

ABC's *Good Morning America*

02/25/26

7:00:15 a.m. [TEASE]

55 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Marathon State of the Union Address; Economic Reality Check]

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Marathon state of the union.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: We've seen nothing yet. We're going to do better and better. This is the golden age of America.

STEPHANOPOULOS: President Trump addresses the nation overnight, touting his first year back in office as he faces the lowest —

[TECHNICAL SNAFU — TAPE RESTARTS]

TRUMP: We've seen nothing yet. We're going to do better and better. This is the golden age of America.

STEPHANOPOULOS: President Trump addresses the nation overnight, touting his first year back in office as he faces the lowest approval ratings of his second term. The chamber divided from the start. Some Democrats protest, Trump fires back. Others skipped his speech altogether. The President celebrated his policies on immigration. No mention of the deadly ICE shootings in Minneapolis. The Democrat response offering a sharp contrast to Trump's claim of [a] golden age.

GOVERNOR ABIGAIL SPANBERGER (D-VA): Is the President working to make life more affordable for you and your family?

STEPHANOPOULOS: This morning, our economic reality check, rising tensions with Iran, what it all means ahead of midterms.

(...)

7:03:16 a.m.

8 minutes and 13 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: President Delivers State of the Union Address]

STEPHANOPOULOS: First, last night's speech, facing his lowest ever approval ratings, President Trump delivered the longest ever State of the Union, a mix of feel-good moments spotlighting popular Americans and partisan attacks ahead of the midterm elections.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Many Democrats boycotted the address, some shouting back at the

President and others walking out of the chamber. Our senior political correspondent Rachel Scott starts us off at the White House. Good morning, Rachel.

SCOTT: Michael, good morning to you. And President Trump said it was going to be a long speech, and it was breaking records at one hour and 48 minutes, but it's clear the President was hoping for a bit of a reset here in a critical midterm election year, projecting confidence about the economy as he faces his toughest poll numbers yet.

HOUSE SERGEANT AT ARMS WILLIAM MCFARLAND: Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States.

SCOTT: In a marathon State of the Union address, President Trump telling the American people the U.S. is winning even as he faces his lowest approval ratings of his second term.

TRUMP: This is the golden age of America.

SCOTT: With polls showing he is losing ground on the economy, Trump painting a rosy picture ahead of the midterms, trying to convince wary voters Republicans can deliver.

TRUMP: Our country is winning again. In fact, we're winning so much that we really don't know what to do about it.

SCOTT: But the President also keenly aware he just suffered a massive blow to his economic agenda, coming face to face with some of the very justices who declared most of his sweeping tariffs unconstitutional, including Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who he nominated. The President shaking their hands after spending days launching personal attacks.

TRUMP: And unfortunate ruling from the United States Supreme Court. It just came down. Very unfortunate ruling.

SCOTT: The President making it clear he has no plans to go to Congress to make his tariffs into law, using a different authority to impose a 10 percent global tariff for now.

TRUMP: Congressional action will not be necessary. It's already time tested and approved.

SCOTT: Republicans rallying behind him, but the chamber divided from the start. More than 70 Democrats skipping the speech altogether, others protesting, the President firing back.

TRUMP: These people are crazy. I'm telling you.

SCOTT: Congressman Al Green holding this sign, calling out the President's racist social media posts depicting the Obamas as apes before being escorted out. The handful of moments of unity honoring veterans and applauding the men's hockey team didn't last for long. Representatives Ilhan Omar and Rashida Talib often heckling the President as he spoke about sanctuary cities and undocumented immigrants, calling Trump a liar.

TRUMP: The removal of these people out of our country and you should be ashamed.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: President Clashes With Democrats in Combative Address]

SCOTT: The President praised his immigration crackdown but made no mention of Minneapolis or the two Americans who were killed, Renee Good and Alex Pretti. He called on Republicans to pass a bill requiring voter ID and continue to push false claims about the 2020 election.

TRUMP: First year of the second term — should be my third term.

