate 100,000 each of the 2 days, and it's for free, as the President said.

But we're honored. I think it's an opportunity to showcase the technology, the speed, the partnerships, and the athletes that make such a difference.

We think about the Indy 500 as an iconic race, but this is going to move right up there next to it, as far as we're concerned, from the standpoint of the best in the world.

So, Mr. President, thank you again for this opportunity, and I think we have a special helmet for you. Am I right, Alex?

Chip Ganassi Racing IndyCar driver Alex Palou Montalbo. We do.

The President. Oh.

Mr. Palou. It's a present for you. [Inaudible]

[*The President was presented with a racing helmet.*]

The President. Wow. [Laughter] Thank you.

Mr. Penske. We hope you will wear that when you're riding around in the Beast——

The President. I will. [Laughter]

Mr. Penske. ——leading the field. Come to the green flag.

Again, thank you, sir.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Penske. Bud Denker.

The President. Thank you very much. Very great.

Penske Corp. President Claude "Bud" Denker III. Thank you, Roger. Thank you, Secretary Duffy.

I also wanted to thank and recognize Ambassador Crowley over here as well. Monica Crowley, our Ambassador of Protocol, has been a partner of mine in this whole journey; Mayor Bowser; but importantly, the President of the United States.

As he mentioned, I was on Capitol Hill for several months and trying to get the race around that racetrack. But you know what? It didn't happen.

[*Mr. Denker continued his remarks.*]

So, Mr. President, thank you again for your support. Thank you again for your leadership. Thank you again for your vision.

And with that, I'm going to have our driver, David Malukas, start that car. You're going to see this amazing pit crew here from Team Penske change four tires, fuel in about 6.5 seconds.

Let's see it, guys.

[*A pit stop demonstration was performed.*]

What do you think? Few days—41 days from now.

Mr. President.

Thank you.

The President. So just—I want to thank everybody for being here. Our country is great. Our country is strong, powerful, respected again like never before.

And I'll see you in 41 days or sooner.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:01 p.m. on West Executive Avenue at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mary T. Barra, chair and chief executive officer, General Motors Corp.; Dana F. White, Jr., president and chief executive officer, Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC); Rachel Campos-Duffy, wife of Secretary Duffy, in her capacity as cohost of the Fox News Channel's "Fox and Friends Weekend" program.

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