

President Joe Biden Speech in Scranton, Pennsylvania | 11.02.24

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Speakers:

President Joe Biden - 100.0%

Notes:

- I know all new folks in this area know when we say it's good to be home, a lot of us mean it because we have family. Scranton becomes part of your heart. And my only regret every time I come home is that my mom's not with me. We are beginning to build back better in a big way.
- I'm proud to have been the first president to walk the picket line. The middle class built America, and unions built the midd. That's why Kamala is so proud of the greatest job creation record of any single presidential term in American history. The stakes couldn't be clearer.
- Yesterday at the Sprinkler Fetters in Philly, I Awarded Rita Lewis, Butch Lewis widow, the Presidential Citizens Medal. Trump wants to take away the Affordable Health Care Act. That would have a devastating impact on the kids you grew up with.
- Trump and his Republican friends want another giant tax cut for the wealthy. He wants to cut Social Security. Think of how many people in this country depend on Medicare. I'm

asking you for your support for Common Common.

- This election is more consequential than any in anyone's lifetime in this room. More is at stake in the direction of this country than ever before. Let's remember who the hell we are. I'm telling you, Kamala Harris character to lead this nation.

President Joe Biden

00:00:03

I know all new folks in this area know when we say it's good to be home, a lot of us mean it because we have family. Our roots are here. And I told my granddaughter, my deceased son Bo, who was a decorated army veteran, anyway, an Attorney General of the state of Delaware.

President Joe Biden

00:00:20

His daughter, who was a sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania, said, popular, you're heading to Scranton. Can I come?

President Joe Biden

00:00:28

I want you to meet her.

President Joe Biden

00:00:43

This is Natalie.

President Joe Biden

00:00:47

She's the love of my life and the life of my love. And I tell you what, man. And she's probably heard so many stories about Scranton growing up that she said, can I come? She'd been here before with me. Been here before, but we're not going to get to go to North Washington Avenue this time.

President Joe Biden

00:01:03

Okay, folks, look, you know, I know a lot of, you know, folks who used to live in Scranton and don't live here anymore, but still talk about home all the time because a lot of them had to leave for. Like my dad did when Cole was dying, back in the late 40s and the 50s, he moved back to Delaware.

President Joe Biden

00:01:35

My grandfather, Biden, who died six days before I was born in Mercy Hospital in 1942, 200 years ago.

President Joe Biden

00:01:45

The. But, you know, Scranton is. Scranton becomes part of your heart. It crawls into your heart. And it's real.

President Joe Biden

00:01:54

It's not hyperbole. It's not a joke. It's real. And my relatives are here right now, the Finnegans.

President Joe Biden

00:02:10

And there's. You know, my only regret every time I come home is that my mom's not with me. My mom, Katherine Eugenia Finnegan Biden, one of five children. She had four brothers. No one screwed around, man.

President Joe Biden

00:02:27

And. But anyway, I just. I'm so proud to be back. And I'm so proud that we finally are able, as Doug pointed out, to. To begin to build back better in a big way.

President Joe Biden

00:02:39

We are. Scranton's coming back. Yeah. Yeah. No, by the way, you know, we've been through a lot together.

President Joe Biden

00:02:50

Not only have you been my allies, the laborer, you've been my friends. Carpenters were the first outfit to endorse me in Delaware as a 1972, as a 29 year old kid running for the United States Senate. And as I say, you guys brung me home. I want to thank Doug, who's been a great, great, great ally.

President Joe Biden

00:03:12

You've always had my back, and I think I can honestly say I've had yours as well.

President Joe Biden

00:03:25

You understand. You understand what my dad taught me. And they used to say this dinner table, I Swear to God. He said, joey, the job's about a lot more than a paycheck. It's about your dignity.

President Joe Biden

00:03:36

It's about respect. It's about the way you're treated in the community. It's about how you're able to look at your kid in the eye and say, honey, it's going to be okay. He meant it. He meant it.

