# 10/02/2025 - Ciattarelli - ChatBox

Good to be back, David. Thank you. So are you comfortable with how all this went down, leaked to your campaign, then to a news site that put out the other part of the story that worked to your advantage? David, it's unfortunate that the National Archives screwed up when they fulfilled a Freedom of Information Act request, perfectly legal to ask for freedom of information in New Jersey. It's unfortunate that when they did they they didn't redact certain information And so and they've apologized they took responsibility for what they did and they apologized nothing illegal has been done But this is all the smokescreen and spin. Here's the bottom line There was a cheating scandal at the Naval Academy in 1994 my opponent was involved in it and she was punished. She wasn't allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony. Her name did not appear in the commencement exercise program. She says it's because she didn't want to turn in her her classmates. I don't think that's true but the way to prove that it is true and what the truth really is all she has to do is approve the release of her disciplinary records and if what she is saying is true why the hesitancy in releasing the records and by the way she didn't want to turn in her fellow mates who were cheating what is she going to do when she gets to Trenton as governor and finds people who are gaming the system or doing wrong by New Jersey taxpayers. You said she was involved what does that mean? She was punished for a reason why was she punished? She says it's because she wasn't going to turn her classmates. Then the story took a little bit of a pivot and she said it was because she knew that there was a test that was circulating prior to the actual test being taken. All she has to do is approve the release of her disciplinary records. Don't know what the big deal is. If she's telling the truth, those records will say exactly what she's saying and it's over and done with. It doesn't change the fact that she was punished. What did she do that was so wrong that we know of that disqualifies her for the governor's job? Are you saying that what's in these records may be what disqualifies her for the governor's job? I think if you're not being transparent about a time that you were punished, particularly at one of our military academies, I think the people of New Jersey deserve the right to know exactly why you were punished. And the release of her disciplinary records would reveal that. Yeah. So lots of wild speculation, as you may have guessed, on social media, where wild speculation goes. Well, David, I mean, listen, not the first time we've seen a lack of transparency here. I mean, as congressperson, she did violate federal law with regard to stock trades and stock reporting. The New York Times reports that while sitting on the House Armed Services Committee, she was trading defense stocks. Are we beginning to see a pattern here? You're saying that she purposely and knowingly changed, exchanged stocks or bought stocks or sold stocks while she was doing work in Congress that involved military contracts. You're saying she knowingly did this. David, even if it's not illegal, it doesn't pass the sniff test that while sitting on the House Armed Services Committee, the New York Times reports that she was trading defense stocks. What do you expect we'll learn if she does release these records? You know, there's lots of wild speculation that I was saying. What do you think is in there? Listen, I think it could be a couple of things other than what it is that she's saying. What she's saying is that she was punished because she wouldn't turn in her classmates. If that's the case, let's see the disciplinary records. They probably say something else. That's why she doesn't want to release them. Well, you say they probably say something else. What do you think they probably say? David, I'll leave it up to you to speculate, but my guess is it's a whole lot worse than not turning in your classmates. All right. Don't you think our privacy has been invaded enough? National Archives is taking responsibility and apologized for what they did. You also know, Assemblyman, that the public is very cynical and they know that the President of the United States, that this is not something that would be beyond the President of the United States to orchestrate for a guy who he supports for governor. David, if you're cynical, you're inclined to believe anything. But I will tell you, it's a huge smokescreen and spin to think that it was the President of the United States that got involved in fulfilling a very simple Freedom of Information Act. That's almost like saying that I as governor would get involved with you making an OPA request of a small community in one of our 21 counties. Come on. All right, let's move on to some policy stuff here. The shutdown, right? Let's just go ahead and blame the President, right? Because I mean, he says it's on the President. Well, there's nothing my opponent won't blame on the President. As I always say to people, if you get a flat tire today, it's the President's fault. Listen, a shutdown is unfortunate. Let's hope that they, this is a negotiation. It's not like we haven't seen this kind of thing before. I've just learned of it. I've been in meetings all day. What I have also learned is that there is a bipartisan group that is doing everything they can to avert the shutdown. And my opponent has decided not to be part of that bipartisan group to avert it. She'd rather vote no and that's exactly what she did. All right. So how do you get my $600 a month electrical bill down to what was an already ridiculous $200 a month that it used to be? Can you really tell people that the governor is going to make that kind of change? You bet I can. I'll tell you how in a second. Let me tell you how I can't. By declaring a state of emergency to freeze electricity rates at an all-time high rate. Why would we freeze them here? We want them back here. And you have 77 sitting Democratic legislators, 52 of which are on the ballot this year, and not one of them has endorsed that illegitimate plan put forth by my opponent that even the governor has said on TV. I don't think you can do that. Here's how we do it, David. We pull out a reggie. