

Cardin, Van Hollen respond to State of the Union Address

Posted by [Alan Van Wormer](#) On 02/06/2019

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.), ranking member of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations, Environment & Public Works, and Finance committees, offered the following remarks in response to President Trump's State of the Union address.

"I listened carefully to President Trump's words tonight. The president talked about serious foreign policy issues and serious domestic issues, as he should have, but his heated rhetoric, hyperbole and disregard for the facts overshadowed most attempts at a reasonable discussion of our national security, economic security, public health and public safety.

"There most definitely are areas where Congress and the President can find common ground, such as the need to invest in America's crumbling infrastructure or righting the wrongs of our criminal justice system. I join him in applauding the historic number of women serving in Congress. And the entire nation salutes our brave military and incredible veterans. But the president's attempts at political reconciliation rang hollow to anyone with a passing knowledge of how he has conducted himself over the last two years in office. In one breath he called for a new spirit of bipartisanship and in another, and another, he chose to be combative toward those who disagreed with his plans for a border wall. He talked about economic equality for women, but set a marker down that would deny women the right to control their own health care decisions. He called for protecting health coverage for people with pre-existing conditions, but yet declared victory over tearing apart the very system that finally made health care affordable for the millions of Americans who have such pre-existing conditions. Missing was mention of the small businesses, the environment, gun violence, or the harmful 35-day shutdown of our federal government caused by the president's own hand.

"American voters chose a divided government in the last election to provide checks and balances on this president. As he meandered back and forth between aspirational goals and doubling down on hardline border security, President Trump's State of the Union speech tonight illustrated how much that truly is needed."

WASHINGTON – "The White House promised this State of the Union would be one of unity and a vision for bipartisan cooperation. But most of what we heard tonight was the same division and dishonesty that sadly has become the hallmark of this presidency. The President could have used this time to offer concrete plans on bipartisan economic priorities that actually help working people. Instead, he was long on empty promises and short on real policy proposals. Two years into the Trump Administration, the fact remains that he has failed to strengthen the middle class and those working to join the middle class.

"Nothing the President said tonight changes the fact that corporate executives are cashing in as a result of the Trump tax scam, people with pre-existing health conditions are suffering as a result of the GOP's sabotage of the ACA, and the vitality of our democracy and the rule of law is threatened by his relentless attacks on our democratic principles.

"President Trump loves to talk about real Americans. I brought a real American with me to tonight's speech – Ms. Lila Johnson, a federal contract worker from Maryland whose family is suffering because she missed over a month of her wages during the shutdown and currently won't get back pay. Instead of taking responsibility, the President blamed everybody but himself and made no commitment to prevent it in the future.

"Despite the President's toxic rhetoric, I hear from people in Maryland and across the country calling for real, bipartisan solutions to the challenges we face at home and abroad. I stand ready to answer that call."

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