Rhetoric At Work

Directions: Read the excerpt from a political debate speech on income inequality. As you read, look for the use of **rhetorical appeals**: ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion), and logos (logic). Annotate where you see these appeals in action. Answer the questions that follow, explaining how each appeal strengthens the speaker's argument.

Excerpt from Debate Speech on Income Inequality

"Fellow citizens, our nation was built on the belief that hard work should lead to dignity and opportunity. Yet today, too many of our neighbors work two or three jobs and still cannot pay rent. This is not the promise our parents fought for, nor the future our children deserve.

Let me be clear: this is not just about statistics, it's about people. I have met the nurse who works twelve-hour shifts, only to choose between groceries and her child's medication. I have spoken with the young graduate who, despite his degree, carries crushing debt and no path to stability.

We can fix this, but it requires courage. Policies that favor only the wealthiest few must change. We must raise wages, protect unions, and ensure that opportunity is not reserved for the privileged. This is not a radical dream; it is the fulfillment of our nation's founding promise: liberty and justice for all."

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1. Identify one example of **ethos** in the passage. How does it strengthen the speaker's credibility?

2. Identify one example of **pathos** in the passage. How does it appeal to the audience's emotions?

3. Identify one example of **logos** in the passage. How does it appeal to logic or reason?

4. How do these appeals work together to strengthen the overall argument?

5. Do you find the speaker's argument effective? Explain why or why not, using evidence from the text.