Biden vows to fight inequalities with economic agenda

By Will Weissert and Bill Barrow
The Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden promised Tuesday that his economic agenda would combat long-standing racial inequalities in U.S. society as he sought to draw another sharp contrast with President Donald Trump.

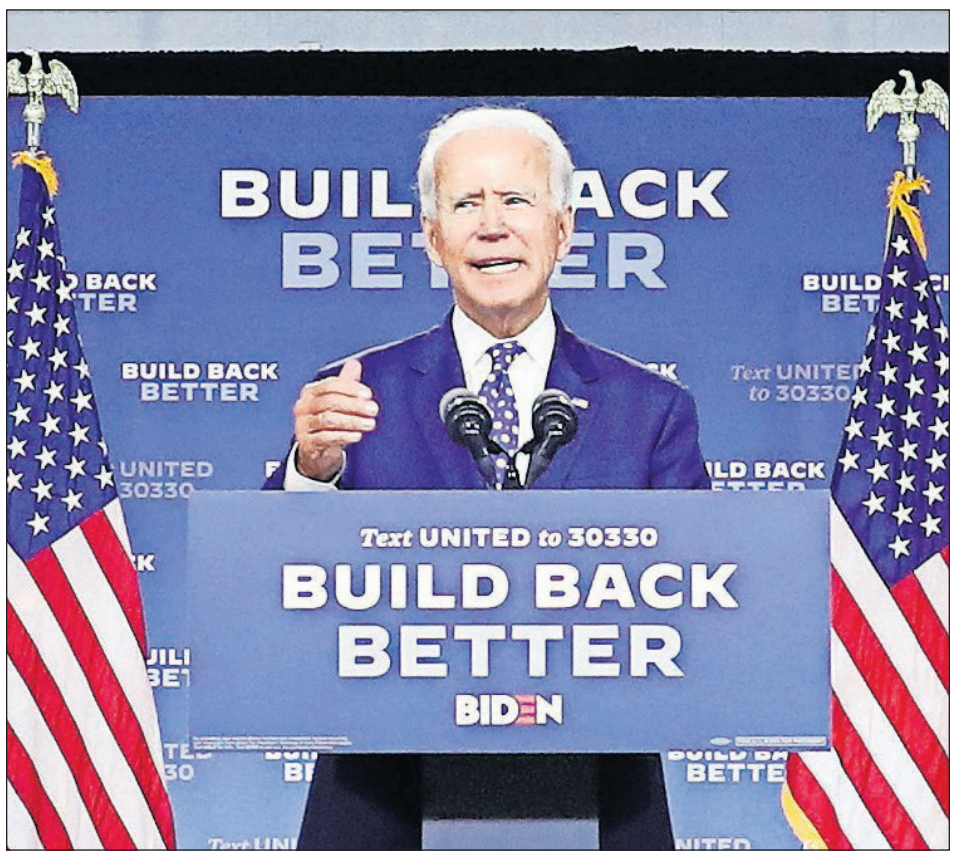
Biden said the Republican president is exacerbating social discord across the country, including by sending federal authorities into major cities under the pretense of addressing crime, and has little interest in addressing the racism that Biden said has been laid bare by the COVID-19 pandemic and an election-year reckoning with police violence against Black men.

"He's shown that he can't beat the pandemic and keep you safe," Biden said, speaking in a community center gymnasium in his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware. "He can't turn the economy around. He's determined to stoke division and chaos. It's not good for the country, but Donald Trump doesn't care. His campaign is failing and he's looking for a lifeline."

Biden countered with a litany of proposals to steer more federal money and tax credits to various small business and economic development programs for minority-owned firms and disadvantaged neighborhoods. Biden also said he'd encourage home ownership to help close wealth gaps among minority communities.

Many of his proposals — and the billions in federal spending needed to pay for it — had already been promised as part of previous, larger Biden plans to jump-start the economy when the coronavirus outbreak begins to recede. But as protests against institutional racism and police brutality have swept the country in recent months, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee is attempting to show voters that he's committed to implementing specific remedies that can promote racial and economic equality should he win the White House in November.

