

# THE SOUTH CAROLINA BLUES FEDERAL POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE



## A Recap of President Biden's Address to Congress

May 2021

President Biden concluded his first 100 days in office with a joint session to Congress where he recapped the past few months and highlighted his legislative priorities. The past six presidents have chosen to deliver a joint session speech during their first year rather than an official State of the Union address. The two speeches are similar; however, they have different objectives. A joint session speech allows the new president to deliver their legislative agenda while the official State of the Union address highlights what the administration has done.

### Biden Recapped Successes During His First 100 Days

- American Rescue Plan (*please reference the April newsletter for breakdown of what was included*)
- Large investment in veteran healthcare and the battle against opioids
- Economy created 1.3 million jobs
- International Monetary Fund is estimated to grow at a 6% rate this year

### Biden's Legislative Agenda

- Proposed the \$1.8 Trillion American Families Plan
  - o Affordable childcare where families pay no more than 7% of their income for kids younger than 5
  - o Making community college free for two years with 75% of the tuition cost covered by the government and 25% by the states
  - o Enhancing Pell Grants to low-income students
  - o Providing paid family and medical leave for 12 weeks
  - o Universal preschool for 3 and 4 years
- Proposed the American Jobs Plan
  - o Clean drinking water through pipe replacement
  - o High speed internet for everyone
  - o Infrastructure updates
  - o Modern power grids
  - o Transmission line for clean grid
  - o Promotion of a "Buy American" economy
- Raising taxes on people making over \$400K/year and raising corporate taxes
- Create an advanced research project agency under the National Institute of Health to focus on developing breakthroughs to prevent, detect and treat diseases like cancer
- Appeal to Congress for bipartisanship to stay competitive globally
- End war in Afghanistan
- Protect the Right to Organize Act
- Raise minimum wage to \$15/hr
- Paycheck Fairness Act
- Authorize Violence Against Women Act
- Tackling the immigration issue and the 2.6 million backlogs
- Justice in Policing Act to ban chokeholds, ban no-knock warrants, create a duty to intervene, create a public registry of national police misconduct, and end qualified immunity
- Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islanders Hate Crime Bill
- Gun Reform



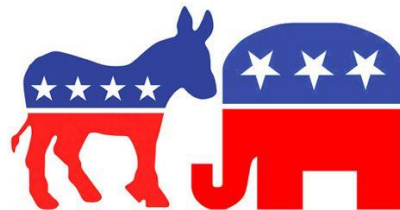
## Republican Response by Senator Tim Scott

South Carolina should be proud the Republican response was given by Senator Tim Scott, the Jr. Senator from South Carolina. Senator Scott has served the state in the U.S. Senate since 2013. Before that he owned a business and served in the Charleston County Council, SC State House, and U.S. House of Representatives. He is known as a leader in tax reform, education and job training, and innovative ideas on reinvesting in our nation's distressed communities.

He grew up in poverty in a single parent household and works every day to bring hope and possibility to millions through his Opportunity Agenda ensuring every family has the opportunity to succeed. Senator Scott lives by a philosophy that "you can think your way out of poverty, and financial independence is a stepping-stone for success." He says, "having a job is a good thing, but creating jobs is a great thing." In 2017, Senator Scott introduced his signature piece of legislation creating Opportunity Zones focused on bringing billions of dollars of private investment to distressed communities across the country.

Senator Scott's theme during his response was to support "...common sense finding common ground". Scott focused on policy debates and issues including infrastructure, voting rights, policing reform, and racism and discrimination. Scott has been at the center of talks between parties about police reform and race. Last year he led legislation aimed at overhauling policing, but it ultimately failed on the Senate floor. Senator Scott is now leading the bipartisan effort with Senator Booker and Representative Bass in hopes of reaching a compromise bill. Scott also spearheaded the bill last year to fund body cameras.

In closing, he lamented the collapse of "...common sense making common ground..." currently; however, he reminded all Americans that "we are in this together and that we are family, not adversaries". He said that "we live in the greatest country on Earth" and that he is "confident our finest hour is to come".



## First Quarter Review of Congress

Here's a list of bills that have been officially passed as laws so far in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**H.R. 335** | To provide for an exception to a limitation against appointment of persons as Secretary of Defense within seven years of relief from active duty as a regular commissioned officer of the Armed Forces.

**H.R. 1319** | American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

**H.R. 1651** | COVID-19 Bankruptcy Relief Extension Act of 2021

**H.R. 1799** | PPP Extension Act of 2021

**H.R. 1868** | To prevent across-the-board direct spending cuts, and for other purposes

**S. 164** | Advancing Education on Biosimilars Act of 2021

**S. 415** | A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act with respect to the scope of new chemical exclusivity

**S. 422** | Senate Shared Employee Act

**S. 578** | FASTER Act of 2021

**S. 579** | A bill to make a technical correction to the ALS Disability Insurance Access Act of 2019