

declares the House in recess until approximately 8:35 p.m. for the purpose of receiving in joint session the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2036

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS PURSUANT TO HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 93 TO RE- CEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 8 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Ms. Kathleen Joyce, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The joint session will come to order.

The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort the President of the United States into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE);

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER);

The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK);

The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON);

The gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER);

The gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE);

The gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MCCLAIN);

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE);

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCHENTHALER);

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES);

The gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK);

The gentleman from California (Mr. AGUILAR);

The gentleman from California (Mr. LIEU);

The gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE);

The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE);

The gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. UNDERWOOD);

The gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR);

The gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN); and

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber:

The Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY);

The Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW);

The Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR);

The Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER);

The Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL);

The Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE);

The Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO);

The Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO); and

The Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST).

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Hersey Kyota, the Ambassador of the Republic of Palau.

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court.

The Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 9 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, the Honorable William P. McFarland, announced the President of the United States.

The President of the United States, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The PRESIDENT. Good evening. Good evening.

If I were smart, I would go home now.

Mr. Speaker, Madam Vice President, Members of Congress, my fellow Americans, in January 1941, Franklin Roosevelt came to this Chamber to speak to the Nation, and he said: "I address you . . . at a moment unprecedented in the history of the Union."

Hitler was on the march. War was raging in Europe. President Roosevelt's purpose was to wake up Congress and alert the American people that this was no ordinary time. Freedom and democracy were under assault in the world.

Tonight, I come to this same Chamber to address the Nation. Now, it is we

who face an unprecedented moment in the history of the Union, and, yes, my purpose tonight is to wake up the Congress and alert the American people that this is no ordinary moment, either.

Not since President Lincoln and the Civil War have freedom and democracy been under assault at home as they are today. What makes our moment rare is that freedom and democracy are under attack both at home and overseas at the very same time.

Overseas, Putin of Russia is on the march, invading Ukraine and sowing chaos throughout Europe and beyond. If anybody in this room thinks Putin will stop at Ukraine, I assure you, he will not. But Ukraine can stop Putin.

Ukraine can stop Putin if we stand with Ukraine and provide the weapons that it needs to defend itself. That is all. That is all Ukraine is asking. They are not asking for American soldiers. In fact, there are no American soldiers at war in Ukraine, and I am determined to keep it that way. But, now, assistance to Ukraine is being blocked by those who want to walk away from our world leadership.

It wasn't long ago when a Republican President named Ronald Reagan thundered: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

Now, my predecessor, a former Republican President, tells Putin: Do whatever the hell you want.

That is a quote. The former President actually said that, bowing down to a Russian leader.

I think it is outrageous, it is dangerous, and it is unacceptable.

America is a founding member of NATO, the military alliance of democratic nations created after World War II to prevent war and keep the peace, and today, we have made NATO stronger than ever. We welcomed Finland to the alliance last year, and, just this morning, Sweden officially joined, and their Minister is here tonight.

Stand up.

Welcome. Welcome. Welcome. Welcome.

And they know how to fight.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to NATO, the strongest military alliance the world has ever seen.

I say this to Congress: We have to stand up to Putin. Send me a bipartisan national security bill. History is literally watching. History is watching.

If the United States walks away, it will put Ukraine at risk. Europe is at risk. The free world will be at risk, emboldening others to do what they wish to do us harm.

My message to President Putin, whom I have known for a long time, is simple. We will not walk away. We will not bow down. I will not bow down. In a literal sense, history is watching.

History is watching, just like history watched 3 years ago on January 6th.

Insurrectionists stormed this very Capitol and placed a dagger to the throat of American democracy.

Many of you were here on that darkest of days.

We all saw with our own eyes the insurrectionists were not patriots.

They had come to stop the peaceful transfer of power and to overturn the will of the people.

January 6th and the lies about the 2020 election, and the plots to steal the election, posed the gravest threat to U.S. democracy since the Civil War.

But they failed. America stood strong and democracy prevailed.

We must be honest, the threat to democracy must be defended.

My predecessor and some of you here seek to bury the truth about January 6th.

I will not do that.

This is a moment to speak the truth and bury the lies.

Here is the simple truth: You can't love your country only when you win.

As I have done ever since being elected to office, I ask all of you, without regard to party, to join together and defend democracy.

Remember your oath of office to defend against all threats foreign and domestic.

Respect free and fair elections. Restore trust in our institutions. And make clear, political violence has absolutely no place, no place in America. Zero place.

Again, it is not hyperbole to suggest history is watching. We are watching. Your children and grandchildren will read about this day and what we do.

History is watching another assault on freedom. Joining us tonight is Latorya Beasley, a social worker from Birmingham, Alabama. Fourteen months ago, she and her husband welcomed a baby girl thanks to the miracle of IVF.

