Weather forces president to move his speech inside

Republicans hoot: "Having trouble filling the seats?"

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Democratic officials are moving President Barack Obama's convention speech Thursday indoors because of the possibility of severe weather. Obama had planned to accept his party's nomination in an outdoor football stadium before a crowd of up to 30,000 people. But Obama officials said forecasters have predicted severe thunderstorms Thursday in the 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. slot, raising concerns about the safety of supporters, volunteers, staff members and law enforcement.

Officials said Thursday's entire program would be moved indoors, including Vice President Joe Biden's speech. The event will be held at the Time Warner Cable Arena, the site of the first two days of the convention proceedings.

The move will significantly reduce the number of people Obama will speak to in person.

Republicans, who canceled the first day of their own convention due to weather in Tampa, Fla., accused Democrats of downgrading their events because of low enthusiasm.

"Problems filling the seats" infused Republican National Committee spokeswoman Kirsten Kukowski.

Steve Kerrigan, who heads the Democratic convention, said more than 61,000 people had signed up for credentials to attend the outdoor speech but now could not be accommodated because of the smaller venue. Kerrigan organized the new event.

Murray gets her say today

The Seattle Times

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — U.S. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., is scheduled to speak to national convention delegates Thursday morning. The former head of the Senate Appropriations Committee is likely to use the platform to address the issue of children's health care and a way of providing health care for poor children.

But the point was to move the speech because of the weather.

Michelle Obama's talk takes a personal tone

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Michelle Obama's message: President Barack Obama is just like you.

"Barack knows the American dream because he's lived it," the first lady told the Democratic National Convention on Tuesday in an address intended to reassure voters that his husband shares their values — hard work, perseverance and optimism — while also drawing a contrast between him and Mitt Romney.

Mrs. Obama never mentioned the president's Republican challenger, who grew up in a world of privilege and wealth, but the point was clear as she moved a tapestry of their early years together, when money was tight and times were tough, when they were "so in love, and so in debt." She remembered about the man who now occupies the Oval Office pulling his favorite coffee table out of the trash and wearing dress shoes that were half a size too small. And she told stories about a president who still takes time to eat dinner with his daughters nearly every night, answering their questions about the news and strategizing about middle-school friendships.

With a mix of personal anecdotes and policy talk, Mrs. Obama's speech was her most political yet.

"Today, after so many struggles and triumphs and moments that have tested my husband in ways I never could have imagined, I have seen firsthand that being president doesn't change who you are — it reveals who you are," she said.

To that end, the first lady painted a portrait of a leader who knows the struggles of everyday Americans, who listens to them as president and who pushes an agenda with their interests in mind.

"That's the man I see in those quiet moments late at night, hunched over his desk, poring over the letters people have sent him," she said. "I see the concern in his eyes ... I heard the determination in his voice as he told me, "You won't believe what these folks are going through, Michelle ... It's not easy. It's not easy. We've got to keep working to fix this. We've got so much more to do.""

She added: "I see how that's what drives Barack Obama every single day."