

Full Transcript of President Trump's State of the Union Address

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President Trump delivered the first [State of the Union address](#) of his second term on Tuesday to a joint session of Congress. The following is a transcript of his remarks, as recorded by The New York Times.

Well, thank you very much, everybody. It's really an honor. Speaker Johnson. Vice President Vance. First lady of the United States. Second lady of the United States.

Members of Congress and my fellow Americans, our nation is back, bigger, better, richer and stronger than ever before.

Less than five months from now, our country will celebrate an epic milestone of American history: the 250th anniversary of our glorious American independence. This July 4, we will mark two-and-a-half centuries of liberty and triumph, progress and freedom in the most incredible and exceptional nation ever to exist on the face of the Earth.

And you've seen nothing yet. We are going to do better and better and better. This is the golden age of America.

When I last spoke in this chamber 12 months ago, I had just inherited a nation in crisis with a stagnant economy, inflation at record levels, a wide open border, horrendous recruitment for military and police, rampant crime at home, and wars and chaos all over the world. But tonight, after just one year, I can say with dignity and pride that we have achieved a transformation like no one has ever seen before and a turnaround for the ages. It is indeed a turnaround for the ages.

And we will never go back to where we were just a very short time ago. We are not going back. Today, our border is secure.

Thank you. Today, our border is secure, our spirit is restored, inflation is plummeting, incomes are rising fast. The roaring economy is roaring like never before, and our enemies are scared, our military and police are stacked, and America is respected again, perhaps, like never before.

After four years, in which millions and millions of illegal aliens poured across our borders totally unvetted and unchecked, we now have the strongest and most secure border in American history by far. In the past nine months, zero illegal aliens have been admitted to the United States.

But we will always allow people to come in legally. People that will love our country and will work hard to maintain our country.

The flow of deadly fentanyl across our border is down by a record 56 percent, in one year.

And last year, the murder rate saw its single largest decline in recorded history. This is the biggest decline, think of it, in recorded history. The lowest number in over 125 years — year 1900. In fact, substantially before my wonderful father — I had a wonderful father, Fred — before he was born, substantially before he was born. That's a long time ago. He wouldn't like me to say that, but that's a long time ago.

The Biden administration and its allies in Congress gave us the worst inflation in the history of our country. But in 12 months, my administration has driven core inflation down to the lowest level in more than five years. And in the last three months of 2025, it was down to 1.7 percent.

Gasoline, which reached a peak of over \$6 a gallon in some states under my predecessor — it was quite honestly a disaster — is now below \$2.30 a gallon in most states. And in some places, \$1.99 a gallon. And when I visited the great state of Iowa just a few weeks ago, I even saw \$1.85 a gallon for gasoline.

Mortgage rates are the lowest in four years and falling fast, and the annual cost of a typical new mortgage is down almost \$5,000 just since I took office. One year.

And low interest rates will solve the Biden-created housing problem while at the same time protecting the values of those people who already own a house that really feel rich for the first time in their lives. We want to protect those values; we want to keep those values up. We are going to do both. And we are going to keep it that way.

The stock market is at 53 — all-time record highs since the election. Think of that. One year. Boosting pensions, 401(k)s and retirement accounts with millions and millions of Americans. They're all gaining. Everybody's up, way up. In four long years, the last administration got less than \$1 trillion in new investment in the United States. And when I say less, substantially less.

In 12 months, I secured commitments for more than \$18 trillion, pouring in from all over the globe.

Think of it. Much less than \$1 trillion for four years versus much more than \$18 trillion for one year. What a difference a president makes.

A short time ago, we were a dead country. Now we are the hottest country anywhere in the world. The hottest.

As thousands of new businesses are forming, and factories, plants and laboratories are being built, we've added 70,000 new construction jobs in just a very short period of time.

It's getting bigger and bigger and stronger. Nobody can believe what they're watching. American oil production is up by more than 600,000 barrels a day, and we just received from our new friend and partner Venezuela more than 80 million barrels of oil.

American natural gas production is at an all-time high because I kept my promise to drill, baby, drill.

More Americans are working today than at any time in the history of our country. Think about that: any time in the history of our country, more working today. And 100 percent of all jobs created under my administration have been in the private sector.

We ended D.E.I. in America.

We cut a record number of job-killing regulations. And in one year, we have lifted 2.4 million Americans, a record, off of food stamps.

And for all of these reasons I say tonight, members of Congress, the state of our union is strong.

Our country is winning again. In fact, we're winning so much that we really don't know what to do about it. People are asking me: "Please, please, please, Mr. President, we're winning too much; we can't take it anymore. We're not used to winning in our country. Until you came along, we were just always losing, but now we are winning too much."

And I say, "No, no, no, you're going to win again. You are going to win big. You are going to win bigger than ever." And to prove that point, to prove that point, here with us is a group of winners who just made the entire nation proud.

The men's gold medal Olympic hockey team, come on in.

Go ahead. They deserve it. They deserve it.

That's the first time I've ever seen them get up. And actually not all of them did get up. But they beat a fantastic Canadian team in overtime, as everybody saw. As did the American women, who will soon be coming to the White House.

They were in the Oval Office before.

And I just want to say a second, very big congratulations to Team U.S.A. But I have to say that, and I told them this, we took a vote of the team. I said, "Anybody votes no, I'm not doing it." They stood there. They weren't about to say no. Because I've never seen a goaltender play as well as goalie Connor Hellebuyck.

Think of it, 46 shots on goal. And I asked him, the one shot, the one where you put your stick in the back, and it hit the neck of your stick and bounced off. You practiced that, or was it a little lucky?

He refused to answer that question. But I just want to tell you that the members of this great hockey squad will be very happy to hear based on their vote and my vote — and in this case, my vote was more important — that I will soon be presenting Connor with our highest civilian honor, which we will be giving, and which has been given to many athletes over the years.