And that's it. Three days to election day, and the stakes couldn't be higher. The choice couldn't be clearer. A lot of politicians have trouble you saying the word union, but I'm not one of them.

President Joe Biden

00:04:08

By the way, neither is Kamala. I wouldn't have chosen her for vice president if she had that trouble. You know, I'm proud to have been the first president to walk the picket line.

President Joe Biden

00:04:23

I've walked many ticket lines, but I didn't realize when I walked this president, they said, you're doing that? I said, yeah, damn right I am. Well, Kamala walked as well. But the other guy. Every picket line he sees, he wants to cross, I hope.

President Joe Biden

00:04:39

Well, let me tell you something. You know, here's what we know. He doesn't. Wall street didn't. You've heard me say this a thousand times.

President Joe Biden

00:04:47

I mean it my whole career. Wall street didn't build America. The middle class built America, and unions built the midd.

President Joe Biden

00:04:59

I mean it. There would be no middle class without labor. That's the God truth. That's why Kamala is so proud of the greatest job creation record of any single presidential term in American history. Nearly 16 million new jobs so far.

President Joe Biden

00:05:16

900,000 construction jobs. And we're just getting started. For real.

President Joe Biden

00:05:26

And these are good paying jobs. My dad would say that. Provide dignity. You can raise a family on you. You can do it.

President Joe Biden

00:05:34

You don't have to need a college degree to do it. But if you want to send your kids to college, you can afford to do it. Look, folks, one of the things that Kamal and I are proudest of is the work we've done to protect pensions in this country. We're damn proud to have protected pensions for millions and millions of union workers.

And when I signed and remember all the crap I got about saying not to do it.

President Joe Biden

00:05:57

The Butch Lewis Act. And guess what? You all have pensions that are guaranteed. You're getting reimbursed as well.

President Joe Biden

00:06:12

Put in the American rescue. Not one. Not one. Not one Republican, Democrat, or I mean the House or the Senate voted for it. Not one.

President Joe Biden

00:06:21

Not a single one. Yesterday at the Sprinkler Fetters in Philly, I Awarded Rita Lewis, Butch Lewis widow, the Presidential Citizens Medal. You know, Butch's work on our nation. It's the highest honor you can give a civilian posthumously, to see her yesterday. Talk about.

President Joe Biden

00:06:41

Butch's story is reminded of how ordinary people do the most extraordinary things in this country. Butch was a decorated war hero, could have been a professional baseball player. He was, in fact, recruited. But he devoted himself to labor. When his pension got cut, he devoted his life to righting the wrong.

President Joe Biden

00:07:00

And so far, a million union workers have had their pensions restored and protected, including back pay. And we did that together because the people in this room have a strong labor voice. All over the country exist. But guess what? Guess what?

President Joe Biden

00:07:20

These other guys want to take it away. It's not a joke. Look, folks, let's be clear about what the stakes are. I come here today not just because of all the work we've done together as unions, but to talk about what's at stake for all of us. Your mothers, your fathers, your sisters, your brothers, your friends, the kids you grew up with, whether it was in Minooka or Scranton or wherever it was, the folks you went to school with who aren't members of the unit don't belong to a trade and find themselves in a circumstance of just struggling to get by.

President Joe Biden

00:07:52

This other guy doesn't care about us. Just look at what his MAGA friends are saying about healthcare. They want to get rid of the Affordable Care Act. Now, you guys have pensions and you have protection because you're union members. And we fought like hell to make

sure it gets stronger.

President Joe Biden

00:08:08

But there are 40 million people in this country in the Affordable care Act. Another 100 million people have healthcare because they have preexisting conditions. Trump wants to take it away. I'm not. This is not personal.

President Joe Biden

00:08:22

This is the facts. Facts. He wants to take away the Affordable Health Care Act. That would have a devastating impact on the kids you grew up with, the people you grew up with. Don't forget where you came from.

