



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on May 27, 2022

## **Biden to Visit Uvalde; But What About the Sites of Tragedies He Never Visited?**

On Thursday, the White House announced that President Biden will travel to Uvalde, Texas, on Sunday. His visit was announced just three days after the deadly school shooting that claimed the lives of 19 students and two teachers and left 17 injured at Robb Elementary School in the small South Texas community.

As CNBC reports:

In a brief statement, the White House said that the president and first lady Jill Biden “will travel to Uvalde, Texas to grieve with the community that lost twenty-one lives in the horrific elementary school shooting.”

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters shortly after the travel announcement that Biden is scheduled to meet with religious and community leaders, and mourn with the families whose children were killed.

“The president and the first lady believe it is important to show their support for the community during this devastating time and to be there for the families of the victims,” Jean-Pierre said. “We cannot become numb to this. We will not accept this.”



AP Images

While visiting the sites of tragedies is something presidents traditionally do, Biden has had a strange knack for selecting which tragedies seem to warrant his presence. For instance, he is visiting Uvalde, and last week he visited Buffalo, New York — the site of another mass shooting. He also made it a point to visit Atlanta after a shooter killed eight and wounded one at three spas in that city in March of last year. He visited with the family of Jacob Blake, who was shot and seriously injured by police officer Rusten Sheskey in Kenosha, Wisconsin, in 2020. Though the media and prominent Democrats — including Biden — spread the false narrative of an unarmed black man being shot by a white police officer, it has since been confirmed that Blake was armed with a knife at the time he was shot.

But there are tragedies that apparently are not worthy of Biden’s visits. For instance, Biden did not visit



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Waukesha, Wisconsin, after Darrell Brooks plowed his SUV through a Christmas parade there, deliberately swerving to hit as many people as possible. Brooks, who is black, killed six people and injured another 62. Of his victims, at least one child died and another 17 were injured. But, again, Biden did not visit. At the time, then-White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said, “It’s not something that I have a trip to preview at this point in time,” adding that “any president going to visit a community requires a lot of assets” and requires “taking their resources.”

It would be easy to imagine that Biden did not visit Waukesha because Brooks used a car instead of a gun and Biden isn’t trying to ban cars, but that doesn’t quite seem to cover it. Because Biden also did not visit Oxford Township, Michigan, after a 15-year-old boy opened fire at his school, killing four students and injuring another seven.

Biden did not visit Collierville, Tennessee, after the son of refugees from Myanmar shot and killed one person and injured 13 others before taking his own life at a Kroger grocery store there. He also did not visit Boulder, Colorado, after a 21-year-old Syrian immigrant there shot and killed 10 people, including a local on-duty police officer at a King Soopers supermarket.

That is far from an exhaustive list of Biden’s no-shows, but it should be sufficient to illustrate the point. Biden is going to Uvalde, but other places where tragedy has struck did not meet whatever standard is used to warrant a visit.

It would also be easy to imagine that race may play some part in which tragedies Biden visits and which he does not, but, again, that doesn’t quite cover it. After all, the shooter at Oxford Township was white and used a gun, at a school no less. That ticks off three boxes right there. But then again, Oxford Township is an affluent white community, so perhaps that costs several points in whatever metric Biden uses to decide.

Then again, perhaps [Occam’s razor](#) should be applied here: The simplest solution is usually correct. It is just as easy to imagine that Biden’s decision to go or not to go to this tragedy or that tragedy is made more by his ability — from one day to the next — to be seen in public and form sentences. After all, in September, Biden *claimed* that he had visited the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh after a lone gunman killed 11 and injured another six during morning services on October 27, 2018. Biden made his claim on September 2, 2021, just before the Jewish holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. In a virtual address, he said, “I remember spending time at the — you know, going to the — you know, the Tree of Life Synagogue, speaking with the — just — it just is amazing these things are happening — happening in America.”

After Biden’s claim, Tree of Life rabbi Hazzan Jeffrey Myers told the *New York Post* that Biden had never visited. The White House later clarified that — as it turns out — it was a phone call.

So, while Biden is planning a visit to Uvalde only days after the shooting there — though there are some sites of tragedies he *never* visited — he may *think* he visited them. Because he called. Or because he talked to Jill about those places. Or because he heard someone mention those places.

He might visit, he might not. And whether he does or not, he might not know it himself.



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