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is a carbon tax policy that has failed New Jersey. Murphy put us in. Seven and a half years later, electricity is no less expensive. The air is no cleaner and half a billion dollars a year is going to other states for their grid, not ours. The Democratic governor of Pennsylvania is not in Reggie. We won't be either on day one of my administration. I could save half a billion dollars a year for ratepayers, for homeowners, tenants and businesses by pulling out of Reggie. rbon tax policy. So Reggie pulling out of Reggie is is going to take my rate down back to where it's usually. There'll be less charges on your bill. And in addition to that I've got to repurpose the six plants that Phil Murphy shut down. I've got to accelerate solar on the rooftops of all this warehousing across the state which is prime real estate. Talk to any solar developer about what Murphy's DEP does to slow that down. I want to expand our nuclear capability in South Jersey. I want to build three or four more new natural gas fire electricity generation plants. I want to lift the moratorium on the existing plants and we can be an exporter once again. I mean when Phil Murphy took off as we were an importer we were an exporter of electricity. Today we have to import it. Buy it through exchanges competing with a whole bunch of other states and that's the why electricity is through the roof. To my opponent my president is just another blatant lie in this campaign. It's all at the hands and the feet of the current administration. Let me make one thing perfectly clear. While he was shutting down everything that was producing electricity, he bet it all on wind. And seven and a half years later, show me a single wind turbine off the Jersey Shore producing electricity. It's been a failure. His entire energy policy has been a failure. And right now, New Jerseyans are paying through the nose. So you talk about nuclear and getting some of these plants that were shuttered back online. Is that going to require some kind of regulatory changes in the state that environmentalists may want to know about? My goodness, environmentalists should be very happy about the fact that when we reopen them, we won't use coal, we'll use natural gas. Yeah. There's already feeds that are already there. So, listen, we need a rational transition to the future. There are some people on the left that won't be happy with any fossil fuels being burned. I mean, the Democratic governor of Pennsylvania is burning seven coal-burning plants, natural gas like there's no tomorrow, just cut the ribbon on a new nuclear reactor. He's got the juice, it's abundant, it's reliable, it's cost effective. So not only is your monthly bill down, but he's getting economic development opportunities that we're not, including the data centers that are needed to support AI. That's a whole lot of jobs. All right, let's talk about your tax cut policies. Do you distinguish between taxes, by the way, and fees? Right, because I know you're going to say you're going to cut taxes, but a lot of times elected officials say, "Hey, we're going to cut taxes," and then they raise your fees over here, so it kind of evens out. You see it, you separate those two, right? David, let me say this. The middle class is being crushed today like never before. People at the lower rungs of the ladder are having trouble climbing, and it has everything to do with the affordability in crisis and all the fares and fees and taxes that have been raised over the last eight years. I'm going to very responsibly and surgically reduce the size and cost of our state government to afford a tax cut for individuals and businesses on the income tax side. With a new school funding formula, we can reduce property taxes. We're not increasing the sales tax. It's a blatant lie by my opponent, and we're not increasing fares or fees. We've got to make New Jersey affordable again. Government plays a role here, and part of it is to reduce the tax burden. New Jerseyans have the highest overall tax burden in the country. It needs to change. So how do you pay for that? I mean, you're talking about five or six different tax cuts there. You're going to reduce the size of government that much that you're going to we're going to be paying less so much less for it? A couple things I hope we can have a whole nother half hour to talk about the ways of making New Jersey a better place to do business when we do that we grow the economy that means there's more businesses paying the old tax not the new tax more people who are employed that means more income and sales tax because we're growing the base but the other point I'll make here is it took 238 years 238 years as a state to get the $36 billion state budget and in eight years we went from 36 billion to 59 billion a 70% increase if your property taxes were down if your income taxes were down if your electricity bill was down if your schools were performing magnificently and there wasn't overdevelopment in our suburban communities and our cities were vibrant you know what I would do I'd tip my cap to the Democratic opponents say it's all yours things are great here in New Jersey but they're not in my 64 years they've never been worse do you for instance when you're talking about budget cutting and budget right sizing do you keep programs like stay NJ and anchor I want to combine them we need property tax relief particularly for our seniors but I like programs that are fair and easy to administrate there's one aspect of one of those programs you just rattled off that to me I mean we're gonna send a property tax rebate check to people that are making five hundred thousand dollars a year I mean I know their property taxes are high and I'm not condemning them for earning that kind of