But when I say many, not too many, like 12. It's called the highest civilian honor in our country, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Great athletes have gotten that, very great, the best. And I thought he deserved it. And I did take a vote, every single one of them. I said, "I'm not giving it if anybody goes no," and every single one of them rapidly put up their hand. So I want to thank you all. What a special job you did. What special champions you are. Thank you very much.

I'm also pleased to say that the next time the Olympic torch is lit, it will be here in America for the 2028 Olympics, and it is the summer version right in Los Angeles. We're going to do a good job in Los Angeles.

And Los Angeles is going to be safe, just like Washington, D.C., is now one of the safest cities in the country.

And this year — and I must say I got them both, I got them in the first term — I was disappointed because I didn't think I'd be the president when this happened. But strange things took place, and now I got them, because I got the Olympics, and I got the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and I wanted to claim the 250th, but I didn't get away with that one. I couldn't claim that one for myself.

But we're getting the World Cup, so we have the World Cup and the Olympics coming, and that is exciting news. So this will be a year to celebrate our country and the heroes who have kept it free.

Men like Buddy Taggart. At age 17, Buddy volunteered to defend America in World War II. Serving in the Pacific under the great Gen. Douglas MacArthur, he fought bravely in the famous Battle of Manila. Worked so hard. He was badly wounded and almost killed by enemy machine guns in Luzon. And 81 years ago this month, he liberated the largest internment camp in the Philippines. One of the largest anywhere in the world.

But he earned many honors, including a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star, came home, started a family, and tonight he is in the gallery looking forward to July 4, 2026, his 100th birthday.

So, Buddy, you're a brave man, and we salute you.

Even in times of challenge, setback and immense heartache, the spirit of 1776 has always shown through very brightly. It was July 4 of last year when floodwaters tore through a girls' summer camp in central Texas. One of the worst things I've ever seen. I was there.

Rising 26 feet in the matter of minutes, tragically claiming many, many lives. You all remember that one. As the waters threatened to sweep her away, 11-year-old Milly Cate McClymond closed her eyes and prayed to God. She thought she was going to die.

Those prayers were answered when Coast Guard rescue swimmer Scott Ruskan descended from a helicopter above. Nobody knew where he came from. It was Scott's first-ever rescue mission. Young guy. Very brave. Very, very top. Always top of his class. And he lifted not just Milly Cate, but 164 others to safety. People watched Scott from a distance, and they couldn't believe what they were seeing.

The winds were blowing. The rain was pouring. Everything was going, and that rapid water, nobody had ever seen anything like it. They said, "Wow, that's something!" Tonight, Scott and Milly Cate are here together, reunited for the very first time. Thank you, Scott, Milly Cate.

And Petty Officer Ruskan, I am pleased to inform you that I'm now awarding you the Legion of Merit for extraordinary heroism, which is what it was. Extraordinary heroism. Thank you!

And I'd like to have the military aide to please come down and take care of this service. Military aide. Thank you. Take care of that very important service. Thank you very much.

From 1776 to today, every generation of Americans who step forward to defend life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and they're really doing it for the next generation. But now it's our turn. Together, we're building a nation where every child has the chance to reach higher and go further. Where government answers to the people, not the powerful, and where the interests of hard-working American citizens are always our first and ultimate concern.

That is the debt we owe to the heroes who came before us, and that is the promise we must keep to America for our 250th year.

Last year, I urged this Congress to begin the mission by passing the largest tax cuts in American history, and our Republican majorities delivered so beautifully. Thank you, Republicans!

All Democrats, every single one of them, voted against these really important and very necessary massive tax cuts. They wanted large-scale tax increases to hurt the people instead.

But we held strong, and with the great Big Beautiful Bill, we gave you no tax on tips, no tax on overtime and no tax on Social Security for our great seniors. And we also made interest on auto loans tax-deductible. The first time. But only if the car is made in America. Recently in Pennsylvania, I met Megan Hemhauser, a devoted mom who's — home-schools her children. Beautiful. Two children.

During the day, while waiting tables at night, as her husband works overtime operating very heavy equipment — Megan is here this evening, and she's happy to tell you that she is so, so much richer, because with no tax on tips, no tax on overtime and her expanded child tax credit done again by Republicans, Megan and her husband will take home more than \$5,000 extra just for the year, cutting her tax bill in more than half.

Megan, please stand up! We're fighting for you, Megan! Thank you, Megan. Thank you, Megan. We're fighting for you, Megan. Under our bill, parents like Megan can also activate their children's brand-new Trump accounts.

And I didn't name it. I didn't name it. I did not name that. Nobody believes me, but I did not name it. It was named by a very tall man sitting right there in the third row. Nice man, a good man. Tax-free investment accounts for every American child. This is something that's so special. It has taken off and gone through the roof. Millions will be prefunded courtesy of the U.S. Treasury, and private individuals like Michael and Susan Dell, who have donated \$6,250,000,000 to fund the Trump accounts for 25 million American children. They're great people.

You know, I asked Michael, "How do you make all that money?" He said, "Well, I just sat in my dorm in school, and I made computers, and I'd sell them to people. And I just kept selling and selling and selling." And, pretty amazing story. That's called the American dream. He sold a lot of computers, a lot of those laptops.

So I congratulate him on that, but I really thank him and Susan, as well as others like Brad Gerstner, a very tremendous guy. He was behind it right from the beginning. Brad

Gerstner. Thank you, Brad. So with modest, additional contributions, these young people's accounts could grow to over \$100,000 or more by the time they turn 18.

Think of it. How much money is that for somebody that started with nothing? Over a hundred thousand, could be much more than that. To make this investment in our children's future, go to trumpaccounts.gov, trumpaccounts.gov. And a lot of people are doing it. That's setting every record in the book. It's popular. They knew what was going to — what it was going to take. So proud of them. I'm so proud of the people that got it started. Now it's just taken off.