President Joe Biden

00:08:36

Don't forget who you're with.

President Joe Biden

00:08:40

I mean it. I'm not joking. I am not joking. Think of all the people who need that health care. Their only way to get health care.

President Joe Biden

00:08:52

They'd lose it. Lose it. Some of your cousins, your brothers or kids you went to grade school with, all the people who are struggling to make it, they lose it. He also wants to eliminate the Department of Education. How can you lead the world if you don't have the best educated public in the world, the best schools in the world?

President Joe Biden

00:09:11

Trump and Republicans want to get rid of the Chips and Science Act. Well, this bill was signed. I worked like hell to get that done. I wrote that sucker.

President Joe Biden

00:09:21

No, it's not like. Because where I come from, the neighbors I grew up in. Look, folks, we invented that computer chip smaller than the tip of my little finger. And so it requires every reason. We had that recession back early on.

President Joe Biden

00:09:37

Guess what? You find out that cars need 300 of those little chips. You find out everything from nuclear weapons to everything we need, from the watches to the refrigerators, they need those chips. We invented them, we made them better, and we lost them because

they went overseas with the other guys. Because it was cheaper labor.

President Joe Biden

00:09:57

Cheaper labor. That's why they went there. And guess what? I remember the look of my family. And I see one of my directors here as well, the Scranton girl.

President Joe Biden

00:10:08

You know, when I went to my staff, I said, I'm going to go to South Korea. I said, what are you going to South Korea for? So I'm going to get the chip industry to come here, come back home. I said, not going to happen. Well, I went with.

President Joe Biden

00:10:18

I met with President Moon and I met with Samsung. The leaders talked to him in investing over \$15 billion and coming back here and investing. Guess what? Guess what? I asked why?

President Joe Biden

00:10:32

And what? They said, not a joke. You guys underestimate yourself. They said, because you have the most skilled workers in the world, in America, and. No, no, no, no.

President Joe Biden

00:10:45

It's just the facts, man. And secondly, because it's the safest place in the world to be. Look, it's going to go, whoa.

President Joe Biden

00:11:00

The country owes you. Think about it. It's going to be tens of thousands of jobs. First of all, constructing the factories, all those carpenter jobs, and guess what? And then when they're open, these are like, they call them fabs.

President Joe Biden

00:11:17

These great big. They're the biggest football fields. Fields. You've not seen them. They're just going to.

President Joe Biden

00:11:21

Just starting to get built. Biggest football fields. You know what the average salary is? \$104,000. And you don't need a college degree.

President Joe Biden

00:11:36

I'll give you an example. An example is Micron up in Syracuse where they're building one of those fabs. And they're building. They're investing Micron, investing \$100 billion to build them. It's the kind of investment that won't.

President Joe Biden

00:11:52

Won't just lift up labor. It's going to lift up everybody. It's going to grow the economy. They want to get rid of it. They want to get rid of it.

President Joe Biden

00:12:01

They want to get rid of that. Look, why Cheaper labor overseas, man. Cheaper labor. There's one more thing Trump and his Republican friends want to do. They want another giant tax cut for the wealthy.

President Joe Biden

00:12:15

Now, I know some of you guys are tempted to think it's macho guy. I'll tell you what, man, when I was in Scranton, we used to have a little trouble going down the plot once in a while.

President Joe Biden

00:12:27

But I'm serious. These are the kind of guys you like to smack in the ass, by the way, I'm sure. Think about it. My son gave his life for this country. He was Attorney General of the state of Delaware.

President Joe Biden

00:12:45

He volunteered to go to Iraq for a year. Came back with stage four glioblastoma. When I was over there recently in Paris celebrating the invasion, the day, the D Day, and General 4 Star General said Trump wouldn't go to one of the cemeteries because. Because they were suckers and losers. They're the guys you grew up with.