money but we've got a whole lot of people that are struggling I think we should point the money mostly to the people who are struggling the most but if we freeze property taxes for everyone once they hit 870 if we make all retirement income tax-free the way it is in Pennsylvania if we allow you to deduct 100% of your New Jersey property taxes on your New Jersey tax return if we cap property taxes at 1% of the assessed value of the home for first-time homebuyers you know we can help a whole lot of people and with a new school funding formula we can help all those people in the middle too by lowering their property tax which is exactly what I'll work like hell to do. I move on to public safety you have a lieutenant governor who's in law enforcement or lieutenant governor candidate who's in law enforcement and you talk a lot about taking the handcuffs off of our cops what does that mean exactly? Well first of all what it means is not having an immigrant trust directive so no town in our state will be a sanctuary city will not be a sanctuary state. I believe that only encourages illegal immigration and it does handcuff our police in a number of different ways one of which is the administration of warrants. And the second thing is if any mayor feels that to keep his or her community safe they want their local PD to work in partnership with federal agency I don't think I should take that right away from them. But it also means getting rid of reform in bail reform. Cashless bail has created a professional criminal who's learned how to game the system and Talk to your local police arrest release repeat is real. What would you change about violent crime? Nonviolent crime is spiky. We have car thefts. We have break-ins Flash mobs on the Jersey Shore and at our malls Did you see what happened in Secaucus four weeks ago? Total lack of regard for law and order, total lack of respect for law enforcement. You're kind of conflating a couple of things there. You're talking about bail reform and then you talk about kids wilding in their cars. Let me ask you about bail reform. What would you change? You asked me, you know, how do we take the handcuffs off? First of all, we have to create an environment in which we respect law and order and respect law enforcement. But in terms of taking the handcuffs off, I don't have a problem with no-knock warrants. I don't have a problem with canines for crowd control. I don't have a problem necessarily with high-speed chases. We're not getting rid of qualified immunity, which my opponent voted yes on. These are all the things that make the job of local law enforcement harder. Why would we do that? As I go around the state of New Jersey, people want safe communities. The way to do that is by taking these handcuffs off, I just gave you four, and let them do their job. They're trained professionals. What about the other side of that, from communities that have been over-policed, and you, for instance, are being against or being for restrictions on public access to internal affairs records and being against community reform boards. David, if you did something seriously wrong at your place of business where you're employed, do you think it's fair that your employer make that your personnel records public going forward or backward? These are human resource issues. Now listen, are there bad cops? There's bad CPAs. There's bad doctors. I'm a bad broadcaster, but I'm not putting cuffs on people. Hey, here's the one thing that those who kind of go down this road never want to seem to mention. Every single law enforcement officer in this state has a body camera on that records everything. Everything. And anyone who's been violated is entitled to that video becoming public. That's good enough for me. But if there is for some reason a guy you know they don't always put on their their cameras or something happens to it shouldn't there be a venue for an investigation into all of that? Absolutely. There should never not be a venue for investigation. But do we take somebody's personnel records and make them public? Why do we want to shame cops? All right. So you spoke at the New Jersey Public Health Innovation PAC event, I guess this week or last week. The group is is far along on the anti-vax spectrum. It called into question just what vaccines you think should be mandated or what your vaccine policies would be. David, I vaccinated all four of my children. I would recommend that parents get their children vaccinated. The advocacy that you're referring to is really very passionate about two things. One of which is informed consent. Our parents being completely informed about vaccines. And also the other thing they're very concerned about is the volume of vaccines that are given in a very short period of time. Things are very different today in terms of the volumes of vaccines that a child gets compared to when you and I were children. And so I think those are fair things to discuss. Here in New Jersey we have a medical exemption. Here in New Jersey we also have a religious exemption. And I think the Democrats seem to have no problem with that because they've controlled the Assembly the Senate and the executive branch for the past eight years and they haven't tried to change it. They're in a perfectly perfect position to reform that if they wanted to and they haven't. So obviously they agree with a lot of what those people at that gala are advocating for. I want to talk a little bit about Donald Trump because I know you expect me to ask about Donald Trump. I'd be disappointed if you didn't. Exactly. So how do you think he's doing for New Jersey excluding killing the wind industry and congestion pricing? Excluding? Excluding those things because I know that's two things that you always go to. So I want to say yes, fine. What else you got? Well let's talk about the big beautiful bill for a second. This quadruples the SALT deduction, the ability to deduct state and local taxes now up to $40,000 on your federal tax return. It was $10,000, it's now $40,000. That's really