One of the primary reasons for our country's stunning economic turnaround — the biggest in history, where the Dow Jones broke 50,000, four years ahead of schedule, and the S&P hit 7,000, where it wasn't supposed to do it for many years — were tariffs. I use these tariffs, took in hundreds of billions of dollars to make great deals for our country, both economically and on a national security basis.

Everything was working well. Countries that were ripping us off for decades are now paying us hundreds of billions of dollars. They were ripping us so badly. You all know that. Everybody knows it. Even Democrats know it. They just don't want to say it. And yet these countries are now happy, and so are we. We made deals. The deals are all done. And they're happy. They're not making money like they used to, but we're making a lot of money.

There was no inflation, tremendous growth. And the big story was how Donald Trump called the economy correctly, and 22 Nobel Prize winners in economics didn't. They got it totally wrong. They got it really wrong. And then just four days ago an unfortunate ruling from the United States Supreme Court, it just came down, came down.

Very unfortunate ruling. But the good news is that almost all countries and corporations want to keep the deal that they already made, right, Scott? Knowing that the legal power that I as president have to make a new deal could be far worse for them. And therefore they will continue to work along the same successful path that we had negotiated before the Supreme Court's unfortunate involvement.

So despite the disappointing ruling, these powerful, country-saving — it's saving our country, the kind of money we're taking in — peace protecting — many of the wars I settled was because of the threat of tariffs. I wouldn't have been able to settle them without — will remain in place under fully approved and tested alternative legal statutes, and they've been tested for a long time. They're a little more complex, but they're actually probably better. Leading to a solution that will be even stronger than before.

Congressional action will not be necessary. It's already time-tested and approved. And as time goes by, I believe the tariffs, paid for by foreign countries, will, like in the past, substantially replace the modern-day system of income tax, taking a great financial burden off the people that I love.

Right? Moving forward, factories, jobs, investment and trillions and trillions of dollars will continue pouring into the United States of America. Because we finally have a president who puts America first. I put America first. I love America.

For decades, before I came along, we had the exact opposite. From trade to health care, from energy to immigration, everything was stolen and rigged in order to drain the wealth

out of the productive and hard-working people who make our country great, who make our country run.

Under Biden and his corrupt partners in Congress and beyond, it reached a breaking point with the “Green New Scam,” open borders for everyone. They poured in by the millions and millions from prisons, from mental institutions. There were murderers, 11,888 murders. They came into our country. You allowed that to happen. And record-setting inflation that cost the typical family \$34,000 in just a speck of time.

Now the same people in this chamber who voted for those disasters suddenly use the word “affordability.” A word, they just used it. Somebody gave it to them, knowing full well that they caused and created the increased prices that all of our citizens had to endure. You caused that problem. You caused that problem.

They knew their statements were a lie. They knew it. They knew their statements were a dirty, rotten lie. Their policies created the high prices. Our policies are rapidly ending them. We are doing really well. Those prices are plummeting downward.

The price of eggs is down 60 percent. Madam Secretary, thank you. The cost of chicken, butter, fruit, hotels, automobiles, rent is lower today than when I took office, by a lot.

And even beef, which was very high, is starting to come down significantly. Just hold on a little while. We’re getting it down. And soon you will see numbers that few people would think were possible to achieve just a short time ago. Nobody can believe when they see the kind of numbers, especially energy. When they see energy going down to numbers like that. They cannot believe it. It’s like another big tax cut.

I’m also confronting one of the biggest rip-offs of our times: the crushing costs of health care, caused by you. Since the passage of the “Unaffordable Care Act,” sometimes referred to as Obamacare, big insurance companies have gotten rich. It was meant for the insurance companies, not for the people. With our government giving them hundreds and hundreds of billions of dollars a year as their stock prices soared 1,000, 1,200, 1,400 and even 1,700 percent, like nothing else.

That’s why I introduced the “Great Health Care Plan.” I want to stop all payments to big insurance companies and instead, give that money directly to the people so they can buy their own health care, which will be better health care at a much lower cost.

In addition, my plan requires maximum price transparency. That’s a big deal. Sounds so simple, so big. And I did that in my first term, and the Democrats immediately terminated it with full knowledge that they were doing a very bad thing for the people. Costs were going to go way up, and that’s what happened, and now I’m bringing them way down on health care and everything else.

I’m also ending the wildly inflated costs of prescription drugs like has never happened before.

Other presidents tried to do it, but they never could. They tried. Most didn’t try, actually. But they tried. They said they tried. They couldn’t do it. They didn’t even come close. They were all talk and no action. But I got it done. Under my just-enacted, most favored nation agreements, Americans who have for decades paid by far the highest prices of any nation

anywhere in the world for prescription drugs will now pay the lowest price anywhere in the world for drugs, anywhere. The lowest price.

So, in my first year of the second term — it should be my third term, but strange things happened. I took prescription drugs, a very big part of health care, from the highest price in the entire world to the lowest. That's a big achievement. The result is price differences of 300, 400, 500, 600 percent and more — all available right now at a new website called trumprx.gov. And I didn't name that one either, by the way.

And here tonight is the very first customer ever to get that big discount. And it is big. Catherine Rayner. For five years, she and her husband have struggled with infertility, and they turned to IVF. One drug has been costing Catherine \$4,000 to purchase.

But a few weeks ago, she logged onto the TrumpRx website and got that same drug that cost \$4,000, got it for under \$500 — a reduction of much more, actually, than \$3,500. Catherine, we are all praying for you, and you are going to be a great mom.

So now I'm calling on Congress to codify my most favored nation program into law.

Now the one thing, I'm not sure it matters, because it's going to be very hard for somebody that comes along after me to say, "Let's raise drug prices by 700 or 800 percent." But John and Mike, if you don't mind, codify it anyway. They may do it. Codify it anyway. Thank you.

Many Americans are also concerned that energy demand from AI data centers could unfairly drive up their electric utility bills. Tonight I'm pleased to announce that I have negotiated the new ratepayer protection pledge. You know what that is. We're telling the major tech companies that they have the obligation to provide for their own power needs.

