

Senator Amy Klobuchar's Remarks, As Prepared for Delivery:

Hello everyone! Welcome to Boom Island. Where are we? We don't let a little cold stop us, do we? Like are you guys even cold?

When I said that elected leaders should go not just where it's comfortable, but also where it's uncomfortable, I meant it!

John and Abigail and I want to thank our amazing and hard-working team who put this event together, the City of Minneapolis parks, and all the incredible people who are here.

My friends Senator Tina Smith and Governor Walz. Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan, who is the highest ranking Native American state official in our nation. Our congressional delegation from all over the state. And thank you, mayors and commissioners and legislators.

Thank you Dudley D., who traveled with Prince for many years, Sounds of Blackness, Rabbi Zimmerman... Thank you friends from around the country, from greater Minnesota, the suburbs, and yes the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

We are gathered here today on the Mississippi River—America's great river, running straight through the middle of our country, through the heartland. It takes its name from a Native American word for "The Father of Waters."

It starts small up north. And like many of you, as a kid, I got a thrill out of saying that I had gone up to Lake Itasca and jumped clear across the Mississippi River.

It then gets wider as it flows down here to the Twin Cities, then into Wisconsin where my mom was born.

And then down to Iowa...a place where we in Minnesota like to go south for the winter. At least I do.

And then to Illinois, a state that boasts a lot of extraordinary presidents, from Abraham Lincoln to Barack Obama.

Then the river meanders down to St. Louis, where you'll find a big arch, a gateway that honors our country's pioneers.

Onwards to Kentucky and Memphis, Tennessee. Where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. went one April day to join sanitation workers fighting for their dignity. Where he preached about the mountaintop and how he'd seen the Promised Land.

And then to Arkansas and Mississippi. All the way down to New Orleans where the spirit of resilience abounds.

The Mississippi River... all our rivers connect us... to one another. To our shared story.

For that is how this country was founded, with patriots who saw more that united them than divided them.

And that is how this city—the Mill City—and our country prospered, right along this river and our nation's railways and roads, grounded in the common belief that prosperity shared leads to better lives for all. And this is how we became the world's beacon of democracy, one in which everyone matters.

We start in this place where about a mile downriver, on a beautiful summer day, a big bridge collapsed into this river. I said on that day, that a bridge just shouldn't fall down in the middle of America. Not one of the busiest bridges in our state. Not a bridge just a few blocks from our house that John and Abigail and I drove over nearly every day. But it happened.

And suddenly the eyes of the nation were on our state. And that day America saw in a very visceral way that everyone matters. Everyone.

They saw it in the off-duty firefighter who dove into the murky water, over and over again, looking for survivors among dozens of trucks and cars.

They saw it in the story of Paul Eickstadt, the semi-truck driver, who sacrificed his own life by veering off the road to save a school bus full of kids.

They saw it in the school staff member, Jeremy Hernandez, who rescued each and every kid on that miracle school bus as it hung precariously next to a guardrail after plummeting thirty feet.

Later, we worked across the aisle to get the federal funding and we rebuilt that I-35W bridge—in just over a year.

That's community. *That's* a shared story. *That's* ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

But that sense of community is fracturing across our nation right now, worn down by the petty and vicious nature of our politics. We are all tired of the shutdowns and the showdowns, the gridlock and the grandstanding.

Today we say enough is enough.

Our nation must be governed not from chaos but from opportunity. Not by wallowing over what's wrong, but by marching inexorably toward what's right. That's got to start with all of us.

My family's story is like many of yours. On both my mom and my dad's side, they arrived in this country with nothing but a suitcase. But they made a home here.

It was cold. (O.K. maybe not as cold as this).

They didn't know anyone. But like so many immigrants, they wanted a better life for their families.

My grandpa worked 1,500 feet underground in the mines up North on the Iron Range. He never graduated from high school. He saved money in a coffee can in the basement and sent my dad to college.

My dad, whose here with us today at age 90, got a two-year degree from Vermillion Junior College, and then finished up at the University of Minnesota. He became a journalist.

As a young Associated Press reporter he called the 1960 presidential race for John F. Kennedy. He covered the 1968 conventions. He interviewed everyone from Mike Ditka to Hubert Humphrey to Ronald Reagan to Ginger Rogers. Freedom of the press wasn't some abstract idea to dad. He embraced it. He lived it.

My mom, a proud union member, taught second grade in the suburbs until she was 70 years old. Her students, now grown, still come up to me on the street and tell me she was their favorite teacher.

So today, on an island in the middle of the mighty Mississippi, in our nation's **heartland**, at a time when we must heal the heart of our democracy and renew our commitment to the common good, I stand before you as the granddaughter of an iron ore miner, the daughter of a teacher and a newspaperman, the first woman elected to the United States Senate from the State of Minnesota, to announce my candidacy for President of the United States.

I'm running for this job for every person who wants their work recognized and rewarded.

I'm running for every parent who wants a better world for their kids.

I'm running for every student who wants a good education.

For every senior who wants affordable prescription drugs.

For every worker, farmer, dreamer, builder.

For every American

I'm running for you.

And I promise you this: As your President, I will look you in the eye. I will tell you what I think. I will focus on getting things done. That's what I've done my whole life.

And no matter what, I'll lead from the heart.

Let me be blunt: for too long leaders in Washington have sat on the sidelines while others try to figure out what to do about our changing economy and its impact on our lives, what to do about the disruptive nature of new technologies, income inequality, the political and geographic divides, the changing climate, the tumult in our world.

For a moment, let's stop seeing those obstacles as obstacles on our path. Let's see those obstacles **as** our path.