President Joe Biden

00:13:10

You want. I'm not joking. You know, I don't want to get started, but folks, look, the reason I accidentally got involved in politics was because when we moved to Delaware, which was civil rights was a big issue. We were a slave state early on. Go back to where I was and what happened was I got involved because my dad used to say everyone's entitled to a shot, man.

President Joe Biden

00:13:48

No guarantee. Just a shot. Just an even shot. Well, what are these guys doing now? You know, we're fought like hell for our pensions, right?

You got it done, right. Well, guess what? For your cousins, your uncles, your aunts, the people who aren't middle class folks who are just busting their necks, guess what? What's their penchant, their Social Security. He wants to cut Social Security.

President Joe Biden

00:14:17

Not a joke. Not a joke. That is a penchant for the vast majority of American people. They broke their neck their whole lives paying the Social Security from the first paycheck they got as a kid on the Social Security, they want to cut it. Why?

President Joe Biden

00:14:35

Why? They want to pay for a new tax cut. He talks about, he cuts, cuts from the middle class. How many of you guys make less than 400,000 bucks a year? Raise your hand.

President Joe Biden

00:14:47

Well, I'm serious. Think about it. Think about this. That's what they're talking about doing. Because guess what?

President Joe Biden

00:14:55

He's the first president other than Herbert Hoover who came into office and left with fewer jobs. When he came into office and left the largest deficit any president has in recent history because of a \$2 trillion tax cut, which you got virtually nothing from. Virtually nothing from. You know what the average Billionaire.

President Joe Biden

00:15:14

There's a thousand billionaires.

President Joe Biden

00:15:16

How much? Average tax they pay federal, 8.2%. Raise your hand if you trade places with that tax cut. I'm serious.

President Joe Biden

00:15:27

And think of how many people in this country depend on Medicare. It's an add on for you all because you bust your neck and reorganized. But he wants to cut back on Medicare. What are we talking about? This is what your friends you grew up with are looking at.

President Joe Biden

00:15:46

Trump thinks tax cuts for the rich folks are more important than protecting Social Security, Medicare. You know, that's how we take care of folks who we grew up with. We fight for

the things that they, he, they're going to take away if in fact he wins. I'm not making this stuff up, I swear to God.

President Joe Biden

00:16:03

Check it out.

President Joe Biden

00:16:05

I don't care if you're thinking of voting for Trump or you're Republican, just check it out. What they want to do and what they don't want to do. Look, we've made a lot of progress and Commonwealth building that progress. You know, we've asked a lot of each other, you and I, Unions and me.

President Joe Biden

00:16:20

I ask you one more thing.

President Joe Biden

00:16:22

I'm asking you for your support for Common Tim Holtz. I'm not just asking. I mean, I'm going to be gone. I'm asking to do something for yourself and the family, for the people you grew up with, the neighborhoods you come from. That's what the hell we're about.

President Joe Biden

00:16:41

You didn't leave anybody behind when you're in grade school or high school. You didn't walk away when they were attacked. You stepped up. Well, guess what? We didn't have a lot of money.

President Joe Biden

00:16:52

We grew up in a typical middle class family, I guess technically a slightly lower middle class. We moved to Delaware. We lived in a three bedroom split level home with four kids and a grandpa. Well, guess what, man, we didn't think we were poor, but we didn't have anything left over at the end of the day.

President Joe Biden

00:17:08

My dad used to say the measure of whether you can make it or not is have anything after all the bills are paid.

President Joe Biden

00:17:13

Is there a little bit left over? But our family stuck together. We looked out for each other. We believe in giving everyone just a fair shot. That's all.

Just a shot. Decent chance to get a good education, to have healthcare so they can sleep at night, not at the roll. I remember that small house we lived in. It wasn't a bad house. It was a newly built home.

President Joe Biden

00:17:35

It was building in suburbia and my bed was up against the headboard of My mom and dad's bed. I remember my dad being so restless. When I said, what's the matter? My mom said, he just lost his. He just lost his pension, honey.