They can build their own power plants as part of their factory, so that no one's prices will go up, and in many cases prices of electricity will go down for the community, and very substantially down. This is a unique strategy never used in this country before.

We have an old grid. It could never handle the kind of numbers, the amount of electricity that's needed. So I'm telling them they can build their own plant. They're going to produce their own electricity. It will ensure the company's ability to get electricity while at the same time lowering prices of electricity for you, and could be very substantial, for all of your cities and towns. You are going to see good things happen over the next number of years.

Another pillar of the American dream that has been under attack is homeownership.

With us tonight is Raysall Wiggins, a mom of two from Houston. She placed bids on 20 homes and lost all of those bids to gigantic investment firms that bypassed inspection. Paid all cash and turned those houses into rentals, stealing away her American dream. She was devastated. Stories like this are why last month I signed executive order to ban large Wall Street investment firms from buying up, in the thousands, single family homes.

And now I'm asking Congress to make that ban permanent, because homes for people — really, that's what we want. We want homes for people, not for corporations. Corporations are doing just fine. Raysall, thank you very much. Good luck with your home. You'll get one soon.

We're also making it easier for Americans to save for retirement, and under this administration, we will always protect Social Security and Medicare. They are not protecting it for our seniors. We will always protect Social Security, Medicare — Medicare.

Since I took office, the typical 401(k) balance is up by at least \$30,000. That's a lot of money. We have millions and millions of people, because the stock market has done so well, setting all those records — your 401(k)s are way up. Yet half of all of working Americans still do not have access to a retirement plan with matching contributions from an employer.

To remedy this gross disparity, I'm announcing that next year, my administration will give these often forgotten American workers — great people, the people that built our country — access to the same type of retirement plan offered to every federal worker. We will match your contribution with up to \$1,000 each year, as we ensure that all Americans can profit from a rising stock market.

Let's also ensure that members of Congress cannot corruptly profit from using insider information.

They stood up for that. I can't believe it. I can't believe it. Did Nancy Pelosi stand up, if she's here? Doubt it. Pass the Stop Insider Trading Act without delay. I wasn't sure if anybody even on this side was even going to applaud for that. I'm very impressed. Thank you. I'm very impressed.

But when it comes to the corruption that is plundering — it really, it's plundering America — there's been no more stunning example than Minnesota, where members of the Somali community have pillaged an estimated \$19 billion from the American taxpayer. Oh, we have all the information.

And in actuality the number is much higher than that, and California, Massachusetts, Maine and many other states are even worse. This is the kind of corruption that shreds the fabric of a nation, and we are working on it like you wouldn't believe. So tonight, although started four months ago, I am officially announcing the war on fraud to be led by our great vice president, JD Vance.

He'll get it done. And we're able to find enough of that fraud — we will actually have a balanced budget overnight. It'll go very quickly. That's the kind of money you're talking about. We'll balance our budget. The Somali pirates who ransacked Minnesota remind us that there are large parts of the world where bribery, corruption and lawlessness are the norm, not the exception.

Importing these cultures through unrestricted immigration and open borders brings those problems right here to the U.S.A. And it is the American people who pay the price in higher medical bills, car insurance rates, rent, taxes and, perhaps most importantly, crime.

We will take care of this problem. We're going to take care of this problem. We are not playing games. Dalilah — Dalilah Coleman was only 5 years old in June 2024 when an 18-wheel tractor-trailer plowed into her stopped car traveling at 60 miles an hour or more. The driver was an illegal alien let in by Joe Biden and given a commercial driver's license by open borders, politicians and California. Doctors said Dalilah would never be able to walk or talk, have a good life.

She wouldn't even be able to eat again. But against all odds, she is now in the first grade, learning to walk, and she is here this evening with her dad, Marcus, a fantastic man. Dalilah, please, you are a great inspiration. Please stand up. Thank you, Dalilah. Many, if not most, illegal aliens do not speak English and cannot read even the most basic road signs as to direction, speed, danger or location.

That's why tonight I'm calling on Congress to pass what we will call the Dalilah law, barring any state from granting commercial licenses to illegal alien.

And yesterday, as you probably saw at the White House, I hosted a ceremony with Americans who lost their treasured loved ones to the scourge of illegal immigration. People came into our country, how we allowed this to happen with our open borders. These are the angel moms and families that for decades our government betrayed and our media totally ignored — totally ignored, it was terrible. Hard to believe, actually.

In 2023, a 16-year-old high school cheerleader named Lizbeth Medina was supposed to perform in her town's Christmas parade. But she never arrived. Her mother, Jacqueline, went home to look for her and she found her lying dead in a bathtub bleeding profusely after being stabbed 25 times.

Lizbeth's killer was a previously arrested illegal alien who had broken in and bruta — just brutally extinguished the brightest light in her family's life. Violently and viciously. Her heartbroken mother is in the gallery to remind everyone in this chamber exactly why we are deporting illegal alien criminals from our country at record numbers and we're getting them the hell out of here fast. We don't want 'em.

Thank you very much, Jacqueline. Thank you. We can never forget that many in this room not only allowed the border invasion to happen before I got involved but, indeed, they would do it all over again if they ever had the chance.

If they ever got elected, they would open up those borders to some of the worst criminals anywhere in the world. The only thing standing between Americans and a wide-open border right now is President Donald J. Trump and our great Republican patriots in Congress. Thank you. Thank you.

As we speak, Democrats in this chamber have cut off all funding for the Department of Homeland Security. It's all cut off — it's all cut off. They have instituted another Democrat shutdown, the first one costing us two points on G.D.P. — two points we lost on G.D.P., which probably made them quite happy, actually.

Now they have closed the agency responsible for protecting Americans from terrorists and murderers.

Tonight I'm demanding the full and immediate restoration of all funding for the border security, homeland security of the United States and also for helping people clean up their snow.