This is what I mean.

There are insidious forces every day that are trying to make it harder for people to vote, trying to drown out our voices with big money.

It's time to organize. Time to galvanize. Time to take back our democracy. It's time, America!

Time to pass a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United* and get the dark money out of our politics.

It's time to stop discriminatory actions by restoring the Voting Rights Act.

Time to pass my bill to automatically register every young person to vote when they turn 18.

You see the obstacles they're throwing at us with big money and limits on voting, they're obstacles but they're also our path.

Here's another one: climate change.

The people are on our side when it comes to climate change. Why? Because like you and I, they believe in science.

That's why in the first 100 days of my administration I will reinstate the clean power rules and gas mileage standards and put forth sweeping legislation to invest in green jobs and infrastructure.

And on day one, our country will rejoin the international climate agreement.

The obstacles? They are our path.

Here's another challenge: Way too many politicians have their heads stuck in the sand when it comes to the digital revolution.

Hey guys it's not just coming, it's here. And if you don't know the difference between a hack and Slack, it's time to pull off the digital highway.

What would I do as President?

We need to put some digital rules of the road into law when it comes to privacy.

For too long the big tech companies have been telling you “Don’t worry! We’ve got your back!” while your identities are being stolen and your data is mined.

Our laws need to be as sophisticated as the people who are breaking them. We must revamp our nation’s cybersecurity and guarantee net neutrality.

And we need to end the digital divide by pledging to connect every household to the internet by 2022, and that means you rural America. Hey, if they can do it in Iceland, we can do it here.

We need to train our workers today for the jobs of tomorrow and strengthen our economy by planning ahead. That means respecting and recognizing educational certifications and two-year degrees and making it easier for people to get them.

And yes, that means comprehensive immigration reform. It’s time, America!

And by the way we should close those tax loopholes designed by and for the wealthy and bring down our debt and make it easier for workers to afford child care, housing and education. That’s what I mean by shared prosperity.

But we won’t get there if people can’t afford their health care and that means getting to universal health care and bringing down the costs of prescription drugs.

Last week my guest to the State of the Union, who is here again with me today, was Nicole Smith-Holt.

Nicole’s son Alec, a 26-year-old restaurant manager from the southern suburbs, aged off his parents’ health insurance.

Three days short of his payday, Alec, a diabetic, wasn’t able to afford his insulin. He tried rationing it to save money. Tragically it didn’t work. He died. This disgrace should never have happened in the United States of America. Not with a simple drug that’s been around for nearly a century.

The obstacle to change? The big pharma companies think they own Washington. Well they don't own me. And they don't own Nicole.

We are teaming up to pass meaningful legislation to bring in competitive safe drugs from other countries. To stop big pharma's practice of paying off generic companies to keep their products off the market. We're going to harness the negotiating power of 43 million seniors... that's a lot of negotiating power... and lift the ban on negotiating cheaper drug prices under Medicare.

I always believe in doing my job without fear or favor. That's what I do as a Senator and that's what I did as a prosecutor. And that means not only convicting the guilty but protecting the innocent.

That's why I have and why I will always continue to advocate for criminal justice reform.

That's why, in a state where we all value hunting and fishing and the great outdoors, I'm not afraid to join the vast majority of Americans, *including* many gun owners, to stand up to the gun lobby and put universal background checks and commonsense gun legislation into law. It's time, America!

And a safer world is not just about what we do here at home. Even if you want to isolate yourself from the rest of the world, the rest of the world won't let you. International problems come banging on our door, just as opportunities come knocking.

We need to stand strong — and consistently — with our allies. We need to be clear in our purpose. We must respect our front line troops, diplomats and intelligence officers... who are out there every day risking their lives for us...they deserve better than foreign policy by Tweet.

And one last obstacle which we must overcome to move forward together. Stop the fear-mongering and stop the hate. We may come from different places. We may pray in different ways. We may look different. And love different. But all live in the same country of shared dreams.

In Minnesota we have the biggest Somali population in the country. And we're very proud of that community. A few years ago at the height of the angry rhetoric, a Somali-American family of four went out to dinner. This guy walked by, looked down at them and said "you four go home. Go home to where you came from."

And the little girl looks up at her mom and says “Mom, I don’t want to go home. You said we could eat out tonight. I don’t want to eat dinner at home.” Think of the innocence of that little girl. She didn’t even know what he was talking about. Because she only knows one home. And that home is our state. She only knows one home, and that home, that home is the United States of America.

Walt Whitman, the great American poet, once wrote these words: “I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear.” For Whitman those were the songs of the mechanics, the carpenters, the masons and the shoemakers.

And those carols are still being sung today. They are now also the songs of our sisters and brothers, a chorus of different faiths, races, creeds and ways of life.

E pluribus unum. Out of many, one. It is more than a motto. It is the North Star of our democracy. It is the North Star of this effort.

I’m asking you to join us on this campaign. It’s a homegrown one. I don’t have a political machine. I don’t come from money. But what I do have is this: I have grit.

I have family. I have friends. I have neighbors.

I have all of *you* who are willing to come out in the middle of the winter, all of *you* who took the time to watch us today, all of *you* who are willing to stand up and say people matter.

I’m asking you to not look down and not look away. I’m asking you to look up. To look at each other. To look to the future before us. Let us rise to the occasion and meet the challenges of our day.

Let us cross the river of our divides and walk across our sturdy bridge to higher ground.

As one faith leader reminded me this week, to pursue the good, we **must** believe that good will prevail. I do believe it and so do you.

So let’s join together, as one nation, indivisible, under God, and pursue the good.

Thank you and God bless the United States of America.