# Oct 16 - Sherrill - njcom

Yeah, I don't even want to tell you what my electric bill was this summer. It was horrible. We um have a uh very old house and um I love it. It's it's a great house, but it is a house that I'm constantly working to make more energy efficient. And um judging from the electricity bills this summer have fa I failed. Well, I'm declaring a state of emergency on day one and I'm freezing rate hikes. And I'm doing that for several reasons. Number one, because I am furious that as I trace back what's going on in the utility markets. This has been something that was foreseen and yet too many different organizations kick the can down the road and then suddenly put it all in the backs of the New Jersey rateayers. So, I'm really angry about that that that sort of mismanagement of our utilities um led to the rateayer paying for it and especially people who as I charted out just can't afford it right now. We have some money that comes in through BPU from Reggie and others that we can use to defay some of this. But in speaking to a lot of the people that work in this industry too, I think it's made people take like I I think it's made people sort of shake off the cobwebs to say, "Oh yeah, we have a crisis and we can't kick the can down the road and we can't pretend it's not happening and we can't just hope it goes away. We all need to come to the table and deal with this." So housing costs have gone up tremendously. But you've also pointed something else out. We have um some of the most environmentally fragile places in our state because of climate change. The shore itself is um some of the most at risk from rising sea levels in the world. Um I'll also tell you and we have tons of river flooding. I've seen it in the Rawe, the Whippony, the Pacman, the Pake. Um, so we have all kinds of challenges, which is why we need to protect some of the wetlands and open spaces for community enjoyment, but we also need to build out housing infrastructure and so um, we need to have a statewide plan to do that and and that I think has been really lacking largely because of local control. So coming up with a statewide plan when you have five, you know, all all the municipalities weighing in, I I think has made it this environment where everybody is constantly litigating over it because there's no vision. And so it's a fight and what happens in too many cases is some mayor of some town will be really clever and they don't want some project. So, they zone it industrial and then five mayors later, some developer comes in and says, "We're going to build a warehouse on this soccer field." And the mayor's like, "No, you won't." And then they're like, "It's zoned industrial. You know, you guys did this." So, I think a a broader vision. Um, and that's going to involve zoning help from the state. It's going to involve um not only developing and transit oriented development, repurposing some of this commercial development and building out on already built upon state so we can preserve open spaces. Um but also looking at some areas of the state which historically had been more dense like Trenton and Atlantic City which I think really could be thriving cities with some support from the state. And then at the same time looking at where we're going to build new neighborhoods as we think about the economy of South Jersey and how we're going to invest there and what transportation across the state's going to look like. And this is a statewide plan. This is okay. Here's a new transit hub that we're going to build out. A new neighborhood's going to be here. And it's, you know, going to be job opportunities to get here, here, and here. And this area is going to be um more open space, wetlands, um flooding prevention, etc. And we're going to have to we're going to have to get buy in. Um and I was just asked recently about the Glboro Camden line. And right now we have tons of opportunity. We have a lot of people who really want it. I mean, you know, connecting Rowan and Camden and the Eds and Meds corridor could be great for the economy, but then we have these groups that are really against it. And so, as governor, I'm going to bring everybody together and say, "What is the problem here? What are you worried about? And here's the vision here and what it would look like and here's what we're committed to. And then let's get buy in from the area or an agreement that, you know, we're going to we're going to push in here, here, and here, and this is the way we're going to do it. We love this. We love this development. Here's why this development could harm wetlands. Let's But this kind of constant, we just fight and fight and fight and then somebody forces it and something happens. But it doesn't feel thoughtful and it doesn't feel and I doesn't just not feel like it. I can tell you 1,000% we're not getting the housing developed that we need. So, um, we, you know, as I've said in numerous occasions, uh, we have more municipalities than California and we have more school districts than municipalities. And we have school districts where they're just not even running a K through 12 program. So we really need to address the administrative fees because that's a key area where if you ask any parent, any family in this state, where do they want their money to go for schools? It's kids, right, and education, it's teachers, it's some of the old school buildings and infrastructure that we need. It's not this bloated administrative system. So, we really do need to um share services, consolidate some of these administrative systems. I'd also um I'm also going to address the state health benefits plan that so between schools and the state health benefits plan. That's where a lot of the costs are coming from for property taxes. And so, um we've