We have no money because of the Democrats and it would be nice — we'd love to give you a hand at cleaning it up, but you gave no money. Nobody's getting paid. It's a shame. So you have to think about it. We have, in case you didn't know, pretty large snowstorm out there.

One of the great things about the State of the Union is how it gives Americans the chance to see clearly what their representatives really believe. So tonight I'm inviting every legislator to join with my administration in reaffirming a fundamental principle. If you agree with this statement, then stand up and show your support. The first duty of the American government is to protect American citizens. Not illegal aliens.

Isn't that a shame? You should be ashamed of yourself, not standing up. You should be ashamed of yourself.

That is why I'm also asking you to end deadly sanctuary cities that protect the criminals and enact serious penalties for public officials who block the removal of criminal aliens, in many cases drug lords, murderers all over our country. They're blocking the removal of these people out of our country and you should be ashamed of yourselves.

And perhaps most importantly, I'm asking you to approve the Save America Act. To stop illegal aliens and others, who are unpermitted persons, from voting in our sacred American elections. The cheating is rampant in our elections. It's rampant. It's very simple. All voters must show voter ID.

All voters must show proof of citizenship in order to vote. And no more crooked mail-in ballots except for illness, disability, military or travel. None. And this should be an easy one and by the way it's polling at 89 percent including Democrats, 89 percent.

And even the new communist mayor of New York City — I think he's a nice guy, actually. Speak to him a lot. Bad policy but nice guy — just said they want people to shovel snow. They got hit hard. Wants them to shovel snow. But if you apply for that job, you need to show two original forms of ID and a Social Security card. Yet they don't want identification for the greatest privilege of them all: Voting in America.

No, it's no good. No good. Both Republicans and Democrats overwhelmingly agree on the policy that we just enunciated, and Congress should unite and enact this common-sense, country-saving legislation right now and it should be before anything else happens.

And the reason they don't want to do it — why would anybody not want voter ID? One reason: because they want to cheat. There's only one reason. They make up all excuses. They say it's racist, they come up with things — you almost say, "What imagination they have." They want to cheat. They have cheated.

And their policy is so bad that the only way they can get elected is to cheat and we're going to stop it. We have to stop it, John. We have to stop it.

And here is one more opportunity to show common sense in government. In the gallery tonight are Sage Blair and her mother, Michelle. In 2021, Sage was 14 when school officials in Virginia sought to socially transition her to a new gender, treating her as a boy and hiding it from her parents. Hard to believe, isn't it? Before long, a confused Sage ran away from home.

After she was found in a horrific situation in Maryland, a left-wing judge refused to return Sage to her parents because they did not immediately state that their daughter was their son. Sage was thrown into an all-boys state home and suffered terribly for a long time. But today all of that is behind them because Sage is a proud and wonderful young woman with a full-ride scholarship to Liberty University. Sage and Michelle, please stand up.

And thank you for your great bravery, and who can believe we're even speaking about things like this? Fifteen years ago, if someone was up here and said that, they'd say: "What's wrong with him?" But now we have to say it, because it's going on all over, numerous states, without even telling the parents.

But surely we can all agree no state can be allowed to rip children from their parents' arms and transition them to a new gender against the parents' will. Who would believe that we're even talking about that? We must ban it, and we must ban it immediately.

Look, nobody stands up. These people are crazy, I'm telling you. They're crazy.

Amazing. Terrible. Boy, oh boy. We're lucky we have a country. With people like this — Democrats are destroying our country, but we've stopped it just in the nick of time, didn't we, huh?

No one cares more about protecting America's youth than our wonderful first lady. Now a movie star; she's a movie star. Can you believe it? Who would've believed that? Over the past year, she has had an incredible impact championing A.I. legislation, advancing a landmark executive order on foster care and helping secure 30 million dollars to launch the Melania Trump Foster Youth to Independence Initiative.

It's a tremendous — really a tremendous thing that happened and had a lot of bipartisan support. She gets much better bipartisan support than I do. I get none. She gets a lot. Someday you're going to have to tell me how you did that.

And students and educators in every state have joined the first lady's efforts in the presidential A.I. challenge, keeping America's next generation positioned to succeed and strongly succeed in the future. Tonight we welcome two young people whose lives reflect the first lady's impact, Sierra Burns and Everest Nevraumont. Thank you both, and Melania, thank you, I know how hard you worked on it. Thank you very much.

I'm very proud to say that during my time in office, both the first four years and in particular this last year, there has been a tremendous renewal in religion, faith, Christianity and belief in God. Tremendous renewal.

This is especially true among young people and a big part of that had to do with my great friend, Charlie Kirk. A great guy, great man.

So last year Charlie was violently murdered by an assassin and martyred — really, martyred — for his beliefs. His wonderful wife Erika is with us tonight. Erika, please stand.

Thank you, Erika. Been through a lot. In Charlie's memory, we must all come together to reaffirm that America is one nation under God, and we must totally reject political violence of any kind.

We love religion, and we love bringing it back, and it's coming back at levels nobody actually thought possible. It's really a beautiful thing to see.

Above all, unleashing America's promise requires keeping our community safe. We have made incredible strides, yet dangerous repeat offenders continue to be released by pro-crime Democrat politicians again and again. We are honored to be joined tonight by a woman who has been through hell: Anya Zarutka. In 2022, she and her beautiful

daughter — so beautiful, what a beautiful young woman — Iryna fled war-torn, war-torn Ukraine to live with relatives near Charlotte, N.C. — and by the way, what's going on with Charlotte?

Last summer, 23-year-old Iryna was riding home on the train when a deranged monster who had been arrested over a dozen times and was released through no-cash bail stood up and viciously slashed a knife through her neck and body. No one will ever forget — there were people on that train — no one will ever forget the expression of terror on Iryna's face as she looked up at her attacker in the last seconds of her life. She died instantly. She had escaped a brutal war only to be slain by a hardened criminal set free to kill in America. Came in through open borders.

