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The Honorable Bernie Sanders
United States Senator, Vermont
Democratic National Convention
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Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

My fellow Americans: It's an honor to be with you tonight as we lay the groundwork for Kamala Harris to become the next president of the United States.

And let me tell you why that's so important. Remember where we were three-and-a-half years ago—in the midst of the worst public health crisis in 100 years, and the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. 3,000 Americans were dying every day as our hospitals were overwhelmed with COVID patients.

All across the country, businesses were shutting down. Unemployment was soaring. Workers were losing their health insurance. Schools were closing. State and city budgets were running out of money. People were being evicted from their homes. Children were going hungry. That was the reality the Biden-Harris administration faced as they entered the Oval Office. A nation suffering—a nation frightened—and people looking to their government for support. And, within two months of taking office, our government *did* respond.

We passed the American Rescue Plan, which provided \$1,400 for every man, woman, and child in the working class. Extended and expanded benefits for the unemployed. Provided emergency assistance for small businesses to stay open. Guaranteed health care coverage to tens of millions of Americans through one of the largest expansions of Medicaid in history. Provided rent relief and mortgage assistance, which prevented tenants and homeowners from being evicted. We established emergency food programs for hungry children and the elderly, and protected the pensions of millions of union workers and retirees from being slashed by up to 65 percent. Oh, and by the way, we cut childhood poverty by over 40 percent through an expanded child tax credit.

Thank you, President Biden. Thank you, Vice President Harris. Thank you, Democratic Congress. I say all of this not to relive that difficult moment but to make one simple point: When the political will is there, government can effectively deliver for the people of our country.

We need to summon that will again—because too many of our fellow Americans are struggling every day to just get by—to put food on the table, pay the rent, and get the health care they need. Bottom line: We need an economy that works for all of us, not just the greed of the billionaire class.

My fellow Americans: while 60 percent of our people live paycheck to paycheck, the top 1 percent have never had it so good. These oligarchs tell us we shouldn't tax the rich. We shouldn't take on price gouging. We shouldn't expand Medicare to cover dental, hearing, and vision, and we shouldn't increase Social Security benefits for struggling seniors.

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Well, I've got some bad news for them. That is precisely what we are going to do, and we're going to win this struggle because this is precisely what the American people want from their government.

And at the top of that to-do list is the need to get big money out of our political process. Billionaires in both parties should not be able to buy elections—including primary elections. For the sake of our democracy we must overturn the disastrous Citizens United Supreme Court decision and move toward public funding of elections.

And let me tell you what else we must do. We need to join the rest of the industrialized world and guarantee health care to all as a human right, not a privilege. We need to raise the minimum wage to a living wage and pass the PRO Act so that workers can organize in unions for decent pay and decent benefits. We need to strengthen public education, raise teacher salaries, and make sure every American, regardless of income, receives the higher education he or she needs.

We need to take on Big Pharma and cut prescription drug costs in half so that we pay no more than other countries. Joe and Kamala made sure no senior in America pays over \$35 a month for insulin. We need to make that a reality for every American.

I look forward to working with Kamala and Tim to pass this agenda. And let's be clear. This is not a radical agenda. But, let me tell you what a radical agenda *is*. And that is Trump's Project 2025. Giving more tax breaks to billionaires. Putting forth budgets to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Letting polluters destroy our planet. That is what is radical. And we won't let it happen.

My friends: In the last three-and-a-half years, working together, we have accomplished more than any government since FDR. But much more remains to be done. We must have the courage to stand up to wealth and power and deliver justice for people at home and abroad. Abroad, we must end this horrific war in Gaza, bring home the hostages, and demand an immediate ceasefire. At home, we must take on Big Pharma, Big Oil, Big Ag, Big Tech, and all the other corporate monopolists whose greed is denying progress for working people.

On November 5th, let us elect Kamala Harris as our president. And let us go forward to create the nation we know we can become.

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