Mikie speech

Aug 27 - Greater Atlantic City Chamber at the Seaview Golf Club in Galloway Township

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGtzS48E6PU>

FULL CC

And I've learned in the Navy that you can either lead, follow, or get out of the way. And right now, we are going to need strong leadership to navigate us through these difficult times. You know, it's interesting because I've told some of you this feels like the least partisan election I've read. And that's reminding me a little bit of the Navy where I never flew missions with Democrats or Republicans. We all understood that our mission was to serve the United States of America. And we were all able to work together to do just that. And I think that's what we need in New Jersey as we bring people together around our mission to better serve the people of New Jersey and to fight for a different future than a lot of what we see coming from Washington DC. But here at home, we're facing a number of huge economic challenges. In fact, our state is known as the 49th in the nation for business friendliness. For too long, leaders in Trenton haven't been responsive enough to the challenges facing business here in our state. And that's why I am going to make sure that we're prioritizing critical investments in Atlantic City and Atlantic County for key priorities like public transit, housing, and public safety. with you to solve these problems. So, here's my plan to make our state work for business. First, I'm going to streamline and simplify the new business licensing process and overhaul the state permitting process to reduce costs and delays that are holding the major projects back. So, this is going to involve making timelines available to all of you, making sure I am tracking those from the governor's office, and setting deadlines. We've seen in the state next door that Josh Shapiro has cut small business per permitting times by 90%. This is why we need to act quickly because several of our businesses has talked to me about how they're expanding in Pennsylvania and not here in New Jersey. So, I'm going to create a fasttrack team at the governor's office to expedite these approvals and make sure that they are your advocate in the permitting process. In other words, building a government that gets to yes, not works to get to no. I'll also dramatically cut how long these times take. Secondly, on taxes and fees. It's just too expensive to operate New Jersey and it makes it hard for businesses to compete. So, eliminate the new business registration fee to provide immediate tax relief. We don't want people hamstrung and opening up the very businesses that are the lifeblood of our communities, our economy, and how we employ people. I'll also develop new revenue sources that don't rely on new taxes. For example, I'll boost revenue for New Jersey Transit through transit oriented development so that we don't need to rely on the corporate transit fee. Third, skyrocketing energy costs are imposing a huge tax on our businesses. That's why I'll declare a state of emergency on utility costs on day one freezing rate hikes. I'll massively increase New Jersey's power generation by eliminating red tape and permitting delays to build an energy arsenal in our state because more power generation means lower bills. It also means immediately breaking ground on some of our solar projects and battery storage projects, expediting capacity upgrades at our nuclear plants and modernizing existing natural gas facilities to make them cleaner and more investments into Atlantic City and Atlantic County. Oxland bus rapid transit lines and service as well as microtransit options throughout the region to ensure that New Jersey transit isn't seen down here as North Jersey Transit. I'll ensure that Atlantic County receives its fair share of discretionary non-competitive grant funding for critical priorities like education, infrastructure, transit, housing, and public safety. I'll work hard to protect the thousands of good paying jobs that this city and county have relying on gaming and business convention industries. And I'll fight for fair representation on stateappointed bodies like the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority. Each of these challenges will not be easy to solve. But I promise you today that I will work with you and take on anyone that we need to take on to move this state and this county and this city forward. We all saw the national jobs report last month showing that tariff policies are paralyzing our economy. And in response to this news, what did Trump do? He fired the civil servants who collect the jobs data itself. That is not a solution-oriented government. My opponent has said he doesn't disagree with a single thing that Trump has done, including tariffs and turning our critical economic data into propaganda. I've spoken to small businesses from solar companies to HVAC installers and they're struggling. Trump has made it almost impossible to run some of these businesses and my opponent doesn't say a word.