Mrs. Zarutka, tonight I promise you we will ensure justice for your magnificent daughter Iryna.

How do you not stand? How do you not stand? I'm asking this Congress to pass tough legislation to make sure violent and dangerous repeat offenders are put behind bars, and importantly, that they stay there.

Starting last summer, I deployed our National Guard and federal law enforcement to restore law and order to our most dangerous cities, including Memphis, Tennessee — big success — New Orleans, Louisiana — big success — and our nation's capital itself, Washington, D.C., where we have almost no crime anymore in Washington, D.C. How did that happen?

In fact, crime in Washington is now at the lowest level ever recorded and murders in D.C. this January were down close to 100 percent from a year ago.

They don't like to hear that. One of the — sick people. One of the brave service members who helped achieve the stunning turnaround was 20-year-old West Virginia Army National Guard Specialist Sarah Beckstrom.

After a four-month deployment, she voluntarily extended her service and her rank was going to be lifted. She was doing so well. They were so proud of her. But the very next day she was on patrol near the White House when she was ambushed and shot in the head by a terrorist monster from Afghanistan. Shouldn't have been in our country. And all because she wore the uniform of our nation, she was shot. He traveled here because he didn't like people wearing our uniform. He was sick and deranged. Shouldn't have been in our country. Sarah Beckstrom died in order to defend our capital and we are honored to be joined by her wonderful parents, Gary and Evalea. Your daughter was a true American patriot and she will be greatly missed. She was a great person. I saw reports on her. They'd never seen anything like that.

So sorry. Thank you very much. A great young lady. I saw reports. They were like, "She was perfect, perfect."

Serving alongside Sarah that day was Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe. The terrorist shot Andrew in the head, and no one thought he could possibly make it. Two of them, Sarah and Andrew, both shot violently in the head. Neither was expected to make it. They weren't even given a chance, except his wonderful mother named Melody, who I spoke to the same night and she was so positive.

The doctors thought that Andrew was gone. But his mother said, “No, no, Mr. President! Andrew will be fine, he is going to make it.” I’ve never seen anything like it. I mean, he was given almost no chance. She said, “I have no doubt, sir! He’s going to be OK.” This is a conversation I had with her that night with her son laying helplessly in bed, blood all over.

“Everybody’s praying,” she said. “Sir, he will be OK.” The doctors didn’t understand what she was saying. And after looking at the results of the damage done, neither did I. She was so strong and conclusive that even Andrew’s great father felt she didn’t really understand the gravity of the situation. But she turned out to be right. Right, Melody? She turned out to be right!

Amazing, actually. I said, “Where does this woman come from?” She was the most positive person I’ve ever met. With God’s help, Andrew has battled back from the edge of death, and we’re talking about the edge of death. On his way to a miraculous recovery. He’s got a little work to do, but he’s doing great!

Nice to see. He’s a good-looking guy. Nice to see you. Thanks, Andrew. Thank you very much.

So Andrew, while you’re up, now I’m going to ask a highly respected general, James Seward, to present Staff Sgt. Andrew Wolfe and the great family of Sarah Beckstrom with the award created by our late great president, George Washington himself. It’s called the Purple Heart.

We love you all! Love you. We’re proudly restoring safety for Americans at home, and we are also restoring security for Americans abroad.

Our country has never been stronger. My first 10 months I ended eight wars, including Cambodia. Isn’t it funny? Sick people. Cambodia and Thailand. Pakistan and India. Would have been a nuclear war. 35 million people said the prime minister of Pakistan would have died if it were not for my involvement. Kosovo and Serbia. Israel and Iran. Egypt and Ethiopia. Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Congo and Rwanda. And, of course, the war in Gaza, which proceeds at a very low level, it’s just about there. I want to thank Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner for your help. Thank you, Steve. Thank you, Jared.

And I also want to thank the man they report to, Secretary of State Marco Rubio! Thank you, Marco. People like you! You know, Marco got 100 percent of the votes when he was in confirm — I think our next one was about 54 percent. And some of the Democrats are now saying, “I can’t believe we approved that guy!”

And he said, “It’s an honor that they feel that way.” Right, Marco? You have done a great job. Great secretary of state. I think he’ll go down as the best ever.

Under the cease-fire I negotiated, every single hostage, both living and dead, has been returned home. Can you believe this? Nobody thought it was possible. Nobody thought that was possible. Both living and dead. And those parents who had a dead son. Their boy. They’d always tell me, their boy. They wanted him as much as though he were living. That was an amazing period of time.

They came back, and when we got all the living hostages back. And many, many before them. But I always said those last 20 are going to be very tough. But we got many, many more. Hundreds. But I said those last 20 are going to be tough. We got them back, but we

only got back 14 or 15 of the dead, of the 28, and believe it or not, Hamas worked along with Israel, and they dug and they dug and they dug.

It's a tough, it's a tough thing to do, going through bodies all over. Passing up 100 bodies sometimes for each one they found, a tough job. They finally got it back to 27 and then, Steve and Jared, they got it back to 28, they found all 28, nobody thought that was possible but we did it. I remember the family of the 28th, they were so grieved but they were so happy, as happy as it was possible to be. They had their boy back. The mother said, "Sir, we have our boy back."

We got them all back, so thank you very much. And we're working very hard to end the ninth war, the killing and slaughter between Russia and Ukraine, where 25,000 soldiers are dying each and every month. Think of that, 25,000 soldiers dying a month. A war which would never have happened if I were president, would never have happened.

As president, I will make peace wherever I can, but I will never hesitate to confront threats to America wherever we must. That's why in a breakthrough operation last June, the United States military obliterated Iran's nuclear weapons program with an attack on Iranian soil known as Operation Midnight Hammer. For decades, it had been the policy of the United States never to allow Iran to obtain a nuclear weapon, many decades.

Since they seized control of that proud nation 47 years ago, the regime and its murderous proxies have spread nothing but terrorism and death and hate. They've killed and maimed thousands of American service members and even millions of people with what's called roadside bombs, they were the kings of the roadside bomb. And we took out Suleimani, I did that during my first term, it had a huge impact. He was the father of the roadside bomb.

