



President Trump Delivers His State of the Union Address

President Trump gave his 2020 State of the Union on Tuesday evening and extolled the successes of his third year in office while giving grand predictions for the next year. Trump's speech focused on the revitalized American economy, and America's progress under his administration. He commended America's blue-collar workforce and spoke of his pride in renewing America's "manufacturing might." There was no mention of the ongoing impeachment inquiry the President faced, as the Senate was poised to acquit him of all charges and eventually did so. As he entered the floor of the House of Representatives, President Trump was met by grand applause from Republican lawmakers, who chanted "four more years" as he approached the Speaker's lectern. The response from Democrats was predictably subdued, particularly after the President snubbed Speaker Nancy Pelosi's attempt at a handshake before his speech.

A key proponent of President Trump's speech focused on the economy. He praised himself and his allies in Congress for the work done to pass the USMCA, the free trade agreement between the United States, Mexico, and Canada that replaces NAFTA. He also pointed out that the unemployment rate is currently sitting at the lowest point it has been in fifty years. President Trump also spoke about his support for the African American community and cited his administration's policy of increasing funding for historically black colleges and universities.

Another focus of the State of the Union was President Trump's hardline immigration policy. He boasted of a "long, tall, and very powerful wall" being constructed along the southern border and urged lawmakers to pass legislation giving the families of people killed by undocumented immigrants the ability to sue so-called sanctuary cities. President Trump also called for Congress to ban "free government healthcare for illegal aliens" which he used to transition into a discussion on healthcare.

President Trump railed against the idea of "Medicare for All" and promised that his administration would never "let socialism destroy American health care." He also brought up a conversation he had with Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) where the President urged him to pass legislation that lowered the price of prescription drugs. President Trump also cited the executive order he issued in June which mandated hospitals abide by "price transparency" to end patients receiving surprise bills.

President Trump's speech also touched on his foreign policy, and he highlighted his record against terror organizations in the Middle East. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the former leader of the Islamic State, and General Qassem Soleimani, the former leader of Iran's Revolutionary Guards Quds Force, were both killed during his presidency. President Trump also reiterated his desire to wind down the conflict in Afghanistan and spoke of his ire of being the "law enforcement agency" for other countries.

In a touching moment, President Trump also announced the decision to award prominent radio host Rush Limbaugh with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. Limbaugh recently revealed he had been diagnosed with late-stage lung cancer and was surprised with the honor by the First Lady, whom he was sitting next to during the speech. Other guests of the president included a border patrol agent and the brother of a man murdered by an undocumented immigrant, in addition to the parents of Kayla Mueller, an American aid worker who was kidnapped and murdered by ISIS in Syria.