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Maya Harris
Democratic National Convention
Thursday, August 22, 2024
Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

In 1958, a 19-year-old from India left the only country she'd ever known to chart her own path in America. She came here to pursue her education, but she stayed here to build a life.

Her name was Dr. Shyamala Gopalan Harris, but we called her “Mommy.” Mommy was so many things to so many people—a civil rights activist, a scientist, a devoted mother to her two little girls. But most of all, Mommy was a trailblazer who defied the odds and defined herself.

And when it came to Kamala and me, Mommy had great expectations for us—but even greater expectations of us. She raised us to believe we could be and do anything, and we believed her. You see, Mommy understood the power and the possibility that come with knowing—and showing—who you truly are.

She knew we could be the authors of our own stories, just as she'd been the author of hers. Mommy's journey—and the opportunity she wanted for Kamala and me—that's a distinctly American story.

We may have different histories, struggles, or perspectives. But, what binds us together is a fervent desire to be free to fulfill our God-given potential. Kamala's entire life has been about fighting for each of us to have that freedom. Like so many Americans, she knows what it's like to be underestimated and be counted out. She knows what it's like to be the underdog yet beat the odds.

She's created so much electricity, so much joy, so much optimism throughout the nation, and it's why we need her leadership in this historic moment. We are living in a time when some are trying to divide us, to separate us in ways that make it difficult for us to come together.

Well, my sister rejects that view. Where others push darkness, Kamala sees promise. Where others feel detachment, Kamala fosters connection. Where others want to drag us back to the past, Kamala says: “Hold up. We're not going back!”

Because Kamala understands we have so much more in common than what separates us. She knows the measure of our success isn't just winning an election; it's about who we bring along and lift up in the process. I so wish Mommy could be here tonight.

I can see her smiling and saying how proud she is of Kamala. And then, without missing a beat, she'd say: “That's enough. You've got work to do.”

She'd tell all of us to roll up our sleeves and get to work—to elect a leader who sees the potential in each of us, a leader who cares for all of us, a leader who fights for every one of us.

Our Democratic nominee—my big sister—the next president of the United States, Kamala Harris!

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