SCOTT: About 90 minutes in, the President turning briefly to Iran, at some points drawing bipartisan praise.

TRUMP: But one thing is certain, I will never allow the world's number one sponsor of terror, which they are by far, to have a nuclear weapon. Can't let that happen.

SCOTT: But the President doing little to explain why the U.S. may strike Iran, calling the country an urgent threat, even as he insists U.S. strikes obliterated the country's nuclear program last year. Democrats tapping Virginia Governor Abigail Spanberger to deliver their response, asking Americans whether life is better under President Trump.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: President Delivers State of the Union Address]

GOVERNOR ABIGAIL SPANBERGER (D-VA): Let me ask you, the American people watching at home three questions. Is the President working to make life more affordable for you and your family? Is the President working to keep Americans safe both at home and abroad? Is the President working for you?

SCOTT: Spanberger offering a sharp contrast to the so-called golden age Trump described in his address.

SPANBERGER: So I'll ask again, is the President working to keep Americans safe, both at home and abroad? We all know the answer is no.

SCOTT: And the President did roll out some new policies around the economy, including floating a new retirement program. I was inside of the chamber for the State of the Union address, and while there were certainly those fiery moments, there were also some moments of bipartisanship, including when the President brought out the U.S. men's hockey team and also when he honored two American heroes, two veterans, including a 100-year-old Navy captain with the Medal of Honor. But George, I will tell you I don't think I've ever seen so many empty seats inside that chamber. Again, 70 Democrats skipping the address altogether.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Yeah, that was a big change. Okay, Rachel, thanks very much. Let's get more from our chief Washington correspondent Jonathan Karl. Jon, let me pick up where Rachel left off. It was really like two separate speeches in one: a few of these feel-good moments and

partisan attacks.

JONATHAN KARL: Yeah, and there were a lot of them. Look, the speech had genuinely powerful emotional high points. He recognized the World War II veteran who will turn 100 on July 4. He recognized the national guardsmen who survived a shooting in Washington who was there in the chamber with his mother. The heroism of the Medal of Honor recipients and, of course, when he brought out the Olympic hockey team, it was at times, George, like a high octane award show. He gave out two congressional Medals of Honor, a Medal of Freedom, a Legion of Merit award, two Purple Hearts. But these inspirational moments were interspersed with these brutally harsh attacks on the Democrats on the chamber and the speech was remarkably short on specifics about what Trump intends to do for the rest of his term and how he intends to address the majority of Americans who think the country's going in the wrong direction and who are nervous about what the future holds for them.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Some cognitive dissonance as well. You have the largest ever military force in space since 2003 now in the Middle East, yet the President didn't even talk about Iran around until about 90 minutes into the speech, devoted about three times to it.

KARL: Yeah, this speech is — was given against the backdrop of the huge military buildup in the Persian Gulf region. About half of America's deployable airpower there in the Persian Gulf region and the President didn't explain why. He boasted about the air strikes against Iran last summer. That was the three minutes on Iran. He said they totally obliterated Iran's nuclear program, but did nothing to explain why the United States military is preparing for a potentially larger and more drawn out military campaign or to explain why America may be on the verge of a war with Iran. We know the military firepower is there, but even after that nearly two hour speech we don't know why.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Jon Karl, thanks very much. Robin?

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Middle East Reaction to State of the Union]

ROBIN ROBERTS: And, George, as you and John pointed out, the President briefly addressed tensions with Iran in the speech while the U.S. builds up its military presence in the region. Chief foreign correspondent Ian Pannell is in Tel Aviv with reaction overnight. Good morning to you, Iran.

