

Good evening, everyone. It's a hard time, everyone's feeling different ways. I know a lot of folks are reluctant to tune into a political convention right now in politics general. Believe me, I get that. But I am here tonight because I love this country with all my heart, it pains me to see so many people hurting.

I've met so many of you. I've heard your stories. Through you, I have seen this country's promise. Thanks to so many who came before me, thanks to their toil, sweat, blood, I've been able to live up to the promise myself.

That's the story of America. All those folks who sacrificed, overcame so much of their own times because they wanted something more, something better for their kids.

There's a lot of beauty in this story. There's a lot of pain in it, too, a lot of struggle, injustice, work left to do. Who we choose as our president in this election will determine whether or not we honor the struggle, chip away at injustice, keep alive the very possibility of finishing the work.

I am one of a handful of people living today who have seen firsthand the immense weight and awesome power of the presidency. Let me once again tell you this: the job is hard. It requires clear-headed judgment, a mastery of complex competing issues, a devotion to facts, history, a moral compass, an ability to listen—and an abiding belief in each of the 330,000,000 lives that this country has meaning with.

A president's words have the power to move markets. They can start wars or broker peace. They can summon our better angels or awaken our worst instincts. You simply cannot fake your way through this job.

As I've said before, being president doesn't change who you are; it reveals who you are. Well, a presidential election can reveal who we are, too. Four years ago, too many people chose to believe their votes didn't matter. Maybe they were fed up. Maybe they thought the outcome wouldn't be close. Maybe the barriers felt too steep. Whatever the reason, in the end, those choices sent someone to the Oval Office who lost the national popular vote by nearly 3,000,000 votes.

In one of the states that determined the outcome, the winning margin averaged out to just two votes per precinct—two votes. We've all been living with the consequences.

When my husband left office with Joe Biden at his side, we had a record-breaking stretch of job creation. We'd secured the right to health care for 20,000,000 people. We were respected around the world, rallying our allies to confront climate change. Our leaders had worked hand-in-hand with scientists to help prevent an Ebola outbreak from becoming a global pandemic.

Four years later, the state this nation is very different. More than 150,000 people have died, our economy is in shambles because a virus this president downplayed too long. has left millions of people jobless. Too many have lost their health care; too many are struggling to take care of basic necessities like food and rent; too many communities have been left to grapple with whether to open our schools safely. Internationally, we've turned our back, not just on agreements signed by my husband, but on alliances championed by presidents like Reagan and Eisenhower.

And here at home, as George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, a never-ending list of innocent people continue to be murdered, stating the simple fact that Black life matters is still met with derision from the nation's highest office.

Because whenever we look at this White House for some leadership or consolation or any semblance of steadiness, what we get instead is chaos, division, a total and utter lack of empathy.

Empathy: that's something I've been thinking a lot about lately. The ability to walk in someone else's shoes; the recognition that someone else's experience has value, too. Most of us practice this without a second thought. If we see someone suffering or struggling, we don't stand in judgment. We reach out because, "There, but for the grace of God, go I." is not a hard concept to grasp. It's what we teach our children.

And like so many of you, Barack and I have tried our best to instill in our girls a strong moral foundation and carry forward the values our parents and grandparents poured into us. But right now, kids in this country are seeing what happens when we stop requiring empathy of one another. They're looking around wondering if we've been lying to them this whole time about who we are and what we truly value.

They see people shouting at grocery stores, unwilling to wear a mask to keep us all safe. They see people calling the police on folks minding their own business just because of their color. They see an entitlement that says only certain people belong here, that greed is good, winning is everything because as long as you come out on top, it doesn't matter what happens to everyone else. They see what happens when a lack of empathy is ginned up into outright disdain.

They see our leaders labeling fellow citizens enemies of the state while emboldening the torch-bearing white supremacists. They watch how their own children are taken from their families, thrown into cages, pepper spray and rubber bullets are used on peaceful protesters in a photo-op.

Sadly, this is the America on display to the next generation. A nation that's underperforming not simply on matters of policy but on matters of character. That's not just disappointing; it's downright infuriating, because I know the goodness and the grace is out there in households and neighborhoods all across this nation.

And I know regardless our race, age, religion, politics, when we close out the noise the fear truly open our hearts, we know what's going on this country is just not right. This is not who we want be.

So what do we do now? What's our strategy? Over the past four years, a lot people have asked me, "When others are going so low, does going high still really work?" My answer: going high is the only thing works, because when we go low, when we use those same tactics degrading dehumanizing others, we just become part the ugly noise that's drowning out everything else. We degrade ourselves. We degrade the very causes which we fight.

But let's be clear: going high does not mean putting on a smile saying nice things when confronted by viciousness cruelty. Going high means taking the harder path. means scraping clawing our way mountain top. Going high means standing fierce against hatred while remembering we are one nation under God, if we want survive, we've got find a way live together work together across our differences.

And going high means unlocking the shackles lies mistrust with the only thing can truly set us free: the cold hard truth.

So let me be as honest clear as I possibly can. Donald Trump is the wrong president our country. He has had more than enough time prove he can do the job, but he is clearly over his head. He cannot meet this moment. He simply cannot be who we need him be us. is what is.

Now, I understand my message won't be heard by some people. We live a nation is deeply divided, I am a Black woman speaking at the Democratic Convention. But enough you know me by now. You know I tell you exactly what I'm feeling. You know I hate politics. But you also know I care about this nation. You know how much I care about all our children.

So if you take one thing from my words tonight, is this: if you think things cannot possibly get worse, trust me, they can; they will if we don't make a change this election. If we have any hope ending this chaos, we have got vote Joe Biden like our lives depend on it.

I know Joe. He is a profoundly decent man, guided by faith. He was a terrific vice president. He knows what takes rescue an economy, beat back a pandemic, lead our country. he listens. He will tell the truth trust science. He will make smart plans manage a good team. he will govern as someone who's lived a life the rest us can recognize.

When he was a kid, Joe's father lost his job. When he was a young senator, Joe lost his wife his baby daughter. when he was vice president, he lost his beloved son. So Joe knows the anguish sitting at a table with an empty chair, which is why he gives his time so

freely grieving parents. Joe knows what it's like struggle, which is why he gives his personal phone number kids overcoming a stutter their own.

His life is a testament getting back up, he is going channel same grit passion pick us all up, help us heal guide us ward.

Now, Joe is not perfect. he'd be the first tell you that. But there is no perfect candidate, no perfect president. his ability learn grow—we find the kind humility maturity so many us yearn right now. Because Joe Biden has served this nation his entire life without ever losing sight who he is; but more than that, he has never lost sight who we are, all us.

Joe Biden wants all our kids go a good school, see a doctor when they're sick, live on a healthy planet. he's got plans make all happen. Joe Biden wants all our kids, no matter what they look like, be able walk out the door without worrying about being harassed arrested killed. He wants all our kids be able go a movie a math class without being afraid getting shot. He wants all our kids grow up with leaders who won't just serve themselves their wealthy peers but will provide a safety net people facing hard times.