

# Vice President Pence: The President Is Unwavering in His Commitment to Defend Life

Vice President Mike Pence spoke Wednesday night to the Susan B. Anthony List's Campaign for Life Gala at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C.

He touted the pro-life advances already achieved in the first 100-plus days of President Donald Trump's administration. He also assured the audience that the Trump administration will not back away from its defense of life.

The following are his complete comments:

Just delighted to be with you tonight. And I bring greetings from my friend, a great champion for life, and the 45th president of the United States of America, President Donald Trump.

Thanks to the support of so many in this room and the Susan B. Anthony List, last November President Trump won a historic victory. More counties than any president since Ronald Reagan, 30 of 50 states—states no Republican had carried in a generation. President Donald Trump turned the blue wall red. And SBA was there every step of the way. So really, I'm just here on behalf of the president to pay a debt of gratitude to all of you who helped—helped in this election and who are helping the president in the Oval Office who is fighting every day—I promise you, fighting every single day—to restore the sanctity of life to the center of American law.

It is really is great to be back to the 10th annual Susan B. Anthony List Gala. This organization, 25 years in the making, 25 years strong, is named after the leading light of

the women's rights movement in the 19th century—a leader who fought tirelessly to empower her fellow women and to secure for them the rights that were, and are, and ever will be their birthright—and so we remember and honor Susan B. Anthony tonight.

Today the women leaders of the pro-life movement, I believe, are Susan B. Anthony's heirs—like so many of the women here tonight, leaders in communities, leaders in business, leaders in public life. And there is someone who I believe actually best embodies the spirit and the courage of Susan B. Anthony in our own time. Would you join me in giving a standing ovation to Marjorie Dannenfelser, who is a champion, the best leader the pro-life movement has in the United States of America.

As I look out across this room, I see more friends than I can count. We've fought together. We've prayed together. We've believed together. And it's really hard for me to express, before my friends of so many years, the deep humility and gratitude that Karen and I feel to stand before you today—my years in the Congress, my years as a governor—as the 48th vice president of the United States of America. And I want to thank you—thank you for the privilege to serve. Thank you for giving our family the opportunity to serve this country.

You know, I actually spoke at this very gala—I think Marjorie mentioned it—back in 2011. So much has changed since the last time I was here. Six years ago, I came here after the Susan B. Anthony List helped restore a pro-life majority in the House of Representatives. And now, thanks to you—thanks to your tireless work, your support and your prayers—today we have a pro-life majority in the House of Representatives, a pro-life majority in the United States Senate, and we have a pro-life president of the United States. Thanks to SBA and the countless hours of volunteer time and resources provided for events like tonight, life is

winning in America.

Even before day one of this administration, President Donald Trump has also been keeping his promises to stand for life. The President knows that personnel is policy—that's why he's literally filled this White House and federal agencies with pro-life leaders. Like I'm telling you anything here tonight. You've already heard from Kellyanne Conway, the counselor to the president, who's with us here tonight. Would you stand up, Kellyanne? This is a great, great champion for life.

And how about the president's world-class Cabinet full of great pro-life leaders. Marjorie mentioned a few—Dr. Tom Price running Health and Human Services; Dr. Ben Carson at Housing and Urban Development; Rick Perry at the Department of Energy; and how about Ambassador Nikki Haley at the United Nations. Folks, this is the A-Team.

And I know that everybody in this room was proud when just last week, President Trump picked the former president of Americans United for Life to be assistant secretary for public affairs at the Department of Health and Human Services—Charmaine Yoest is on the team.

For the first time in a long time, America has an administration that's filled top to bottom with people who stand without apology for life. But it's not just the people. It's also the pro-life policies that President Trump is implementing across the board. In his first week in the Oval Office, President Trump reinstated the Mexico City Policy, preventing taxpayer-funded foreign aid from paying for abortion or promoting abortion beyond America's borders.

Only a few days later, the president personally sent me to speak at the March for Life—and I had the high honor of being the first sitting vice president to ever speak at that annual gathering. And make no mistake about it, he was the

one who sent me. Kellyanne was there, she knows. Karen and I were honored to represent him.

I'll never forget, the prime minister of England was actually visiting that day. It was a busy day for the president, and he was unable to break away to make that traditional phone call that every Republican President has made since the days of Ronald Reagan to the March for Life. I was standing by his desk in the Oval Office—remember, Kellyanne? Standing by his desk, and I said, fairly shyly, you know, they invited me, too. And he immediately said without hesitation, you go and tell them we're standing for the right to life. It's true.

And of course, we all celebrate tonight the president's decision to nominate to the Supreme Court of the United States a new associate justice in the tradition of the late and great Justice Antonin Scalia. I believe, and say from my heart with great confidence, that now Associate Justice Neil Gorsuch is a jurist who will keep faith with the Constitution and who will uphold the God-given liberties that are enshrined there. And last month, thanks in no small part to all of you, and to our honoree, Leonard Leo, Judge Neil Gorsuch became Justice Neil Gorsuch, and he is on the Supreme Court today.

My friends, President Trump has been keeping his promises to all of you and the American people. I like to say that in this administration we're in the promise-keeping business. But I will tell you from my heart, it is the greatest privilege of my life to serve as vice president to a president who is so dedicated to caring for our most vulnerable in our society—the aged, the infirm, the disabled and the unborn. My family and I are humbled to play even a small role in this historic time for our principles, the principles that we all hold dear.

Just over one month ago, at President Trump's direction, I

walked up the steps of the United States Capitol to do my duty as the president of the Senate. That day, the Senate had deadlocked on a crucial bill that was personally important to President Trump and to all who cherish life. On that day, at the president's direction, as president of the Senate, it was my privilege to cast the tie-breaking vote to give states the power to withhold taxpayer funding from abortion providers at the state level.

