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KAMALA HARRIS

VICTORY SPEECH

<https://youtu.be/DgTReERU7Bw>

Good evening. So Congressman John Lewis, Congressman John Lewis, before his passing, wrote: “Democracy is not a state. It is an act.” And what he meant was that America’s democracy is not guaranteed. It is only as strong as our willingness to fight for it, to guard it and never take it for granted. And protecting our democracy takes struggle. It takes sacrifice. But there is joy in it, and there is progress. Because we the people have the power to build a better future.

And when our very democracy was on the ballot in this election, with the very soul of America at stake, and the world watching, you ushered in a new day for America.

To our campaign staff and volunteers, this extraordinary team — thank you for bringing more people than ever before into the democratic process and for making this victory possible. To the poll workers and election officials across our country who have worked tirelessly to make sure every vote is counted — our nation owes you a debt of gratitude as you have protected the integrity of our democracy.

And to the American people who make up our beautiful country, thank you for turning out in record numbers to make your voices heard.

And I know times have been challenging, especially the last several months — the grief, sorrow and pain, the worries and the struggles. But we have also witnessed your courage, your resilience and the generosity of your spirit.

For four years, you marched and organized for equality and justice, for our lives, and for our planet. And then, you voted. And you delivered a clear message. You chose hope and unity, decency, science and, yes, truth.

You chose Joe Biden as the next president of the United States of America. And Joe is a healer, a uniter, a tested and steady hand, a person whose own experience of loss gives him a sense of purpose that will help us, as a nation, reclaim our own sense of purpose. And a man with a big heart who loves with abandon. It’s his love for Jill, who will be an incredible first lady. It’s his love for Hunter, Ashley and his grandchildren, and the entire Biden family. And while I first knew Joe as vice president, I really got to know him as the father who loved Beau, my dear friend, who we remember here today.

And to my husband, Doug; our children, Cole and Ella; my sister, Maya; and our whole family — I love you all more than I can ever express. We are so grateful to Joe and Jill for welcoming our family into theirs on this incredible journey. And to the woman most responsible for my presence here today — my mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, who is always in our hearts.

When she came here from India at the age of 19, she maybe didn't quite imagine this moment. But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible. And so, I'm thinking about her and about the generations of women — Black women, Asian, White, Latina, Native American women who throughout our nation's history have paved the way for this moment tonight. Women who fought and sacrificed so much for equality, liberty and justice for all, including the Black women, who are often, too often overlooked, but so often prove that they are the backbone of our democracy. All the women who worked to secure and protect the right to vote for over a century: 100 years ago with the 19th Amendment, 55 years ago with the Voting Rights Act and now, in 2020, with a new generation of women in our country who cast their ballots and continued the fight for their fundamental right to vote and be heard.

Tonight, I reflect on their struggle, their determination and the strength of their vision — to see what can be, unburdened by what has been. And I stand on their shoulders. And what a testament it is to Joe's character that he had the audacity to break one of the most substantial barriers that exists in our country and select a woman as his vice president.

But while I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last, because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities. And to the children of our country, regardless of your gender, our country has sent you a clear message: Dream with ambition, lead with conviction, and see yourselves in a way that others may not, simply because they've never seen it before, but know that we will applaud you every step of the way.

And to the American people: No matter who you voted for, I will strive to be a vice president like Joe was to President Obama — loyal, honest and prepared, waking up every day thinking of you and your family.

Because now is when the real work begins. The hard work. The necessary work. The good work. The essential work to save lives and beat this pandemic. To rebuild our economy so it works for working people. To root out systemic racism in our justice system and society. To combat the climate crisis. To unite our country and heal the soul of our nation.

And the road ahead will not be easy. But America is ready, and so are Joe and I.

We have elected a president who represents the best in us. A leader the world will respect and our children can look up to. A commander in chief who will respect our troops and keep our country safe. And a president for all Americans.

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