

President Donald Trump's 2026 State of the Union Address

(Delivered on Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2026)

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 in American history, the 250th anniversary of our glorious American independence. This July 4th, 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 we've seen nothing yet. We're going to do better and better and better. This is the golden age of America.

When I 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're not going back.

Today our border is secure. Today our border is secure, our spirit is restored, inflation is plummeting, incomes are rising fast, the roaring economy is roaring like never before, 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 unfettered 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. Deadly fentanyl across our border is down by a record 56% in one year. In the 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. In 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%.

Gasoline, which reached a peak of over \$6 a gallon in some states under my predecessor and 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, 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 lower 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're going to do both — and keep it that way. The stock market has set 53 all-time record highs since the election. Think of that, one year, boosting pensions, 401Ks and retirement accounts for the millions and the millions of Americans, they're all gaining. Everybody is 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 have added 70,000 new construction jobs in just a very short period of time. 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% of all jobs created under my administration have been in the private sector. We ended DEI 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're just always losing. But now we're winning too much. And I say, no, no, no, you're going to win again. You're going to win big. You're going to win bigger than ever. And to prove that point, to prove that point, here with us tonight 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. It'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 USA. But I have to say that - and I told them this and we took a vote of the team. I said, anybody votes no, I'm not doing it.

So 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 - one shot, the one where you put your stick in the back and it hit the neck of your stick and bounced off - you practice that? Or was that 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 given 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's 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. And I was disappointed because I didn't think I'd be the president when this happened. But strange things took place, and now I've got them because I got the Olympics. And I've 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 General Douglas MacArthur. He fought bravely in the famous Battle of Manila. He worked so hard he was badly wounded and almost killed by enemy machine guns at 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 4th, 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 shone through very brightly. It was July 4th 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 26ft 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 Ruskin descended from a helicopter above. Nobody knew where he came from. It was Scott's first ever rescue mission — young guy, but very brave, very, very top. Always top in 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's 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'm pleased to inform you that I am 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 very much. Take care of that very important service. Thank you very much.

From 1776 to today, every generation of Americans has step forward to defend life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And they were 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 hardworking 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 homeschools 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 our 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 did not. I did not name them. Nobody believes me, but I did not name it. It was named by a very tall man standing 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. Has taken off and gone through the roof. Millions will be refunded courtesy of the U.S. Treasury and private individuals like Michael and Susan Dell, who have donated 6 billion, 250 million dollars to fund the Trump accounts for 25 million American children. They're great people.

When I asked Michael Dell, "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 \$100,000, 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. They're 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. And 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 7000 where it wasn't supposed to do it for many years, were tariffs. I used 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 the 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 countries saving, is saving our country the kind of money we're taking in, peace protecting — many of the wars I've 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 have 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.

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, hardworking 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, they 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 used the word affordability, a word, they just used it because 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%, 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'll get that 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, and 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 cost 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%, 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 the 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 cost 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 my second term — should be my third term, but strange things happen — 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% 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're 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%. But, John and Mike, if you don't mind, codify it anyway, they may do it. Codify it anyway. Thank you. And 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 then.

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 these cities and towns, you're going to see some good things happen over the next number of years.

Another pillar of the American dream that has been under attack has been home ownership. With us tonight is Rachel 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 all 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 are buying up in the thousands single family homes.

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

We're also working to make 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, Medicaid. 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 oft-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 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, 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. 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 us problems right here to the USA. 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 five years old in June 2024, when a 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's 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 driver's licenses to illegal aliens.

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. 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 brutally, 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 are - 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. As we speak, Democrats in this chamber have cut off all funding for the Department of Homeland Security. It's all cut off, all cut off. They have instituted another Democrat shutdown, the first one costing us two points on GDP. Two points we lost on GDP, 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, a 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 and 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 yourself.

And perhaps most importantly, I'm asking you to approve the Safe 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, is polling at 89%, including Democrats, 89%. 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.

And here is one more opportunity to show common sense in government.

In the gallery tonight are Sage Blair and her mother, Michele. 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 Rachelle, please stand up. And thank you for your great bravery.

And who can believe that we're even speaking about things like this? 15 years ago, if somebody 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. They're not 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 it? We must ban it, and we must ban it immediately.

Nobody stands up, these people are crazy. I'm telling them they're crazy.

Amazing. 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?

No one cares more about protecting America's youth than our wonderful First Lady. Now a movie star, a movie star. Who would have believed that?

Over the past year, she has had an incredible impact championing AI legislation, advancing a landmark executive order on foster care, and helping secure \$30 million 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 gonna 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. I challenge keeping America's next generation position 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. 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. This is especially true among young people, and a big part of that had to do with my great friend Charlie Kirk. Great guy. Great guy.

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, thank you 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 that nobody actually thought possible. It's really a beautiful thing to see, above all, unleashing America's promise requires keeping our communities 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's 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, North Carolina. And by the way, what's going on with Charlotte? Last summer, 23-year-old Irina 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 Irene, his 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 ensure that 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. A big success in 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% from a year ago.