And just over the last couple of months with the protests, they've killed at least, it looks like 32,000 protesters, 32,000 protesters in their own country. They shot them and hung them. We stopped them from hanging a lot of them with the threat of serious violence, but this is some terrible people.

They've already developed missiles that can threaten Europe and our bases overseas, and they're working to build missiles that will soon reach the United States of America. After Midnight Hammer, they were warned to make no future attempts to rebuild their weapons program, in particular nuclear weapons, yet they continue. They're starting it all over.

We wiped it out, and they want to start over again, and are at this moment again pursuing their sinister ambitions. We are in negotiations with them; they want to make a deal but we haven't heard those secret words: "We will never have a nuclear weapon."

My preference — my preference is to solve this problem through diplomacy. But one thing is certain, I will never allow the world's No. 1 sponsor of terror, which they are by far, to have a nuclear weapon, can't let that happen.

And no nation should ever doubt America's resolve. We have the most powerful military on Earth. I rebuilt the military in my first term. We are going to continue to do so. I also, we just approved a trillion-dollar budget, we have no choice, we have to be strong because hopefully we will seldom have to use this great power that we've built together. It's really called peace through strength, and it's been very, very effective.

Thanks to Republicans in Congress we are investing a record number of dollars — have no choice — in the United States armed forces, also creating a lot of jobs, but we are not even doing it for that reason because as I said, we have more jobs, more people working today than ever before in the history of our country.

And NATO countries, our friends and allies, they are, they are friends and they are allies, they just agreed at my strong request to pay 5 percent of G.D.P. for military defense rather than the 2 percent, which they weren't paying, we were paying for almost all of NATO. Now they are paying five as opposed to not paying three.

And getting that 5 percent was something which everyone said would never be done, could not happen, we got it really easily in one meeting, and a big difference between 2 percent that's not paid, we were paying [inaudible] many of them, very few were paid up, now 5 percent then they're paid, and everything we send over to Ukraine is sent through NATO, and they pay us in full. They pay us totally in full, every branch of our armed forces is setting records for recruitment. This is so exciting, and every service member recently —

And every service member recently received a warrior dividend of \$1,776. You know they put it on my desk, we got the money from tariffs and other things, a lot of money.

We have, we have much more money than people understand, have to rebuild that program a little bit, but it won't take long. But we got the money, \$1,775 and I — they wanted my approval, and I said, "What's the number?" \$1,775.

Well, I said, "Wait a minute, for one more dollar we can have \$1,776." I said we were going to figure that out. I never asked anybody if we could afford it, one more dollar, I said, "1,776." And I said, that's good. I'll tell you what, our military, that was four months ago, our military, I've never see a person in the military that doesn't thank me for it, so we're honored to do it, they deserve it, and 1776, that was great and we love our military, we love our law enforcement, we love our firemen. You know the firemen don't get mentioned enough, we love our firemen. We're also —

We are also restoring American security and dominance in the Western Hemisphere, acting to secure our national interest and defend our country from violence, drugs, terrorism and foreign interference. For years, large swaths of territory in our region, including large parts of Mexico, really large parts of Mexico, have been controlled by murderous drug cartels. That's why I designated these cartels as foreign terrorist organizations and I declared illicit fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction.

With our new military campaign we have stopped record amounts of drugs coming into our country and virtually stopped it completely coming in by water or sea, you probably noticed that.

We very seriously damaged their fishing industry also — nobody wants to go fishing anymore. We've also taken down one of the most sinister cartel kingpins of all — you saw that yesterday. In January, in January, elite American warriors carried out one of the most complex spectacular feats of military competence and power in world history. No one's seen anything like it. Foreign leaders — I won't tell you — called me and they said, "Very impressive." They couldn't believe — they all watched, they saw what happened.

This is a different fighting force than we had years ago when we fought to tie. It's a great fighting force. I'm so proud of it.

Look at Space Force. Space Force is my baby, we did that, my baby, it's becoming so important.

And America's armed forces overwhelmed all defenses and not only defeated an enemy — good fighters — to end the reign of outlaw dictator Nicolás Maduro and bring him to face American justice. And this was an absolutely colossal victory for the security of the United States, and it also opens up a bright new beginning for the people of Venezuela.

We're working closely with the new president of Venezuela, Delcy Rodríguez, to unleash extraordinary economic gains for both of our countries and to bring new hope to those who have suffered so terribly. They really did suffer.

With us tonight is Alejandro Gonzalez, she grew up in a tight-knit Venezuelan family and was especially close to her beloved Uncle Enrique. But after Enrique ran for office and opposed Maduro, he was captured by Maduro's security forces and thrown into the regime's really infamous prison in Caracas.

Alejandro feared she would never see her uncle again. She feared for her own life also. But since the raid, we have worked with the new leadership and they have ordered the closure of that vile prison and released hundreds of political prisoners already, with more to come.

Alejandra, I'm pleased to inform you that not only has your uncle been released but he's here tonight. We brought him over to celebrate his freedom with you in person. Enrique, please come down.

Thank you, Enrique. Have a good time. Nice to have you back, Enrique.

There were many heroes on that January raid to capture Maduro, really great heroes. It was very dangerous, they knew we were coming. They were all set. But the deeds of one warrior that night will live forever in the eternal chronicles of military valor.

Chief Warrant Officer Five, Eric Slover, planned the mission and was the flight lead in the cockpit of the first helicopter, a big, beautiful, powerful helicopter. It was a massive Chinook, carrying, as you can imagine, many, many American war fighters. Wearing the dog tags his wife Amy had blessed with holy water before he left — she knew it was going to be a rough one.

Eric steered the Chinook under the cover of night and descended swiftly upon Maduro's heavily protected military fortress — this was a major military installation protected by thousands of soldiers and guarded by Russian and Chinese military technology.