It's also another way for Biden to lambaste Trump, who has spent weeks vowing to restore "law and order" and ordering federal authorities to intervene against ongoing protests in places like Portland, Oregon, and Chicago, while small businesses around the country continue to struggle or shut down under economic struggles from the coronavirus.



Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speaks at a campaign event Tuesday at the William "Hicks" Anderson Community Center in Wilmington, Del. [ANDREW HARNIK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

Biden accused Trump of distracting the country and trying to scare voters by dispatching federal authorities to cities. The former vice president said most demonstrators are "peaceful protesters" who aren't a threat to be met by federal power. "Arsonists and anarchists should be prosecuted," Biden said, but added that "local law enforcement can do that."

Still, Biden said "this election is not just about voting against Donald Trump. It's about rising to this moment of crisis, understanding people's struggle and building a future worthy of their courage and ambition to overcome."

And he said that means thinking about every policy debate in terms of structural inequalities.

The former vice president wants to take $30 billion, or 10% of federal investment he's already promised as part of larger economic plans, and funnel it into a "Small Business Opportunity Fund" designed to leverage $5 of private investment for minority owned enterprises for each $1 in public funds allocated. He also plans to spend $50 billion to provide startup capital that can help entrepreneurs of color start businesses in disadvantaged areas.

To encourage home ownership, the plan would create a $15,000 federal tax credit to help low-and middle-income families cover down payments on their first homes. It also pledges to build 1.5 million new homes and public housing units in hopes of addressing the affordable housing crisis that has hit many of the nation's marquee cities and disproportionately hurt people of color.

Biden also said the Federal Reserve's mission should be revised to specifically charge the central bank with addressing "persistent racial gaps" in economic opportunities and wealth, rather than a more general focus on maximum employment and stable pricing.

Biden similarly vowed to undo Trump administration regulatory changes that the Democratic presidential nominee says "gutted" Obama administration rules preventing housing discrimination and unfair lending practices.

Asked about the possibility of a congressional study on the feasibility of federal reparations to descendants of enslaved Black people in the United States, senior Biden officials said their candidate wouldn't oppose such a study. But they defended Tuesday's proposal as doing more to benefit Black Americans in the short term, saying, "He is not going to wait on a study to create change."

Biden's plan also doesn't endorse legalizing marijuana, though it seeks to clear logistical court hurdles so that states can better identify nonviolent offenders whose records they might opt to expunge. Black and Hispanic Americans often face far harsher penalties for crimes involving marijuana possession than their white counterparts.

The Democratic National Committee's convention platform committee voted by a wide margin on Monday to keep language calling for legalization of marijuana nationwide out of the party's platform.

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City of Stuart, Florida
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Second Public Hearing Notice

The City of Stuart plans to apply to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for an FFY 2019 to receive funding, Housing Category Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of $750,000. The activities, dollar amounts and estimated percentage benefit to low-and moderateincome persons are as follows:

Activity No.	Activity Name HOUSING REHABILITATION CATEGORY ACTIVITIES	CDBG Funding	LMI Benefit	Local Leverage	Quantity
14A	Housing Rehabilitation/Demolition/ Replacement	$615,500	100%	$50,000	11 Units
08	Temporary Relocation	$22,000	100%	$0	11 Units
21A	Administration	$112,500	N/A	$0	N/A
	TOTAL PROJECT	$750,000	100%	$50,000	11 Units

The City will provide housing rehabilitation to serve approximately eleven (11) homes of low to moderate income households within the City of Stuart.

The City of Stuart does not expect that anyone will be displaced as a result of CDBG-funded activities. If any persons are displaced as a result of the planned activities, The City of Stuart will assist them as described in the City's Anti-Displacement and Relocation Policy, which is available for review at the Stuart City Hall located at 121 SW Flagler Avenue Stuart, Florida, 34994.