They don't like to hear that.

One of the brave service members who helped achieve this stunning turnaround was 20-year-old West Virginia Army National Guard Specialist Sarah Beckstrom. After a four month deployment, she voluntarily extended her service. Her rank was going to be lifted and she was doing so well and was so proud of her. But the very next day, she was on patrol in 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 Capitol, 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've never seen anything like it.

So sorry. Thank you very much. A great young lady. I saw reports they were like, perfect, she's 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. The two of them, Sarah and Andrew shot violently in the head. Neither was expected to make it. They weren't even given any chance. Except his wonderful mother, named Melanie, 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, he's going to be fine" and no before he's 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 okay." This was the conversation that I had with her that night, with the son laying in bed, blood all over. Everybody is praying. She said, "Sir, he will be okay." 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, Melanie? She turned out to be right.

Amazing actually. I said "where does this woman come from, she's 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 you -- he's a good-looking guy. Nice to see you. Thanks, Andrew. Thank you very much.

So Andrew now you're up, I'm going to ask a highly respected Gen. James Seward to present staff sergeant 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? You 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. And 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. Thank. People like you. You know, Marco got 100% of the votes when he was in confirmation -- I think our next one was about 54%. 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 that?

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. And they came back. And when we got all of 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 that they found.

Tough job and 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 and I remember the family of the 28th they were so grieved but they were so happy as happy as it's possible to be they had their boy back. The mother said 'sir we have our boy back.' What a period of time that was, but we got them all back, so thank you both 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 are dying a month. A war which would have never happened if I were president. Would have never 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 has 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 hundreds of thousands and even millions of people. With what's called roadside bombs. They were the kings of the roadside bomb. And we took out Soleimani. I did that during my first term. 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, and in particular nuclear weapons, yet they continue. They're starting it all over. We wiped it out and they want to start it all 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're going to continue to do so also, which is to prove 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 built together. It's really called peace through strength, that has been very, very effective.

So thanks to Republicans in Congress, we're investing that record number of dollars — we have no choice — in the United States Armed Forces, also creating a lot of jobs, but we're 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're our friends and they're our allies — have just agreed, at my very strong request, to pay 5% of GDP for military defense rather than the 2%, which they weren't paying, we were paying for almost all of that. Now they're paying 5, as opposed to not paying 2. And getting that 5% was something which everyone said would never be done, could not happen. We got it really easily with one meeting. And a big difference between 2% that's not paid, we were paying the freight of many of them, very few were paid up, now 5% 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. And every service member recently received a warrior dividend of \$1,776. You know, they cleared up my desk, we got the money from tariffs and other things, a lot of money we have with, much more money than people understand, have to rebuild that program a little bit but it won't take long. But we got all the money and it was \$1,775 and they wanted my approval. And I said, what's the number? \$1,775. I said, wait a minute, for one more dollar, we can have \$1,776. I said, we're 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. And I'll tell you what, our military, that was four months ago, I 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 we call it "1776." It was great. And we love our military. We love our law enforcement. We love a fireman. The firemen don't get mentioned enough. We love firemen.

We're also restoring American security and dominance in the Western Hemisphere, acting to secure our national interests 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. And 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. You've 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 who, called me and they said, very impressive, 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. You know, it's a great fighting force. I'm so proud of it. Look at Space Force. Space Force is my baby. As we did that, my baby is becoming so important. And America's Armed Forces overwhelmed all defenses and utterly defeated an enemy — good fighters — to end the reign of outlawed dictator Nicolas Maduro and bring him to face American justice. And this was an absolutely a colossal victory for the security of the United States. 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 kidnapped 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.

Alejandro, I'm pleased to inform you that not only has your uncle been released, but he is 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 5 Eric Slover planned the mission and was the flight lead in the cockpit of the first helicopter. A big, beautiful, powerful helicopter. Was a massive Chinook carrying, as you can imagine, many, many American warfighters 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

successful helicopter flight, Mike said the most important part of flying a helicopter to deliver the many commanders who would capture and detain Maduro was the only thing Eric was thinking about. And even as he was gushing blood, which was flowing back down the aisle - 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, turn the helicopter around so the gunners could take care of business, saving the lives of his fellow warriors from what could have 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 happened. Maybe cancel the mission if that didn't happen. Eric told his copilot, also wounded, but not as gravely, to take over. I'm 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. 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. But 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. And it will be the.

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, his 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 Captain Royce Williams with his Congressional Medal of Honor.

Thank you Eric. 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'd be taking it. But if they ever opened up that law I will be there with you someday. But you know, that's our highest honor, the Congressional Medal of Honor. And that's a big thing. And it's an honor to be in the same room with you. Thank you both very much. Thank you.

Thank you. Two-hundred fifty years is a long time in the life of a nation. But in another sense, it's really 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 4th, 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, everything we have achieved, has been the work of those few great lifetimes. In 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 pass 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, shattered history's 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 hills 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.