



**\*\*\*EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY\*\*\***  
**REMARKS BY JOHN MCCAIN ON TONIGHT'S PRIMARY  
VICTORIES**

ARLINGTON, VA -- U.S. Senator John McCain's presidential campaign today released the following remarks by John McCain as prepared for delivery tonight in Dallas, Texas:

Thank you. Thank you, Texas, Ohio, Vermont and Rhode Island. I am very grateful for the broad support you have given our campaign. And I am very pleased to note that tonight, my friends, we have won enough delegates to claim with confidence, humility and a sense of great responsibility that I will be the Republican nominee for President of the United States.

I want to thank all of you here and all the Republicans, Independents, and independent thinking Democrats, in all parts of this great country, who supported our campaign for the nomination, and have brought us across the finish line first, an accomplishment that once seemed to more than a few doubters unlikely.

I want to commend again, my friend, Governor Mike Huckabee, and his supporters, for their passionate commitment to their campaign that Governor Huckabee so ably represented. And I want to thank all my former rivals for the nomination and their supporters for their steadfast dedication to keeping America free, safe, prosperous, and proud.

And, of course, I want to thank my family: my wife, Cindy; my children, and our dear friends who have been throughout this campaign, and will remain in the challenging months ahead, an unwavering source of support and love.

Now, we begin the most important part of our campaign: to make a respectful, determined and convincing case to the American people that our campaign and my election as President, given the alternatives presented by our friends in the other party, are in the best interests of the country we love. I have never believed I was destined be President. I don't believe anyone is pre-destined to lead America. But I do believe we are born with responsibilities to the country that has protected our God-given rights, and the opportunities they afford us. I did not grow up with the expectation that my country owed me more than the rights owed every American. On the contrary, I owe my country every opportunity I have ever had. I owe her the meaning that service to America has given my life, and the sense that I am part of something greater than myself, part of a kinship of ideals that have always represented the last, best hope of mankind.

I understand the responsibilities I incur with this nomination, and I give you my word, I will not evade or slight a single one. Our campaign must be, and will be more than another tired debate of false promises, empty sound-bites, or useless arguments from the past that address not a single American's concerns for their family's security. Presidential candidates are judged on their records, their character and the whole of their life experiences. But we are also expected to concentrate our efforts on the challenges that will confront America on our watch and explain how we intend to address them.

America is at war in two countries, and involved in a long and difficult fight with violent extremists who despise us, our values and modernity itself. It is of little use to Americans for their candidates to avoid the many complex challenges of these struggles by re-litigating decisions of the past. I will defend the decision to destroy Saddam Hussein's regime as I criticized the failed tactics that were employed for too long to establish the conditions that will allow us to leave that country with our country's interests secure and our honor intact. But Americans know that the next President doesn't get to re-make that decision. We are in Iraq and our most vital security interests are clearly involved there. The next President must explain how he or she intends to bring that war to the swiftest possible conclusion without exacerbating a sectarian conflict that could quickly descend into genocide; destabilizing the entire Middle East; enabling our adversaries in the region to extend their influence and undermine our security there; and emboldening terrorists to attack us elsewhere with weapons we dare not allow them to possess.

The next President must encourage the greater participation and cooperation of our allies in the fight against al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The next President must lead an effort to restructure our military, our intelligence, our diplomacy and all relevant branches of government to combat Islamic extremism, encourage the vast majority of moderates to win the battle for the soul of Islam, and meet the many other rising challenges in this changing world.

I will leave it to my opponent to argue that we should abrogate trade treaties, and pretend the global economy will go away and Americans can secure our future by trading and investing only among ourselves. We will campaign in favor of seizing the opportunities presented by the growth of free markets throughout the world, helping displaced workers acquire new and lasting employment and educating our children to prepare them for the new economic realities by giving parents choices about their children's education they do not have now.

I will leave it to my opponent to claim that they can keep companies and jobs from going overseas by making it harder for them to do business here at home. We will campaign to strengthen job growth in America by helping businesses become more competitive with lower taxes and less regulation.

I will leave it to my opponent to propose returning to the failed, big government mandates of the sixties and seventies to address problems such as the lack of health care insurance for some Americans. I will campaign to make health care more accessible to more Americans with reforms that will bring down costs in the health care industry down without ruining the quality of the world's best medical care.

And I will campaign to reduce our dangerous dependence on foreign oil with an energy policy that encourages American industry and technology to make our country safer, cleaner and more prosperous by leading the world in the use, development and discovery of alternative sources of energy.

These are some of the challenges that confront us. There are others just as urgent, and during this campaign I'll travel across the country in cities and rural areas, in communities of all ethnic backgrounds and income levels, offering my ideas and listening to the concerns and advice of Americans. Americans aren't interested in an election where they are just talked to and not listened to; an election that offers platitudes instead of principles and insults instead of ideas; an election that results -- no matter who wins -- in four years of unkept promises and a government that is just a battleground for the next election. Their patience is at an end for politicians who value ambition over principle, and for partisanship that is less a contest of ideas than an uncivil brawl over the spoils of power.

Nothing is inevitable in America. We are the captains of our fate. We're not a country that prefers nostalgia to optimism; a country that would rather go back than forward. We're the world's leader, and leaders don't pine for the past and dread the future. We make the future better than the past. We don't hide from history. We make history. That, my friends, is the essence of hope in America, hope built on courage, and faith in the values and principles that have made us great. I intend to make my stand on those principles and chart a course for our future greatness, and trust in the judgment of the people I have served all my life. So stand up with me, my friends, stand up and fight for America -- for her strength, her ideals, and her future. The contest begins tonight. It will have its ups and downs. But we will fight every minute of every day to make certain we have a government that is as capable, wise, brave and decent as the great people we serve. That is our responsibility and I will not let you down.

Thank you.

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