seen the state health benefits plan go up by 20 30% a year. So, um, immediately getting an independent auditor in there to claw back some of the funding for the state, which is nobody knows, nobody's taking a look under the hood. That should save millions. But also then having more competition in the market, looking at the rules and regulations for Horizon, which sort of make it non-competitive in certain ways and and really making sure we're driving down costs and fixing the state health benefits plan. And then we also have um the municipal courts where we could share services there. I think that would be a key place too to see costs go down. Um, and that is all the property tax. And I think that's really different from my opponent who again and again just does not seem to be concerned with driving down taxes. He's voted to raise them at every level of government he's been in. Um, he's been supportive of Trump re-implementing the state and local tax deduction cap, which uh takes off the table about $30 billion in property tax relief. And he's even said stuff like, you know, I think people are willing to pay a little more taxes in their town. So, um, I'm going to drive those down. Well, I I think in energy, for example, in fact, uh, Murphy himself has has been on the other side of what I say I'm going to do. You know, I have built out this plan and it's not where he's gone. Um, I also think I have a very different background and come from a different place. So that this idea of having a culture shift in Trenton, having public servants who actually serve the public and cutting through the red tape and demanding that our public serve the public and and having the vision so everyone in government's working together and we don't have these kind of siloed cabinets um DCA, DOT, D working, you know, kind of in their own a lot of projects go through all of these places and we need to all be marching to the beat of the same drum. So that that's different. And I think what people are seeing because, you know, that kind of gets to the difficulty of running in the same political party as a two-term governor. And that's often been almost impossible here. But I think the difference here is people see, you know, Jack Chidarelli is a perennial candidate. He's running for the third time. He's brought no new ideas. And now his latest stickick is he's just going to do whatever Trump says. And so uh that I think has become more apparent each day. And now this gateway tunnel thing I think everybody's like even now you can't even come up. You can't even be your own man here. Um I think is having the effect of people seeing that he's actually the status quo candidate who won't bring change to the state. Whereas I think I've laid out a pretty strong platform of exactly how I am going to create change. So, I am going to um we are going to see third grade reading scores go up in my administration. Um that is just a key inflection point. And so, we see um if you can't read at grade level in the third grade, you're going to have a really hard time then being successful in your academic career. meaning in fourth grade you're going to have trouble reading your math and social studies and history assignments and you know as you go up science and health I mean it's just it it sort of snowballs from there which is why so many educators see that as kind of this key inflection point we know what works uh phonics space reading education which has that's actually how I learned to read but I'll tell you I have four kids and that's not what they were given to read and um uh for various reasons I had to help some of them learn to it was very very difficult. So uh so getting back to phonics based reading I know the state has some funding and and I want to make sure we have that so teachers can get that kind of training as we move into phonics based reading education. Um, also highintensity tutoring. So if a student needs extra support, that's a very particular evidence-based kind of tutoring that's tied to the school, that's a half an hour, three times a week, that's based on the school curriculum, same tutor each time. That kind of tutoring has shown really good results in getting kids back on track as well. I certainly uh would require um the MMR vaccines. uh you know if you look at the numbers of children dying from things like measles and mumps and rebel if you look at polio and to think that we had all but eradicated these diseases and now we're walking that back I just it's it's been 50 years we've been giving these vaccines and because of that hundreds of thousands of kids lives have been saved and it's not just the kids. It's when you go into schools and you're exposed to this and right now we are, you know, we are seeing across the country movement away from her immunity. I think some of these diseases, it's about 95. We're down at 93. I think we've already had 10 measles cases here in New Jersey. We're the most densely populated state in the nation. Imagine your mom or dad visiting you, your sen, you know, if they're seniors like mine are, and your kid comes home from school and gives them measles, mubella. I mean, imagine if um you have a baby who's too little to be vaccinated. I had four kids. So, a lot of times I had kids in school and I had newborn a newborn at home. Um, and you know, you you know, the baby dies because as we're seeing, I mean, we're seeing babies die across the country from whooping cough, pertasus. It's I mean, to think that we had all but eradicated this and we're going to walk that back based on RFK Jr. who seems to get a lot of his medical information from influencers on TikTok. I I just it's mindboggling to me. And so, uh yeah, we are going to make sure that kids are appropriately vaccinated to go to school.