She scheduled treatments to have that second child, but the Alabama Supreme Court shut down IVF treatments across the State, unleashed by a Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*. She was told her dream would have to wait.

What her family has gone through should never have happened. Unless Congress acts, it could happen again.

Tonight, let's stand up for families like hers. To my friends across the aisle, don't keep us waiting any longer. Guarantee the right to IVF. Guarantee it nationwide.

Like most Americans, I believe *Roe v. Wade* got it right. I thank Vice President HARRIS for being an incredible leader, defending reproductive freedom and so much more.

My predecessor came to office determined to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned. He is the reason it was overturned, and he brags about it.

Look at the chaos that has resulted.

Joining us tonight is Kate Cox, a wife and mother from Dallas. When she became pregnant again, the fetus had a fatal condition. Her doctors told Kate that her own life and her ability to have children in the future were at risk if she didn't act.

Because Texas law banned her ability to act, Kate and her husband had to leave the State to get what she needed.

What her family has gone through should never have happened as well, but it is happening to so many others.

There are State laws banning the freedom to choose, criminalizing doctors, and forcing survivors of rape and incest to leave their States to get the treatment they need.

Many of you in this Chamber and my predecessor are promising to pass a national ban on reproductive freedom. My God, what freedoms will you take away?

In its decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court majority wrote the following—and with all due respect, Justices—“Women are not without electoral or political power.” You are about to realize just how much you were wrong about that.

Clearly, those bragging about overturning *Roe v. Wade* have no clue about the power of women, but they found out when reproductive freedom was on the ballot. We won in 2022, 2023, and we will win again in 2024.

If you, the American people, send me a Congress that supports the right to choose, I promise you I will restore *Roe v. Wade* as the law of the land again.

America cannot go back. I am here tonight to show the way forward because I know how far we have come.

Four years ago next week, before I came to office, the country was hit by the worst pandemic and the worst economic crisis in a century.

Remember the fear; record job losses. Remember the spikes in crime and the murder rate; a raging virus that took more than 1 million American lives of loved ones and millions left behind; a mental health crisis of isolation and loneliness.

A President, my predecessor, failed the most basic Presidential duty that he owes to American people, the duty to care.

I think that is unforgivable. I came to office determined to get us through one of the toughest periods in the Nation's history. We have. It doesn't make news, but in thousands of cities and towns, the American people are writing the greatest comeback story never told.

So let's tell the story here and now. America's comeback is building a future of American possibilities, building an economy from the middle out and the bottom up, not the top down, investing in all America, in all Americans to make sure everyone has a fair shot and we leave no one behind.

The pandemic no longer controls our lives. The vaccine that saved us from COVID are now being used to beat cancer. Turning setback into comeback. That is what America does.

That is what America does. I inherited an economy that was on the brink. Now our economy is literally the envy of the world: 15 million new jobs in just 3 years, a record; unemployment at 50-year lows; a record 16 million Ameri-

cans are starting small businesses and each one is a literal act of hope.

With historic job growth and small business growth for Black and Hispanics and Asian Americans; 800,000 new manufacturing jobs in America and counting.

Where is it written we can't be the manufacturing capital of the world? We are. We will.

More people have health insurance today than ever before. The racial wealth gap is as small as it has been in 20 years. Wages keep going up, and inflation keeps coming down. Inflation has dropped from 9 percent to 3 percent, the lowest in the world, and trending lower. The landing is and will be soft.

And now, instead of importing foreign products and exporting American jobs, we are exporting American products and creating American jobs—right here in America, where they belong.

It takes time, but the American people are beginning to feel it. Consumer studies show consumer confidence is soaring. Buy American has been the law of the land since the 1930s. Past administrations, including my predecessor, including some Democrats as well in the past, failed to buy American. Not anymore.

On my watch, Federal projects that you fund, like helping build American roads, bridges, and highways, will be made with American products and built by American workers, creating good-paying American jobs.

Thanks to our Chips and Science Act, the United States is investing more in research and development than ever before. During the pandemic, a shortage of semiconductor chips drove up the price of everything from cell phones to automobiles. And by the way, we invented those chips right here in America.

Well, instead of having to import them, private companies are now investing billions of dollars to build new chip factories here in America, creating tens of thousands of jobs, many of those jobs paying \$100,000 a year and don't require a college degree.

In fact, my policies have attracted \$650 billion in private-sector investments in clean energy and advanced manufacturing, creating tens of thousands of jobs here in America.

Thanks to our bipartisan infrastructure law, 46,000 new projects have been announced all across your communities.

By the way, I notice some of you who strongly voted against it are there cheering on that money coming in. I like it. I am with you. I am with you. If any of you don't want that money in your district, just let me know.