How did that work out? Not too good. While preparing to land, enemy machine guns fired from every angle and Eric was hit very badly in the leg and hip, one bullet after another. He absorbed four agonizing shots, shredding his leg into numerous pieces.

And yet despite the fact that the use of his legs was vital to a successful helicopter flight, like I said, the most important part of flying a helicopter — to deliver the many commandos who would capture and detain Maduro was the only thing Eric was thinking about. Then even as he was gushing blood, which was flowing back down the aisle, the helicopter lands at a steep angle, the machine guns stood right in front of him — they were right in front of him, two machine gunners who escaped the wrath of the previous planes.

Eric maneuvered his helicopter with all of those lives and souls to face the enemy and let his gunners eliminate the threat. Turned the helicopter around so the gunners could take care of business, saving the lives of his fellow warriors from what could've been a catastrophic crash deep in enemy territory.

Only after safely landing the helicopter with all the warriors aboard in the exact right spot, which was vital to the mission — probably would have had — maybe cancel the mission if that didn't happen — Eric told his co-pilot, also wounded, but not as gravely, to take over. "I am about ready to pass out."

The success of the entire mission and the lives of his fellow warriors hinge on Eric's ability to take searing pain. It was unbelievable, what's happened to his legs — of the bullets, and keep on flying and landing. And people knew what was happening. Everybody in the back of the helicopter knew, because they saw the blood pouring down the aisle.

Chief Warrant Officer Slover is still recovering from his serious wounds, but I'm thrilled to say that he is here tonight with his wife, Amy. Eric and Amy, come on in.

So we have a surprise, Eric and Amy. In recognition of Eric's actions above and beyond the call of duty, I would now like to ask General Jonathan Braga to present Chief Warrant Officer Slover with our nation's highest military award, the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Well thank you very much, Eric and Amy. Great to get to know you. I met with them and with a lot of their fellow warriors at Fort Bragg recently. You notice the name Fort Bragg? We have it back, we brought it back. We won the first World War with it, the second World War with it, and then they decided to change the name. So we changed it back. Everybody wanted it changed back, too. And 10 of Eric's fellow warriors from that incredible night of victory will also be receiving medals at a private ceremony that will soon be held at the White House.

Thank you, Eric. That's a big one.

Tonight we've celebrated many truly extraordinary American patriots. But there is one last living legend to honor before we go. He is one more heroic American aviator, Navy fighter pilot. Royce Williams served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam — flying more than 220 missions. In the skies over Korea in 1952, Royce was in the dogfight of a lifetime — legendary dogfight.

Flying through blizzard conditions, his squadron was ambushed by seven Soviet fighter planes. It was his first aerial combat of the war, and despite being massively outnumbered and outgunned, Royce led the takedown of four enemy jets, and almost destroyed the others, vanquishing his adversaries while taking 263 bullets to his own plane, and being seriously hurt.

His story was secret for over 50 years. He didn't even want to tell his wife. But the legend grew and grew. But tonight, at 100 years old, this brave Navy captain is finally getting the recognition he deserves. He was a legend long before this evening. Royce, please stand up, and I will ask the first lady of the United States to present Capt. Royce Williams with his Congressional Medal of Honor. Thank you.

I've always wanted the Congressional Medal of Honor, but I was informed I'm not allowed to give it to myself, and I wouldn't know why I would be taking it. But if they ever open up

that law, I will be there with you someday. That is our highest honor, the Congressional Medal of Honor. That's a big thing, and it's an honor to be in the same room with you. Thank you both very much. Eric, thank you. Thank you.

Two hundred fifty years is a long time in the life of a nation, but in another sense it is a mere moment in the eye of history. Two of the gentlemen we met in the gallery this evening took their first breaths one century ago. One hundred years before that, on July 4, 1826, the author of the Declaration of Independence, brilliant Thomas Jefferson, drew his last breath.

Just a single long human life span separates the giants who declared and won our independence from the heroes who stand among us tonight. Everything our nation has done and everything we've achieved has been the work of those few great lifetimes. Those brief chapters Americans built this nation from, 13 humble colonies, into the pinnacle of human civilization and human freedom, the strongest, wealthiest, most powerful, most successful nation in all of history.

Americans ventured out across the daunting and dangerous continent. We carved through an unforgiving wilderness, settled a boundless frontier and tamed the beautiful but very, very dangerous Wild West. From empty marshes and wide open plains, we raised up the world's greatest cities. Together, we mastered the world's mightiest industries and shattered histories, monstrous tyrannies, and we liberated millions from the chains of fascism, communism, oppression and terror.

Americans lifted humanity into the skies on the wings of aluminum and steel, and then we launched mankind into the stars on rockets powered by sheer American will and unyielding American pride. We wired the globe with our ingenuity, we captivated the planet with American culture, and now we are pioneering the next great American breakthroughs that will change the entire world.

All of this and so much more is the enduring legacy, unmatched glory, of the hard-working patriots who built and defended this country and who still carry the hopes and freedoms on all of humanity's backs. For years, they were forgotten, betrayed and cast aside, but that great betrayal is over, and they will never be forgotten again. Because when the world needs courage, daring, vision and inspiration, it is still turning to America, and when God needs a nation to work his miracles, he knows exactly who to ask.

There is no challenge Americans cannot overcome, no frontier too vast for us to conquer, no dream too bold for us to chase, no horizon too distant for us to claim. For our destiny is written by the hand of providence, and these first 250 years were just the beginning. From the rugged border towns of Texas to the heartland villages of Michigan, from the sun-kissed shores of Florida to the endless fields of the Dakotas, and from the historic streets of Philadelphia to right here in our nation's capital, Washington, D.C., the golden age of America is upon us.

The revolution that began in 1776 has not ended. It still continues, because the flame of liberty and independence still burns in the heart of every American patriot. And our future will be bigger, better, brighter, bolder and more glorious than ever before.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America. Thank you.