You know, the day the president signed that very bill into law did not mark the end of our fight to keep federal taxpayer money out of the hands of abortion providers. It was the beginning. And we're going to see that fight all the way through.

This president is unwavering—he is unwavering in his commitment to defend life and protect women and children. And that commitment will be on full display this week—if you haven't heard the news yet—because tomorrow, thanks to President Trump's leadership, Congress is going to vote to repeal and replace Obamacare. And when they vote to repeal and replace Obamacare, we will finally defund Planned Parenthood.

When it comes to Obamacare, I don't have to remind anyone in this room that this is why Obamacare has got to go. Despite all the promises that were made, despite the tireless work of everyone in this room to stop it so many years ago, Obamacare has allowed taxpayer money to be used to purchase health insurance that covers abortion, among all of its other failings. We all remember all the promises of Obamacare, don't we? If you like your doctor you can keep him—right? If you like your health insurance, you can keep it. Remember they promised you that health insurance premiums would go down. All the promises of Obamacare have been broken. And tomorrow, we begin the end of Obamacare once and for all.

The day Obamacare passed was also—it was a day of disappointment for the sanctity of life. But hope is finally shining through. The bill before the Congress actually eliminates Obamacare's abortion expansion and it defunds Planned Parenthood, and keeps the President's promise to devote those resources to healthcare providers that help women without promoting abortion.

When this bill passes, it, I believe, will be one of the defining victories for life. And know that the president is grateful for your continued support. We're just at the beginning, tomorrow. The House of Representatives is the first stage; then we head to the United States Senate. And I want to thank you in advance for all that each one of you will do in the future to help move this legislation forward—to give voice to the voiceless, and bring healing and hope to women, to usher in a new era of healthcare in America that respects the values of the American people and finally and at last gives the American people the world-class healthcare that they deserve.

My friends, life is winning in America. And SBA is one of the big reasons why. Your support here tonight is making a difference for the cause of life in America. And I hope you know that. The president and I just came to say thanks. Life is winning through the steady advance of so many areas of science that illuminate almost on a daily basis when life begins. Life is winning through the generosity of millions of adoptive families, who open their hearts and homes to children in need. And life is winning through the compassion of caregivers and volunteers at crisis pregnancy centers and faith-based organizations who minister to women in cities and towns across America.

Life is winning, I believe, also through the quiet counsel between mothers and daughters, grandmothers and granddaughters, between friends across kitchen tables and coffee on college campuses—I think the truth about abortion

is being told. Compassion is overcoming convenience, and hope is defeating despair. Life is winning in America because of all of you—because of your support and your prayers.

I truly believe we've come to a pivotal moment in the life of this movement—in the life of our nation. And in this moment, President Trump needs all of you to let your voices be heard—to continue to stand up and speak out, as if it's the most important moment in the history of our movement—because it is. We need every ounce of your energy and enthusiasm. We need your determination and conviction, your passion, and we need your prayers. We need you to continue to embody the spirit of Susan B. Anthony—the namesake of this organization and our gala tonight, the great defender of women's rights.

In the rotunda of the United States Capitol stands a statue to that extraordinary American hero, and her sisters-in-arms, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. It truly is a beautiful depiction, immortalizing their grace, their courage, their steely strength. But for all its beauty, those of you who have seen the statute know that it still remains unfinished—the smooth and gleaming marble of those visionaries contrasting with the rough, unhewn block of stone behind them.

I've often wondered what that unfinished statue represents, but now, I think I know. The work that Susan B. Anthony and her companions began so long ago has not been completed. And so the statue remains unfinished. Yes the strides toward freedom that they boldly made will echo always—securing suffrage rights for women being chief among them. But their accomplishments—made all the more heroic by the criticism and condemnation they faced in their time—have given shape to America as we know it today, and will inspire the people of this country forever.

But of all the wrongs that women faced that Susan B. Anthony and her fellow freedom fighters fought to right, too many still survive to this day—and abortion is the worst of it. That's why we gather here. That's why, with President Trump, we march forward to complete their mission, complete their work.

Today, tomorrow and every day hence, let us strive with all our might to finish the work that Susan B. Anthony started, to ensure that the timeless promises of the Declaration of Independence—of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—ring true and are preserved not only for ourselves, but our posterity. And this I know we will do.

On January 20th, when I took my oath of office, I only had two decisions to make. One was who would administer my oath of office, and I chose Justice Clarence Thomas. The second was what Bible I would use. And my son told me I had to use one of mine so the family would have it, and it was my great privilege to actually use the Bible, as well, that the 40th President of the United States used in January 1981—President Ronald Reagan's.

I'll never forget—the tradition is that you open the Bible to a particular verse. I did it when I was governor and I did it that day. I opened the Bible to the verse that I had chosen—it was the same verse that I most often quoted on the campaign trail as I traveled around the country, campaigning on behalf of President Trump and with President Trump. And in the days as we labor ahead, as we advance this cause and continue to restore the sanctity of life to the center of American law, these words that I chose I think are worth remembering today.

In fact, to my great delight, I found out that they were exactly the same verse that President Reagan took his oath of office on. When I learned that, that gave me a chill. It's these ancient words: That if His people, who are called

by His name, will humble themselves and pray, He'll do as He's always done—He'll hear from heaven, He'll heal our land.

Those words are as true today as they were in millennia past. And so I close tonight with faith—faith that with your continued help, with God's help, and with President Donald Trump in the White House, we'll heal this land. We'll renew this one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty—and life—for all.

Thank you very much. And may God bless you. And may God bless the United States of America. {eoa}