



# CIRCLE *of* PROTECTION

***This is a summary of Vice President Biden's speech to the Mass Assembly of the Poor People's Campaign in September 2020.***

Vice President Biden's statement on poverty policy begins with the biblical message that we are all created in the image of God and have a right to live in dignity. This moral truth is reflected in our country's founding documents.

Biden shares his boyhood experience of near-poverty when his father's job disappeared. "I remember my dad going to bed at night. I could hear him rolling back and forth on his bed, because he didn't have any health insurance, wondering what in God's name happens if we get sick."

He recalls the biblical "message from the wilderness" about service and good news for the poor. He describes our country's current "wilderness" of disease, widespread economic hardship, and gross economic inequality. It has "ripped the blinders off the systematic racism that still plagues this country," he says.

Biden explains how his Build Back Better program will put us on track to end poverty in America. His first priority, he says, will be a national, evidence-based program to bring the pandemic under control and provide relief to the tens of millions of Americans who have been flattened economically by the pandemic. Looking beyond the pandemic, he focuses on a strong safety-net and good jobs for low-income workers.

"If I am president, ending poverty will not just be an aspiration, it will be a theory of change -- to build a new economy that includes everyone, where we reward hard work, we care for the most vulnerable among us, we release the potential of all our children, and protect the planet."

Biden explains that he will push for an increase in the minimum wage, plus sick leave and affordable child care for all workers. He also proposes major investments in economic development -- infrastructure (including infrastructure for communities of color and low-income communities), the transition to a green economy, and educational opportunity at all levels. These public investments will generate good-paying jobs.

Biden emphasizes preschool for all children, including three-year olds, because three-year old boys and girls who get preschool education are much more likely to finish high school and be able to make a decent living.

Finally, Biden stresses that protecting the right to vote is important to progress against poverty. He urges everyone to vote.

Biden directs his remarks to the 140 million Americans who are poor or have virtually no savings. He affirms the efforts of the Poor People's Campaign to promote and protect voting among these 140 million people.