

JOE THE VICE PRESIDENT AT THE TRAIN STATION

Apparently, they've sent Joe Biden out to drum up some excitement for the stimulus package. Sending him to do so at a train station that would be upgraded under the stimulus package? A nice touch. (via email)

Mr. Mayor, thanks for the passport to get in town here. And, Governor, it's a delight to be with you. And Ben Cardin pointed out – Senator Cardin – the things that Joe Biden knows this, and Joe Biden knows that. Joe Biden knows you're freezing. (Laughter.) Joe Biden knows that pretty soon you won't be able to even move your pens. So I figure if I talk long enough you won't be able to report a thing I say. (Laughter.)

But, ladies and gentleman, I'll be straight to the point. Thanks for coming here today. And as we stand here today, it's an understatement to say the economy is in trouble and the need is urgent. Quite simply, we cannot wait. We cannot wait another two weeks, three weeks, four weeks. We cannot wait.

Our economic recovery package that's now before the Senate will put us back on track to create and save 3 to 4 million jobs. And right here in Maryland, a paper released by the National Economic Council this week shows that the plan would create or save 70,000 jobs, Governor. That's 70,000 people here in the state who won't go through the pain and suffering of a job loss.

But this is only going to happen if and when we pass our recovery act. And Ben assures me he's going to leave the frigid temperature here to go the warm halls of Congress and the Senate and get

that done tonight or tomorrow. But quite frankly, folks, it's only going to work if we make those investments we need, not only in generating employment immediately, but also investing in an economy of the 21st century.

By boosting paychecks through the Make Work Pay tax cuts, we're going to put money in the pockets of middle-class people immediately. By making a down payment on the smart grid, we're not only going to invest in moving towards a new energy future, we're going to invest in clean energy. We're going to invest in creating jobs that are going to not be able to be exported. They're going to continue to grow. By weatherizing and retrofitting thousands of facilities, we're going to modernize over 10,000 schools in America. We're going to put money where we need it, in our nation's infrastructure.

Over \$100 billion of this money is dedicated to infrastructure projects, many of which are ready to go right now. The point that Ben made, literally the spade can be turned or the steps can be pulled up the moment the Governor gets the money, because already the blueprints are done, the contractor ready to be let. We're going to move immediately.

Laurel [Train Station, in Laurel, MD) is one of the thousands of rail and commuter stations all over the country where we need to make these improvements, creating jobs and creating a better transportation system for the 21st century. Over 400,000 jobs nationally will be created by the infrastructure investments that the Congress, God willing, is going to pass and the President is going to sign into law very shortly. Rebuilding train

stations in my state and here, like this very one we're doing now, repairing roads, bridges, waterways, ports; investing – investing – in infrastructure that can carry the economic growth of the 21st century.

Now, we're here today not because Laurel is different from so many other places like it, but rather because it's typical of the sort of work we need to be doing in this country to rebuild the infrastructure and restart our economy. These are projects and critical needs that have been ignored for too long, and they are the backbone of building the economy for the future.

Now, there are some in Washington who still haven't gotten the message. Maybe they don't understand that America has lost almost 2 million jobs in the past four months – 2 million jobs in the past four months; 30,000 jobs lost right here in Maryland in the last four months. Maybe they don't understand that we're in the midst of the worst economic recession in decades. Maybe they don't understand that the American people voted for and want change now, not tomorrow.

We can't go back to the failed approaches of tax breaks alone as the answer to our economic problems. The President and I support tax relief for the middle class. And the recovery act includes a down payment on those tax relief – that tax relief. But the republic – but the recovery act has to include prompt and substantial investment in job creation by building the economy of the 21st century.

So my message today is this: The economic policies of the past eight years are proven failures. The nation's economy is hurting. It needs action now.

And we can't think small. We can't stand by and do nothing and we can't repeat the failures of the past. The Obama administration has asked the Congress to finish its work by the President's Day recess, by this weekend. And it's imperative – it's imperative – that we meet this deadline.

The American people are looking for us to act. And the time for us to do that is now. And the time for me to give you some relief from the cold is now, as well. The good news is I can take a couple questions. The bad news is you'll probably have to ask them.