We are modernizing our roads and bridges, ports and airports, and public transit systems; removing poisonous lead pipes so every child can drink clean water without risk of brain damage; providing affordable, high-speed internet for every American, no matter where you live, urban, suburban, and

rural communities in red States and blue States; record investments in Tribal communities.

Because of my investments in family farms, led by my Secretary of Agriculture, who knows more about this than anybody I know, those farms are better able to stay in the family, so their children and grandchildren won't have to leave home to make a living. It is transformative.

A great comeback story is Belvidere, Illinois, home to an auto plant for nearly 60 years. Before I came to office, the plant was on its way to shutting down. Thousands of workers feared for their livelihoods. Hope was fading.

Then, I was elected to office, and we raised Belvidere repeatedly with the auto company, knowing unions would make all the difference. The UAW worked like hell to keep the plant open and get these jobs back, and together, we succeeded.

Instead of an auto factory shutting down, an auto factory is reopening, and a new state-of-the-art battery factory is being built to power those cars. To the folks in Belvidere, I say: Instead of your town being left behind, your community is moving forward again because instead of watching auto jobs in the future go overseas, 4,000 union jobs with higher wages are building the future in Belvidere, right here in America.

Here tonight is UAW president Shawn Fain, a great friend and great labor leader.

Shawn, where are you? Shawn, stand up.

And Dawn Simms, a third-generation UAW worker at Belvidere—Shawn, I was proud to be the first President to stand on the picket line.

Today, Dawn has a good job in her hometown, providing stability for her family and pride and dignity as well, showing once again Wall Street didn't build America. They are not bad guys. They didn't build it, though. The middle class built the country, and unions built the middle class.

I say to the American people, when America gets knocked down, we get back up. We keep going. That is America. That is you, the American people. It is because of you America is coming back. It is because of you our future is brighter. It is because of you that tonight we can proudly say the state of our Union is strong and getting stronger.

Tonight, I want to talk about the future of possibilities that we can build together, a future where the days of trickle-down economics are over and the wealthy and biggest corporations no longer get all the tax breaks.

By the way, I understand corporations. I come from a State that has more corporations invested than every one of your States in the United States combined, and I represented them for 36 years. I am not anticorporation, but I grew up in a home where trickle-down economics didn't put much on my dad's kitchen table.

That is why I am determined to turn things around, so the middle class does well. When they do well, the poor have a way up, and the wealthy still do very well. We all do well.

There is more to do to make sure you are feeling the benefits of all we are doing.

Americans pay more for prescription drugs than anywhere in the world. It is wrong, and I am ending it. With a law that I proposed and signed—not one of you Republican buddies voted for it—we finally beat Big Pharma. Instead of paying \$400 a month or thereabouts for insulin, seniors with diabetes—and it only costs \$10 to make—they only have to pay \$35 a month now. And they will still make a healthy profit.

And what to do next? I want to cap the cost of insulin at \$35 a month for every American who needs it—everyone.

For years, people have talked about it, but finally, we got it done and gave Medicare the power to negotiate lower prices on prescription drugs, just like the VA is able to do for veterans.

That is not just saving seniors money. It is saving taxpayers money.

We cut the Federal deficit by \$160 billion because Medicare will no longer have to pay those exorbitant prices to Big Pharma.

This year, Medicare is negotiating lower prices for some of the costliest drugs on the market that treat everything from heart disease to arthritis.

It is now time to go further and give Medicare the power to negotiate lower prices for 500 different drugs over the next decade.

They are making a lot of money, guys, and they will still be extremely profitable.

That will not only save lives, it will save taxpayers another \$200 billion.

Starting next year, the same law caps total prescription drug costs for seniors on Medicare at \$2,000 a year, even for expensive cancer drugs that cost \$10,000, \$12,000, \$15,000. Now, I want to cap prescription drug costs at \$2,000 a year for everyone.

Folks, I am going to get in trouble for saying it, but if you want to get in Air Force One with me and fly to Toronto, Berlin, Moscow—I mean—excuse me—well, even Moscow, probably—and bring your prescription with you, I promise you, I will get it for you for 40 percent the cost you are paying now—same company, same drug, same place.

Folks, the Affordable Care Act, the old ObamaCare, is still a very big deal. Over 100 million of you can no longer be denied health insurance because of preexisting conditions, but my predecessor and many in this Chamber want to take those prescription drugs away by repealing the Affordable Care Act. I am not going to let that happen.

We stopped you 50 times before, and we will stop you again. In fact, I am not only protecting it, I am expanding it.

We enacted tax credits of \$800 per person per year to reduce healthcare

costs for millions of working families. That tax credit expires next year. I want to make that savings permanent.

