

Speaker Ryan: Excerpts from farewell address

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WASHINGTON—House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) will deliver his farewell address at 1:00 p.m. ET today at the Library of Congress. Following are excerpts from the address, which you can [watch live on Speaker.gov](#):

On the accomplishments of this Congress:

Three years ago, when we last gathered in this hall, we began a great journey. To set our nation on a better path. To move our economy from stagnation to growth. To restore our military might.

And we have kept our promises.

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We have taken on some of the biggest challenges of our time, and made a great and lasting difference in the trajectory of this country.

Certainly one Congress cannot solve all that ails us. Not every outcome has been perfect.

But that is our great system at work. And I am proud of what we have achieved together to make this a stronger and more prosperous country.

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I leave here as convinced as I was at the start that we face no challenge which cannot be overcome by putting pen to paper on sound policy. By addressing head-on the problems of the day.

On the state of politics:

The state of politics these days is another question, and frankly one I don't have an answer for.

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Our culture is meant to be shaped not by our political institutions, but by the mediating institutions of civil society, of the community.

These are the places where we come together with people of different backgrounds—churches, charities, teams, PTA meetings. It is where we build up our social capital, that currency which keeps us rooted to where we live, and how we live with one another.

Rediscovering that human connection is one lane on the road back to aspiration and inclusion as the guiding influences in public life.

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As I look ahead to the future, this much I know: Our complex problems are solvable.

That is to say, our problems are solvable if our politics will allow it.

On poverty:

I believe firmly that solving our poverty challenges once and for all will require not just a great undertaking, but a great rethinking of how we help the most vulnerable among us.

It begins with realizing that the best results come from within communities, where solutions are tailored and targeted for people's needs. This battle will be won soul-to-soul and eye-to-eye.

We have great advocates for welfare reform in our party, like my friend Tim Scott.

But I challenge my party here: Do not let this issue drift from your consciousness.

Every life matters, and every person deserves the chance to succeed.

Let us keep advancing ideas to allow people to live lives of self-determination.

On entitlements:

I believe that we can be the generation that saves our entitlement programs. And frankly we will need to be.

I acknowledge plainly that my ambitions for entitlement reform have outpaced the political reality and I consider this our greatest unfinished business.

We all know what needs to be done. Strong economic growth, which we have now, and entitlement reform, to address the long-term drivers of our debt.

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Ultimately, solving this problem will require a greater degree of political will than exists today. I regret that.

But when the time comes to do this, and it will, it will be based on the framework we have laid out to solve this problem.

On immigration:

Right now, we are yet again locked in another short-term battle over one aspect of this issue.

No matter what the outcome is in the coming days, the larger problem will remain. The system will still be in need of serious reform. And no less than our full potential as a nation is at stake.

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Again, we came closer in this Congress than people realize. And next year, the Supreme Court will make a ruling and then both parties can and should go back to the table.

Getting this right is an economic and moral imperative. And it would go a long way

toward taking some of the venom out of our discourse.

If we do these three things—make progress on poverty, fix our immigration system, confront this debt crisis—we can make this another great century for our country.