President Joe Biden

00:17:49

Just lost his pension. How many people you know lie in bed awake wondering if they really get sick, what happens to them? They have to sell their home. They're going to have to make a change. What are they going to have to do?

President Joe Biden

00:18:03

Look, that's what's at stake in this election. So what I'm asking you to do, I'm asking you to talk to your friends and your family, union members and brothers and sisters, hit the phones, knock on doors, talk to people in your neighborhood, your old neighborhoods. Let them know how important this election is.

President Joe Biden

00:18:24

I have vast disagreements with Trump and his personality in Iran. I'm not even talking about that.

President Joe Biden

00:18:30

What will happen? What will happen if you trade in my administration for his. No, I'm not. I'm not joking. I'm not.

President Joe Biden

00:18:39

I'm nothing special. No, no, no. Well.

President Joe Biden

00:18:56

Well, thank you.

President Joe Biden

00:19:01

So I guess what I'm saying, I'm keeping it too long standing. But folks, I think we've worked with each other like hell to secure the union's vote, to secure the union's rights, to secure everything from your health care to pensions to your right to work, to pay a whole

range of things. We've stuck together and you've done it.

President Joe Biden

00:19:24

You've done it. Labor is better off today than they've ever been since the 19 early 30s.

President Joe Biden

00:19:30

I'm serious.

President Joe Biden

00:19:35

Because of you. But you have another power I think you underestimate. You have the power to help all those folks you grew up with who aren't members of unions, who didn't get a chance to go to college, didn't, aren't doing well to help them out because all the things that they rely on, from Social Security to Medicare to the aca, to access education to good schools, to teachers being paid, all of it depends on this outcome of this election.

President Joe Biden

00:20:13

It's, not, to use a fancy word, it's not hyperbole to suggest this is the most important election any of us have ever voted in. More is at stake in the direction of this country than ever before.

President Joe Biden

00:20:23

And I promise you, you may have difficulty, you may have disagreed with some of the things in the Harris Walls administration, but I wouldn't have picked her if I didn't think she had the exact view I do about hard working people. I'm serious. And so look, folks, we need to let Kamala as president, let's remember as I said American labor built this country.

President Joe Biden

00:20:50

Let's remember who we are. We're good, decent, honorable people.

President Joe Biden

00:20:55

Where we believe in honesty, decency, treating everyone with respect. We believe character is not only how we conduct our lives but how we expect other persons, those that lead us to have character. I'm telling you, Kamala Harris character to lead this nation. So let's remember who the hell we are. I really mean this.

President Joe Biden

00:21:16

This election is more consequential than any in anyone's lifetime in this room. And don't

leave behind the people you grew up with. Don't leave behind. They may not be part of the unions, have the protection we've been able to get, but let's make sure, let's make sure they at least keep the Affordable Care Act.

President Joe Biden

00:21:34

Let's make sure we keep the Department of Education.

President Joe Biden

00:21:36

Let's make sure we continue to invest in them, provide access to them. How in the hell can we be the. And by the way, one last thing and it's going to sound self serving but I only advantage being the oldest SOB to ever have this.

President Joe Biden

00:21:53

As I've known every major world leader, I've had more experience with dealing with world leaders than any president has in American history. And guess what? They're looking at this election. If we don't lead the world, who does? Who do we look to to lead the world?

President Joe Biden

00:22:09

Do we do this America first stuff all over again and walk away? Folks, we're the United States of America. There's nothing beyond our capacity. Nothing. Nothing.

President Joe Biden

00:22:21

We work together.

President Joe Biden

00:22:25

So I ask you, please, not only I know you're going to vote, get out the vote the people again. Go back to the people you grew up with. Go back to the people you know. Let them know how important it is. It's not about personalities.

President Joe Biden

00:22:43

It's about judgment. It's about honor. It's about dignity. It's about respect.

President Joe Biden

00:22:50

God bless you all. May God protect us.