To state the obvious, women are more than half our population, but research on women's health has always been underfunded. That is why we are launching the first-ever White House Initiative on Women's Health Research, led by Jill, doing an incredible job as First Lady.

So, pass my plan for \$12 billion to transform women's health research and benefit millions of lives all across America.

I know the cost of housing is so important to you. If inflation keeps coming down, mortgage rates will come down as well, and the Fed acknowledges that, but I am not waiting.

I want to provide an annual tax credit that will give Americans \$400 a month for the next 2 years as mortgage rates come down to put toward their mortgages when they buy their first home or trade up for a little more space—just for 2 years.

My administration is also eliminating title insurance on federally backed mortgages. When you refinance your home, you can save \$1,000 or more as a consequence.

For millions of renters, we are cracking down on big landlords who break antitrust laws by price-fixing and driving up rents.

We have cut red tape so more builders can get Federal financing, which is already helping build a record 1.7 million new housing units nationwide.

Now, pass my plan to build and renovate 2 million affordable homes and bring those rents down.

To remain the strongest economy in the world, we need to have the best education system in the world. I, like I suspect all of you, want to give a child—every child—a good start by providing access to preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds.

I think I pointed out last year that children coming from broken homes where there are no books, they are not read to, not spoken to very often, and start school, kindergarten, or first grade having heard a million fewer words spoken.

Studies show that children who go to preschool are nearly 50 percent more likely to finish school and go on to earn a 2- or 4-year degree, no matter what their background is.

I met, a year and a half ago, with the leaders of the Business Roundtable. They were mad. They were angry. Well, they were discussing why I wanted to spend money on education. I pointed out to them, as Vice President, I met with over—I think it was 182 of those folks. Don't hold me to the exact number. And I asked them what they need most as CEOs, and you have had the same experience on both sides of the aisle. They say a better educated workforce, right? So, I looked at them, and I say: I come from Delaware. DuPont used to be the eighth largest corporation in the world. And every new enterprise they bought, they educated the

workforce to that enterprise, but none of you do that anymore. Why are you angry with me for providing you the opportunity for the best educated workforce in the world?

They all looked at me and said: I think you are right.

I want to expand high-quality tutoring and summer learning to see that every child learns to read by third grade.

I am also connecting local businesses and high schools so students get hands-on experience and a path to good-paying jobs, whether or not they go to college.

I want to make sure that college is more affordable. Let's continue increasing the Pell grants to working and middle-class families and increase record investments in HBCUs and minority-serving institutions, including Hispanic institutions.

When I was told I couldn't universally just change the way in which you dealt with student loans, I fixed two student loan programs that already existed to reduce the burden of student debt for nearly 4 million Americans, including nurses, firefighters, and others in public service like Keenan Jones, a public school educator from Minnesota who is here with us tonight.

Keenan, where are you? Keenan, thank you.

He has educated hundreds of students so they can go to college. Now, he is able to help, after debt forgiveness, to get his own daughter to college.

Folks, look, such relief is good for the economy because folks are now able to buy a home, start a business, start a family.

While we are at it, I want to give public school teachers a raise.

By the way, the first couple years, we cut the deficit.

Now, let me speak to the question of fundamental fairness for all Americans. I have been delivering real results in fiscally responsible ways. We have already cut the Federal deficit over a trillion dollars. I signed a bipartisan deal to cut another trillion dollars in the next decade.

It is my goal to cut the Federal deficit another \$3 trillion by making big corporations and the very wealthy finally begin to pay their fair share.

Look, I am a capitalist. If you want to make or can make millions and millions of bucks, that is great. Just pay your fair share in taxes.

A fair tax code is how we invest in things that make this country great: healthcare, education, defense, and so much more, but here is the deal. The last administration enacted a \$2 trillion tax cut that overwhelmingly benefited the top 1 percent, the very wealthy, the biggest corporations, and exploded the Federal deficit.

They added more to the national debt than in any other Presidential term in American history. Check the numbers.

For folks at home, does anybody really think the tax code is fair? Do you really think the wealthy and big

corporations need another \$2 trillion in tax breaks?

I sure don't. I am going to keep fighting like hell to make it fair. Under my plan, nobody earning less than \$400,000 will pay an additional penny in taxes. Nobody. Not one penny. And they haven't yet.

In fact, the child tax credit I passed during the pandemic cut taxes for millions of working families and cut child poverty in half. Restore that child tax credit. No child should go hungry in this country.

The way to make the tax code fair is to make big corporations and the very wealthy begin to pay their fair share.

Remember in 2020, 55 of the biggest companies in America made \$40 billion and paid zero in Federal income taxes—zero.

Not anymore.