A public hearing to provide citizens an opportunity to comment on the application will be held at the City Hall located at 121 SW Flagler Avenue Stuart, FL 34994, on **Monday, August 10 at 5:30 p.m.** A draft copy of the application will be available for review in the City hall located at 121 SW Flagler Avenue Stuart, FL 34994, by noon on August 5, 2020. Persons wanting to submit written comments on the application should send them to Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, CRA Director, by e-mail at pgandhi@ci.stuart.fl.us or by mail at 121 SW Flagler Avenue Stuart, Florida, 34994. A final copy of the application will be made available for review during normal business hours at the Stuart City Hall no later than October 1, 2020. The application will be submitted to DEO on or before October 5, 2020. To obtain additional information concerning the application and the public hearing, contact Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, CRA Administrator, at 772-283-2532 or by e-mail at pgandhi@ci.stuart.fl.us.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), anyone who needs a special accommodation for this meeting should contact the City's ADA coordinator at (772) 288-5306 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting, excluding Saturday and Sunday.

Any non-English speaking person wishing to attend the public hearing should contact Pinal GandhiSavdas at 772-283-2532 at least five days prior to the hearing and an interpreter will be provided.

Due the COVID-19 pandemic: While the public is permitted to attend this meeting, you are encouraged to view and participate in the meeting via a link at City's web page, http://www.cityofstuart.us/. This meeting can be viewed online from the link. People wishing to comment may call into the meeting once the Mayor requests public comment on a phone number that will be provided. Written comment can also be submitted to the CRA Administrator at pgandhi@ci.stuart.tl. us.

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Poll: Global view of US leadership weak

By Khrysgiana Pineda
USA TODAY

For the third year in a row, Germany remains the top-rated global power, while the image of U.S., Chinese and Russian leadership stays consistently weak, according to a new Gallup poll.

The poll results released Monday measure global views of major powers and show worldwide approval of U.S. leadership continues to be "historically low." Globally, 33% approved of U.S. leadership, a slight increase from a previous low of 30% during the first year of Donald Trump's presidency.

"Global perceptions of the world's leading nations often reflect the relative soft power of each global actor. But as much as any leader would love to be admired, leaders often need to make decisions bound by principles of their nation's interest," Gallup said.

The world's view of the U.S. dropped 19 points in 2017, between President Barack Obama's last year in office and Trump's first year, the report said, and "the situation hasn't changed much since."

The 24% median approval rating is unchanged from 2018, the report said, citing that the president's "America first" rhetoric, particularly Trump's address to the U.N General Assembly, hasn't harmed or helped his ratings.

China and Russia continued to fall not far behind the U.S.: China's 32% approval rating fell two points below its 2018 results, whereas Russia's 30% rating remained unchanged.

Germany sat on top with 44% leadership approval ratings, bouncing back from the previous year's slump below 40%, the lowest the country's ratings had been in a decade. Despite the slight setback, Germany has remained the highest rated global power for three consecutive years, according to Gallup.

Julie Ray, Gallup managing editor for world news, said German Chancellor Angela Merkel's "stable leadership" has "earned global respect."

Gallup surveyed about 1,000 people in 135 countries and territories from March 2019 to February 2020, with a margin of error ranging from plus or minus 1.5 to 5.4 percentage points.

The coronavirus pandemic will likely affect how the world views leadership based on how they responded to the crisis, Gallup said.

"We don't know how ratings will look in 2020, but people will certainly have a lot to think about – including a global pandemic," Ray said. "It's pretty likely that people will have how each country responded to the pandemic in mind when they answer the questions again."

China, where COVID-19 originated, and the U.S. – which withdrew from the World Health Organization during the pandemic and leads the world in most coronavirus cases and deaths – face particular room for criticism among 2020 polls, the Gallup report forecasted.

"The image of U.S. leadership in particular could seriously suffer as the globe watches U.S. states and the federal government struggle to get infection rates under control," Gallup said.

The Palm Beach Post

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