IAN PANNELL: Yeah, good morning, Robin. As Jon was saying there, insisting he prefers a diplomatic solution, the President also trying to make the case for potential military action, insisting Iran's nuclear program was obliterated by last June's strikes. He's also saying that they're pursuing what he calls sinister nuclear ambitions, but Iran again repeatedly insisting it'll never develop a nuclear weapon. Trump also claiming around Iran killed and maimed thousands of American service members by roadside bombs. Now, it's unclear if he is referring to Iranian-backed militias in Iraq, but many of the attacks during the war there were actually carried out by other groups. Then he claimed Iran is working to build missiles that will soon reach the U.S., again, without offering any evidence. In a now-deleted post, Iran's foreign ministry

spokesman this morning comparing the President to Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels. It remains to be seen if the President has actually done enough to persuade Americans and allies to get behind a potential military attack. Meanwhile, as Jon says, the buildup continues. Around a dozen F-22 fighter jets landing here in Israel as we wait to see the outcome of those crucial talks in Geneva tomorrow, Michael.

STRAHAN: Alright, Ian. There are definitely a lot of questions that went unanswered.

(...)

8:00:20 a.m. [TEASE]

34 seconds

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SPANBERGER (D-VA): Is the President working to make life more affordable for you and your family?

STEPHANOPOULOS: Elizabeth Schulze is here with your economic reality check.

(...)

8:02:30 a.m.

4 minutes and 22 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking at 8; State of the Union]

STEPHANOPOULOS: We start with the State of the Union address. Facing the lowest ever approval ratings, President Trump delivered his longest ever State of the Union. A mix of feel-good moments, spotlighting Americans and partisan attacks ahead of midterm elections. Many Democrats boycotted, some shouted back at the President, others walked out of the chamber. Want to go to our senior political correspondent Rachel Scott at the White House. Good morning, Rachel.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking at 8; President Delivers State of the Union Address]

SCOTT: George, good morning to you. And it's the President was looking for a reset in a midterm election year, projecting confidence about the economy as he faces his toughest poll numbers yet.

MCFARLAND: Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States.

SCOTT: In a marathon State of the Union address, President Trump telling the American people the U.S. is winning even as he faces his lowest approval ratings of his second term.

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SCOTT: But the President also keenly aware he just suffered a massive blow to his economic agenda, coming face to face with some of the very justices who declared most of his sweeping tariffs unconstitutional, including Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who he nominated.

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TRUMP: But one thing is certain, I will never allow the world's number one sponsor of terror, which they are by far, to have a nuclear weapon. Can't let that happen.

SCOTT: But the President doing little to explain why the U.S. may strike Iran, calling the country an urgent threat, even as he insists U.S. strikes obliterated the country's nuclear program last year. So, there were those fiery moments, there were a handful of moments of bipartisanship,

including when the President brought out the U.S. men's hockey team fresh off of their Olympic gold medal win in Milan. And, also, when the President honored two American heroes, two veterans, and saying the President said it was going to be a long speech, It definitely was, breaking records at an hour and 48 minutes, Michael.

STRAHAN: Yeah, that it was, Rachel. It was a long speech. Alright, thank you. We're gonna now more — more now on the affordability crisis. Let's go and bring in Elizabeth Schulze for a reality check. Good morning, Elizabeth.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Affordability Crisis]

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking at 8; Perception of the Economy]

ELIZABETH SCHULZE: Hey, good morning, Michael. President Trump is painting a rosy picture of the economy at a time when many households say they are not feeling it. Our latest poll finds 48 percent of Americans say the economy has gotten worse since Trump became President. 29 percent say it's gotten better. The President used the speech to tout economic numbers that look good on paper. Record highs and stock market, lower gas prices, falling mortgage rates. But, for many families, their perception of the economy comes down to what they're paying for day-to-day essentials and many of the costs are rising. Government data shows that, since President Trump took office, electricity bills are up six percent. Medical care and day care cost up four percent. Rent is up about three percent. Grocery bills up two percent. Eggs are down by other staples like coffee are up double digits. So, while the President said inflation is plummeting, when we put all of this together, the typical household is spending about \$170 extra every month compared to last year and for lower and middle income households especially, their take-home pay is not keeping up with the price hikes, underscoring a widening divide in the economy, Robin.

ROBERTS: And thank you for breaking down those numbers for us. Appreciate it, Elizabeth.