Thanks to the law I wrote and signed, big companies have to pay a minimum of 15 percent. But that is still less than working people pay in Federal taxes. It is time to raise the corporate minimum tax to at least 21 percent so every big corporation finally begins to pay their fair share.

I also want to end tax breaks for Big Pharma, Big Oil, private jets, and massive executive pay when it is only supposed to be a million dollars that can be deducted. They can pay them 20 million if they want but deduct a million.

End it now.

You know, there are 1,000 billionaires in America. Do you know what the average Federal tax is for those billionaires? No? They are making great sacrifices—8.2 percent. That is far less than the vast majority of Americans pay.

No billionaire should pay a lower Federal tax rate than a teacher, a sanitation worker, or a nurse.

I propose the minimum tax for billionaires of 25 percent—just 25 percent. Do you know what that would raise? That would raise \$500 billion over the next 10 years.

And imagine what that could do for America. Imagine a future with affordable childcare so millions of families can get the care they need to go to work to help grow the economy.

Imagine a future with paid leave because no one should have to choose between working and taking care of their sick family member.

Imagine a future with home care and elder care and people living with disabilities so they can stay in their homes and family caregivers can finally get the pay they deserve.

Tonight, let's all agree once again to stand up for seniors.

Many of my friends on the other side of the aisle want to put Social Security on the chopping block. If anyone here tries to cut Social Security and Medicare or raise the retirement age, I will stop you.

The working people who built this country pay more into Social Security than millionaires and billionaires do. It is not fair.

We have two ways to go. Republicans can cut Social Security and give more tax breaks to the wealthy—that is the proposal.

Oh, no? You guys don't want another \$2 trillion tax cut? I kind of thought that is what your plan was. Well, that is good to hear. You are not going to cut another \$2 trillion for the super wealthy? That is good to hear.

I will protect and strengthen Social Security and make the wealthy pay their fair share.

Look, too many corporations raise prices to pad their profits, charging more and more for less and less. That is why we are cracking down on corporations engaging in price gouging and deceptive pricing from food to healthcare to housing.

In fact, the snack companies think you won't notice if they change the size of the bag and put a hell of a lot fewer—same size bag, put fewer chips in it. No, I am not joking. It is called shrinkflation. Pass BOBBY CASEY's bill and stop this. I really mean it.

You probably all saw that commercial on Snickers bars, and you get charged the same amount, and you got about—I don't know—10 percent fewer Snickers in it.

Look, I am also getting rid of junk fees, those hidden fees at the end of your bills that are there without your knowledge. My administration announced we are cutting credit card late fees from \$32 to \$8.

The banks and credit card companies are allowed to charge what it costs them to instigate the collection, and that is a hell of a lot more like \$8 than 30-something dollars. They don't like it. The credit card companies don't like it, but I am saving American families \$20 billion a year with all the junk fees I am eliminating.

Folks at home, that is why the banks are so mad. It is \$20 billion in profit.

I am not stopping there. My administration has proposed rules to make cable, travel, utilities, and online ticket sellers tell you the total price up front so there are no surprises.

It matters. It matters. And so does this.

In November, my team began serious negotiations with a bipartisan group of Senators. The result was a bipartisan bill with the toughest set of border security reforms we have ever seen.

Oh, you don't think so? Oh, you don't like that bill, huh, that conservatives got together and said it was a good bill? I will be darned. That is amazing.

That bipartisan bill would hire 1,500 more security agents and officers, 100 more immigration judges to help tackle the backlog of 2 million cases, 4,300 more asylum officers and new policies so they can resolve cases in 6 months instead of 6 years now.

What do you get? 100 more high-tech drug detection machines to significantly increase the ability to screen and stop vehicles smuggling fentanyl into America that is killing thousands of children.

This bill would save lives and bring order to the border. It would also give me and any new President new emergency authority to temporarily shut down the border when the number of migrants at the border is overwhelming.

The Border Patrol union has endorsed this bill. The Federal Chamber of Commerce—yeah, yeah, you are saying no. Look at the facts. I know you know how to read.

I believe that given the opportunity a majority of the House and Senate would endorse the bill, as well—the majority right now. But, unfortunately, politics has derailed this bill so far.

I am told my predecessor called Members of Congress and the Senate to demand they block the bill. He feels it would be a political win for me and a political loss for him.

It is not about him. It is not about me.

It would be a winner.

Laken Riley, an innocent young woman who was killed by an illegal—that is right—but how many thousands of people are being killed by legals? To her parents I say, my heart goes out to you, having lost children myself. I understand.

But, look, if we change the dynamic at the border—people pay these smugglers 8,000 bucks to get across the border because they know if they get by—if they get by and let into the country it is 6 to 8 years before they have a hearing, and it is worth taking the chance for \$8,000. But if it is only 6 weeks, the idea is it is highly unlikely that people will pay that money and come all that way knowing that they will be able to be kicked out quickly.