important in a state that has the highest property tax in the nation. It doubles the child care tax credit for families with young kids. It doesn't tax tips, overtime or social security. It tax credit for those who send their kids to private school. I know you're going to run through a list of things I got you but a lot of these tax cuts for instance No tax on tips etc those things sunset a lot of the other corporate taxes. They don't sunset Well the things that I just rattled off are really important to New Jersey for the next few years. What I'm saying is that this big beautiful bill is big and beautiful for those who already got things going pretty good and not so big and beautiful long term or longer term for those who don't have it so good. David I'm gonna respectfully disagree when I talk to parents about what they're having to pay out of pocket for child care. It's one of those things we don't talk about enough with regard to New Jersey's affordability crisis, but I will tell you that parents are paying anywhere between $10,000 and $20,000 a year for child care. And as a CPA, let me tell you, that's net pay. You got to earn $23,000 to $24,000 to $25,000 in gross to afford those kind of bills. That child care tax credit is huge. And for those who send their kids to private school, let's not forget about the private school tax credit. It starts in 2027 and your governor has to opt in. My opponent won't because he's owned by the NJEA. Could you in one minute explain how you would change the school funding formula and how it would be different? You bet I will. You bet the state's going to take over the cost of special education. Go ahead, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. The state's going to ° take over the cost of special education in our school districts. It's causing a crowding out effect, also causes disparity in the quality of special ed from one district to the next. We can't have that. Next, every district gets X for every English speaking student, X plus for every English language learner because that student is a bit more educationally intensive, and then every district for their non-special ed students better be in a reasonable range, somewhere between $14,000 and $20,000 a year. And if they're not, they'll lose their state aid because if they're not, they're wasting taxpayer dollars. I want a quick answer to this one as well because I had a lot of stuff I'm not going to be able to get to. It's Taylor Ham. I'm with you on that one, by the way. NJ Transit, is it going to kill you before you fix it? Nope. I'm creating the Garden State Transportation Authority and all of our mass transit systems will be under one roof. The Atlantic City Expressway, the Parkway, the Turnpike, New Jersey Transit, they all produce revenue. We'll have a dedicated revenue stream called the New Jersey State Budget. We'll put that under one management structure, greater accountability, greater transparency. But I will say this with regard to New Jersey Transit, I'm always very transparent, we need to reevaluate every single train and bus line. And those that do not have adequate ridership, we're going to have to make some tough decisions so we can dedicate the limited resources we have to the routes that provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number of commuters. All right one way of hearing that I think is saying that you're going to cut off some routes that aren't maybe serving a lot of people but a lot of times those kind of routes are in rural areas and where people have a hard time getting around. David we are a sprawl state we can't be people the more we try the more we raise taxes and fares we are dying a slow death by a thousand cuts here in New Jersey we need change we need a hands-on CEO governor that's going to make the bold decisions to point us in a different direction we can't afford another four years of what the past eight have been all right I can't let you get out of here without saying mentioning the story that was big for us for a little bit so WNET which operates and NJPBS that's us is ending its relationship with the state at the end of June it'll be up to the next governor to determine the future of the state's public broadcasting if you're the guy what are some of the the the parameters that you would like to see from a successor to NJ PBS and do you have anyone in mind now David if the next governor governor Ciattarelli is going to agree to subsidize PBS and I'm not saying that I am because there's some difficult decisions we need to make but if I were I'd prefer see a PBS that's broadcasting New Jersey news and not necessarily the BBC or anything outside the United States. We're using taxpayer dollars here. I think that's a reasonable conversation and a reasonable request. Well, I'm not even talking about subsidizing it, which didn't occur until like four years ago. And it's not even about NJPBS. It's about what's next. What the state is going to set with the parameters for a public broadcaster. Are you cool with what the parameters are now? I'm not familiar with what the parameters are now, David. All I will tell you is that everything is going to be evaluated. But one thing I will tell you about the next budget, in the last 24 months we've had more than $2 billion in pet pork projects here in New Jersey. State government under Governor Ciattarelli is not going to be paying for French art museums or turf fields in anybody's backyard. We're not doing that anymore. How do you do that? How do you stop the legislature from putting a billion dollars into the budget the day before it goes to a vote? David, as you know, the New Jersey governorship is the most powerful in the nation by state constitution. That's a fact. And one of the executive powers given to our governor when they redrew the constitution in 1947 is simply this. I've got line item veto. And he's not afraid to use it folks. All right. Republican gubernatorial candidate Jack Ciattarelli. Always good to see you man. We'll see you out there. All right David. Thank you.