



**Senator Peter Welch  
Remarks as Delivered  
On Trump's Misguided Mandate  
February 10, 2025**

Mr. President, Donald Trump, as we all know, won the last election in November, and he's now the 47th President of the United States. But Donald Trump did not, contrary to what he and the Vice President want people to believe, win by anything close to a landslide. As this chart shows, out of a total of 155,238,302 votes, Mr. Trump won 77,302,000, or 49.8%. Kamala Harris won 75 million or 48.3%. President Trump won—but just slightly over two million votes more than Kamala Harris.

The difference between them was 1.5% of the popular vote. And although it was one of the smallest margins of victory since the 19th century, President Trump, in his inaugural address, and others in the inner circle of Trump, repeatedly called the victory a “landslide,” a “blowout,” a “mandate,” “historic.” You know what a real landslide is? Lyndon Johnson in 1964 won by 22.6%. Ronald Reagan won by 18.2%. Those are landslides.

Why does it matter? Because facts matter. The truth matters. And we cannot survive in our democracy without respect and much more respect for the truth. It's also really important because when one goes—whether you're running for the U.S. Senate or the presidency of the United States—when one goes from candidate for office to the president or the U.S. Senator in office, the responsibility that we have is to all the people in our district, and certainly for the President of the United States, a responsibility to all the people in the United States. We serve all whether they voted for us or against us.

But what has been happening with the assertion that this was this massive landslide is that it has become a justification for narrow policies that completely disrespect the reality that so many other Americans need to be represented and heard, and also is so narrow that even among those who voted for President Trump—for a variety of reasons—are not getting policies they thought would be included.

The “America First” policies so far have cut funding for programs to protect water that all Americans need, clean air that we all breathe, whether it is a voter who was for Trump or a voter who was for Harris. We are cutting funding for medical research for cancer, cures for kids who have cancer, for food assistance to the food-malnourished kids and parents who are in every district in this country. And, of course, most spectacularly what we're seeing is the illegal termination of the USAID program,

something the courts have rescinded, but the administration is rushing pell-mell, nevertheless.

All of this, actually, is in service of being able to find offsets in order to pay for the Trump tax cuts that are heavily weighted to folks who are billionaires, like Mr. Musk, and of course to our major U.S. corporations. And you know what? The folks who need a tax cut are the everyday Americans who have been trying to make ends meet and are having real trouble doing that.

The White House is not even trying to hide what they're doing. You've Elon Musk—you know, it's pretty astonishing. He owns Twitter which is a source of misinformation. He's trying to buy Chat GPT. He has massive government contracts for Starlink and for his space program. And he has contributed \$280 million to the Trump Campaign. And now without any elected authority, without any advice and consent of the Senate on a position that is very powerful, the so-called "DOGE Administrator," he has access to the private information of millions of Americans. All that confidential information about your Social Security and mine that's in the Treasury Department.

So, how is that happening? That is not in service of the folks who didn't vote for Mr. Trump. It's not even in service of the folks of people who did. But you know, it's important that elections be, and the outcomes of elections be respected. You know, this last election, just like in 2020, the people who oversaw this election worked hard to ensure that it was free and fair. We don't all get the outcome that we want. But it was free and fair.

The difference in this election is that we on the losing side accepted the result. We didn't falsely claim that it was "stolen," the "stop the steal" narrative as President Trump continues to assert about 2020 and most of his cabinet nominees do as well. We didn't try to prevent the outcome from being certified or to promote an insurrection by a violent mob, folks who actually attacked, injured people in this building and police officers, spit in their face, hit them, hit them with poles and we had police officers who died after that attack.

Falsely denying the outcome of an election and then using violence to overturn the result of a free and fair election absolutely subverts the democratic process. And as every American voter knows, free and fair elections—like the checks and balances between our three coequal branches of government—are absolutely essential to the well-being and continuation of our democracy. You know, in the inaugural address that the president gave, I did not hear anything about child care, or the cost of housing, or bringing down the cost of prescription drugs and making health care more affordable. Things that everyday families in every single part of this country need help with, to be able to pay those bills and at the end of the month have their checkbooks still balance.

If and when the president starts focusing on those issues, I and my colleagues are absolutely ready to work with him and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Because those things—affordable broadband, affordable health care, affordable housing and rent, some economic security—those are things every single one of us needs. And the challenges that we face, whether it's red America or blue America, to try to have better policies to make that happen, are things we must be working on together. But not where what comes first, last, and always are these tax cuts that explode the deficit and go to folks who are not now paying their fair share.

So, as long as President Trump and his allies pretend that he has this massive mandate to literally disrupt and throw out the traditions and norms and guardrails of democracy, that is something I and so many of my colleagues will resist. We can't do that. The law matters. Respect for your opponents matters. And focusing on the everyday needs of everyday people is what matters most. It's what is the goal all of us should be looking to accomplish.

So, Mr. President, there was no mandate, no massive mandate. There was a victory, but with victory, to describe it as this smashing mandate is a suggestion that what awaits us and has already arrived is overreach and failure.

Mr. President, I yield back.

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