Folks, I would respectfully suggest to my Republican friends, you owe it to the American people. Get this bill done. We need to act now.

If my predecessor is watching, instead of playing politics and pressuring Members of Congress to block the bill, join me in telling Congress to pass it.

We can do it together.

Here is what I will not do: I will not demonize immigrants by saying they poison the blood of our country. I will not separate families. I will not ban people because of their faith.

Unlike my predecessor, on my first day in office, I introduced a comprehensive bill to fix our immigration system. Take a look at it. It has all these and more: Secure the border, provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, and so much more.

Unlike my predecessor, I know who we are as Americans. We are the only Nation in the world with a heart and soul that draws from old and new; home to Native Americans whose ancestors have been here for thousands of years; home to people from every place on Earth.

Some came freely; some came in chains; some came when famine struck, like my ancestral family from Ireland; some to flee persecution; some to chase

dreams that are impossible anywhere but here in America. That is America. We all come from somewhere, but we are all Americans.

Folks, we have a simple choice. We can fight about fixing the border or we can fix it. I am ready to fix it. Send me the border bill now.

A transformational moment in history happened 59 years ago today in Selma, Alabama. Hundreds of foot soldiers for justice marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, named after the grand dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, to claim their fundamental right to vote. They were beaten. They were bloodied and left for dead. Our late friend and former colleague John Lewis was on that march. We miss him.

Joining us tonight are other marchers, both on the gallery and on the floor, including Bettie Mae Fikes, known as the Voice of Selma. The daughter of gospel singers and preachers, she sang songs of prayer and protest on that Bloody Sunday to help shake the Nation's conscience. Five months later, the Voting Rights Act passed and was signed into law.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Fifty-nine years later, there are forces taking us back in time: Voter suppression, election subversion, unlimited dark money, extreme gerrymandering.

John Lewis was a great friend to many of us here, but if you truly want to honor him and all the heroes that marched with him, then it is time to do more than talk. Pass the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

Stop the denying another core value of America: our diversity across American life.

Banning books, it is wrong. Instead of erasing history, let's make history.

I want to protect fundamental rights. Pass the Equality Act. My message to transgender Americans: I have your back.

Pass the PRO Act for workers' rights. Raise the Federal minimum wage, because every worker has a right to a decent living, more than 7 bucks an hour.

We are also making history by confronting the climate crisis, not denying it. I don't think any of you think there is no longer a climate crisis. At least I hope you don't.

I am taking the most significant action ever on climate in the history of the world. I am cutting our carbon emissions in half by 2030; creating tens of thousands of clean energy jobs, like the IBEW workers building and installing 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations; conserving 30 percent of America's lands and waters by 2030; and taking action on environmental justice for fenceline communities smothered by the legacy of pollution.

And patterned after the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps, I launched the Climate Corps to put 20,000 young people to work at the forefront of our clean energy future. I will triple that number in a decade.

To state the obvious, all Americans deserve the freedom to be safe, and America is safer today than when I took office.

The year before I took office, murder rates went up 30 percent. Thirty percent they went up, the biggest increase in history. That was then.

Now, through my American Rescue Plan, which every Republican voted against, I might add, we made the largest investment in public safety ever.

Last year, the murder rate saw the sharpest decrease in history, and violent crime fell to one of its lowest levels in more than 50 years.

But we have more to do. Help cities invest in more community police officers, more mental health workers, and more community violence intervention. Give communities the tools to crack down on gun crime, retail crime, and carjacking.

Keep building public trust, as I have been doing by taking executive action on police reform and calling for it to be the law of the land, directing my Cabinet to review the Federal classification of marijuana and expunging thousands of convictions for mere possession, because no one should be jailed for simply using or have it on their record.

To take on crimes of domestic violence, I am ramping up the Federal enforcement of the Violence Against Women Act that I proudly wrote when I was a Senator, so we can finally end the scourge against women in America.

There are other kinds of violence I want to stop. With us tonight is Jasmine, whose 9-year-old sister Jackie was murdered with 21 classmates and teachers in an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas.

Very soon after that happened, Jill and I went to Uvalde for a couple days. We spent hours and hours with each of the families. We heard their message so everyone in this room, in this Chamber, could hear the same message, the constant refrain. I was there for hours meeting with every family. They said: Do something. Do something.

Well, I did do something by establishing the first-ever Office of Gun Violence Prevention in the White House with the Vice President leading the charge.

Thank you for doing that.

Meanwhile, my predecessor told the NRA he is proud he did nothing on guns when he was President.

After another school shooting in Iowa recently, when asked what to do about it, he said just "get over it." There is his quote, just "get over it."

I say: Stop it, stop it, stop it, stop it.

I am proud we beat the NRA when I signed the most significant gun safety law in nearly 30 years because of this Congress. We now must beat the NRA again.

I am demanding a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

Pass universal background checks.

I taught the Second Amendment for 12 years, and none of this violates the Second Amendment or vilifies responsible gun owners.

As we manage challenges at home, we are also managing crises abroad, including the Middle East. I know the last 5 months have been gut-wrenching for so many people, for the Israeli people, the Palestinian people, and so many here in America.

This crisis began on October 7 with a massacre by the terrorist group called Hamas, as you all know. 1,200 innocent people, women and girls, men and boys, slaughtered, many after enduring sexual violence. It was the deadliest day for the Jewish people since the Holocaust, and 250 hostages taken.

Here in this Chamber tonight are families whose loved ones are still being held by Hamas. I pledge to all the families that we will not rest until we bring every one of your loved ones home.

We will also work around the clock to bring home Evan and Paul, Americans being unjustly detained by the Russians and others around the world.

Israel has a right to go after Hamas. Hamas could end this conflict by releasing hostages. Laying down arms could end it, releasing the hostages, laying down arms, and surrendering those responsible for October 7.

Israel has an added burden because Hamas hides and operates among the civilian population like cowards—under hospitals, daycare centers, and all the like. Israel also has a fundamental responsibility, though, to protect innocent civilians in Gaza.

This war has taken a greater toll on innocent civilians than all previous wars in Gaza combined. More than 30,000 Palestinians have been killed, most of whom are not Hamas. Thousands and thousands are innocent women and children—girls and boys also orphaned.

Nearly 2 million more Palestinians are under bombardment or displacement—homes destroyed, neighbors in rubble, cities in ruin. Families are without food, water, medicine. It is heartbreaking.

I have been working nonstop to establish an immediate cease-fire that would last for 6 weeks to get all the prisoners released, all the hostages released, to get the hostages home and ease the intolerable and humanitarian crisis and build toward something more enduring.

The United States is leading international efforts to get more humanitarian assistance into Gaza. Tonight, I am directing the U.S. military to lead an emergency mission to establish a temporary pier in the Mediterranean on the coast of Gaza that can receive large shipments carrying food, water, medicine, and temporary shelters.

No U.S. boots will be on the ground.

A temporary pier will enable a massive increase in the amount of humanitarian assistance getting into Gaza every day, and Israel must do its part. Israel must allow more aid into Gaza and ensure humanitarian workers aren't caught in the crossfire. They are announcing they are going to have a crossing in northern Gaza.

To the leadership of Israel, I say this: Humanitarian assistance cannot be a secondary consideration or a bargaining chip. Protecting and saving innocent lives has to be a priority.

As we look to the future, the only real solution to the situation is a two-state solution over time.

I say this as a lifelong supporter of Israel my entire career. No one has a stronger record with Israel than I do. I challenge any of you here. I am the only American President to visit Israel in wartime.

There is no other path that guarantees Israel's security and democracy. There is no other path that guarantees that Palestinians can live with peace and dignity. And there is no other path that guarantees peace between Israel and all of its neighbors, including Saudi Arabia, with whom I am talking.

Creating stability in the Middle East also means containing the threat posed by Iran. That is why I built a coalition of more than a dozen countries to defend international shipping and freedom of navigation in the Red Sea.

I have ordered strikes to degrade the Houthi capabilities and defend U.S. forces in the region.

As Commander in Chief, I will not hesitate to direct further measures to protect our people and our military personnel.

For years, I have heard many of my Republican and Democratic friends say that China is on the rise and America is falling behind. They have got it backward. I have been saying it for over 4 years, even when I wasn't President: America is rising. We have the best economy in the world. Since I have come to office, our GDP is up, and our trade deficit with China is down to the lowest point in over a decade.

We are standing up against China's unfair economic practices. We are standing up for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. I have revitalized our partnership and alliance in the Pacific: India, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Pacific Islands.

I have made sure that the most advanced American technologies can't be used in China, not allowing to trade them there.

Frankly, for all his tough talk on China, it never occurred to my predecessor to do any of that.

I want competition with China, not conflict, and we are in a stronger position to win the competition for the 21st century against China or anyone else, for that matter—than at any time as well.

Here at home, I have signed over 400 bipartisan bills, but there is more to do to pass my Unity Agenda.

Strengthen penalties on fentanyl trafficking—you don't want to do that?

Pass bipartisan privacy legislation to protect our children online; harness the promise of AI and protect us from its peril; ban AI voice impersonations and more; and keep our one truly sacred obligation, to train and equip those we send into harm's way and care

for them and their families when they come home and when they don't.

That is why, with the strong support and help of Denis and the VA, I signed the PACT Act, one of the most significant laws ever, helping millions of veterans exposed to toxins who now are battling more than 100 different cancers.

Many of them don't come home, but we owe them and their families support.

We owe it to ourselves to keep supporting our new health research agency called ARPA-H and remind us that we can do big things like end cancer as we know it—and we will.

Let me close with this—I know you don't want to hear any more, Lindsey, but I have to say a few more things.

I know it may not look like it, but I have been around a while. When you get to be my age, certain things become clearer than ever. I know the American story. Again and again, I have seen the contest between competing forces and the battle for the soul of our Nation, between those who want to pull America back to the past and those who want to move America into the future.

My lifetime has taught me to embrace freedom and democracy, a future based on core values that defined America—honesty, decency, dignity, equality, to respect everyone, to give everyone a fair shot, to give hate no safe harbor.

Now, other people my age see it differently—the American story of resentment, revenge, and retribution. That is not me.

I was born amid World War II when America stood for freedom in the world. I grew up in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and Claymont, Delaware, among working-class people who built this country.

I watched in horror as two of my heroes, like many of you did, Dr. King and Bobby Kennedy, were assassinated, and their legacies inspired me to pursue a career in service.

I left a law firm and became a public defender because my city of Wilmington was the only city in America occupied by the National Guard after Dr. King was assassinated because of the riots, and I became a county councilman, almost by accident.

I got elected to the United States Senate, when I had no intention of running, at age 29, then Vice President to our first Black President, now President to the first woman Vice President.

In my career, I have been told I was too young. By the way, they didn't let me on the Senate elevators for votes sometimes—not a joke. And I have been told I am too old.

Whether young or old, I have always known what endures. Our North Star.

The very idea of America, that we are all created equal and deserve to be treated equally throughout our lives, we have never fully lived up to that idea, but we have never walked away from it either. And I won't walk away from it now.

I am optimistic. I really am. I am optimistic, Nancy.

My fellow Americans, the issue facing our Nation isn't how old we are. It is how old are our ideas? Hate, anger, revenge, retribution are the oldest of ideas, but you can't lead America with ancient ideas that only take us back. To lead America, the land of possibilities, you need a vision for the future and what can and should be done.

Tonight, you have heard mine. I see a future where we defend democracy. You don't diminish it.

I see a future where we restore the right to choose and protect other freedoms, not take them away.

I see a future where the middle class finally has a fair shot, and the wealthy have to pay their fair share in taxes.

I see a future where we save the planet from the climate crisis and our country from gun violence.

Above all, I see a future for all Americans. I see a country for all Americans. And I will always be President for all Americans because I believe in America. I believe in you, the American people.

You are the reason I have never been more optimistic about our future than I am now, so let's build the future together.

Let's remember who we are. We are the United States of America, and there is nothing—nothing beyond our capacity when we act together.

God bless you all, and may God protect our troops.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.
(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 10 o'clock and 57 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet;

The Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court;

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

JOINT SESSION DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 10 o'clock and 57 minutes p.m., the joint session of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the message of the President be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered printed.

The motion was agreed to.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Kevin F. McCumber, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly an enrolled bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 7454. An Act to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, March 8, 2024, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-3323. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — FY23 Guidelines for Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Grant [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-12] received February 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3324. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-12] received February 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3325. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — FY23 Guidelines for Brownfield Cleanup Grants [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-09] received February 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3326. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — FY23 Guidelines for Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-08] received February 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3327. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — FY23 Guidelines for Brownfield Assessment Grants (Community-Wide Assessment Grants for States and Tribes) [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-06] received February 9, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3328. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — Consumer Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) Grant Program [EPA-I-OLEM-ORCR-23-02] received February 15, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3329. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for application — FY24 Guidelines for Technical Assistance to Existing and Potential Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grant Recipients [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-24-01] received February 15, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3330. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — FY24 Guidelines for Brownfield Cleanup Grants [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-23-15] received February 15, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3331. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — FY24 Guidelines for Brownfields Assessment Grants (Community-Wide Assessment Grants for States and Tribes) [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-23-14] received February 15, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3332. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's request for applications — FY24 Brownfields Job Training (JT) Grants [EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-23-08] received February 15, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 6316. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to establish an expiration date of certain committee resolutions with respect to leases or projects, and for other purposes (Rept. 118-413). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 6277. A bill to amend the Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act of 2016 to improve such Act, and for other purposes (Rept. 118-414). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. House Concurrent Resolution 83. Resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition (Rept. 118-415). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2925. A bill to amend the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 to provide for security of tenure for use of mining claims for ancillary activities, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118-416). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.