Sep 2 - Jack speech

Irvington

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Now the moment has come to introduce the great candidate, the candidate who knows the importance of addressing the community, Jack. We want you more. Thank you all for being here tonight. These three great assembly candidates are the reason why we're going to flip the assembly this year and turn it Republican for the first time in 30 years. Guys, congratulations. [Music] I heard someone saying we're comfortable tonight. Obviously, we're comfortable tonight. We're all New Jerseyians, aren't we? All New Jerseyians first and foremost. So, um it's great to be here tonight. And it's not my first time at Irvington. It won't be my last time at Irvington. I'll be back before November 4th. And I'll be back after we win on November 4th. Uh, one of the questions I get asked most often is why you run for governor. So 100 years ago, my grandparents came here from Italy. My grandfather started out in the ditch as a laborer for the water company and uh saved his nickels and dimes and worked his way up became a very successful independent contractor in the 20s, 30s and 40s at a time when it was not particularly easy for that type of immigrant to be that kind of successful. My parents were very very successful restaurant bar owners and I followed in my grandparents and parents footstep and I'm a two-time business owner here in the state after attending Seat Hall University in South Orange for six years where I got my bachelors in accounting and my masters in finance. And so when I'm asked why are you running for governor, it's really simple. I want today's New Jerseyians and future generations of New Jerseyians, no matter what their skin color, no matter what their race, creed or color, no matter what their zip code, to feel confident they can achieve their American dream right here in New Jersey. And so today, sadly, a great many people don't feel confident about achieving their American dream here in New Jersey. Whether it is the education of their dreams, the job of their dreams, raising a family here, starting a business here, retiring here, these are all the things that people feel insecure, if not fearful of today. And so I believe that we can fix that. I believe leadership matters. When something I love is broken, I want to fix it. And things are broken here in New Jersey, particularly in some of our urban centers where we don't see the two things that I think all Americans want foremost, opportunity and security. Opportunity comes in the form of educational opportunity. And then if you take advantage of a great educational opportunity, the economic opportunity that comes with it, and then when you achieve those two things, you usually can achieve security. Now, eight years ago, our current governor came into places like Irvington and Patterson and Newark and Trenton and Atlantic City and Camden and promised educational justice, economic justice, environmental justice, social justice. We're almost eight years later. I haven't seen any of that. I haven't seen any of that. And so I'm not here to make you promises that I'm not going to keep. What I am going to tell you is that as as your governor, I'm going to do everything in my power to make sure there's every opportunity for each and every New Jerseyian to achieve their dreams right here. And in our urban centers, I think that must start with educational choice. Now, the Democratic Party will often try to say, particularly to minority communities, that we do a better job of representing you than Republicans. They will fight for you. I ask you, who is it that truly has educational choice? People who can afford to send their kids to private school. Who is it that can't afford doesn't get educational choice? People that can't afford to send their kids to private school. Now, that's not just an urban area issue. There's people in the suburbs, too, no matter what their race, creed, or color that may not be able to afford private school. But here's my point. We need to fix the educational system today. Today, in Norc alone, 80% of eighth graders are not on grade level for reading, writing, and math. The data is pretty clear. If you're not on grade level or critical life skills like that, by the time you're done with eighth grade, you will be undermployed most of your life. Okay? And so, we need to get people on grade level. So, what I'm going to do on day one is hold our public school systems accountable all throughout the state. What we need to do is get more rigorous with our academic curriculum. What we need to do is get back to emphasizing critical life skills like reading, writing, and math. There are other things being taught at our schools that I personally believe and I think you're in agreement that belong at home between parents and their children. 100%. What we need in New Jersey is something that Louisiana implemented in the post pandemic when there was so much learning loss because the schools were closed. Here in New Jersey, those schools were closed for two years. This is a governor that opened up our nursing homes but closed down our schools during the pandemic. I want you to think about that for a second. Let me repeat that. He opened up the nursing homes. We closed down the schools for two years and we had significant learning loss in this state. And so what we desperately need is what Louisiana did and something I've been advocating for since the time of the pandemic, a high impact curriculum. What is that exactly? If your child is behind grade level in critical life skills like reading, writing, math, we will spend the entire next marking period and the one thereafter getting them up to speed, getting them on grade level for reading, writing, and math. We need a high school. That's something we can do today. The other thing that we can do tomorrow is provide educational choice with a voucher program like we've seen in Arizona, Ohio, and Florida, and also educational choice through charter schools. Now, during the Christy era, and I didn't necessarily agree with everything that Governor Christie did, but one thing I thought he did right, he opened up charter schools in urban areas. And the charter schools in Newark are some of the best performing schools in the state. And isn't it interesting that every time there was a charter school, there's a lottery to determine who is fortunate enough to get in. And what breaks my heart is each time one of those charter schools has tried to open through the lottery, the demand has exceeded the supply, which means some families were going back to what what they thought was a failing school system. So think about that for a second. So what we can do today is a high impact curriculum. What we can do tomorrow is educational choice through vouchers and through charter schools. And that is the first thing that we need to do quite frankly. Not just in our urban areas but all throughout the state where a school system is failing their students. What determines if a school system is failing their students? Attendance rate, graduation rate, performance on standardized tests, readiness for career if a child is not going to college. Talk to county clerks today. When 18year-olds are coming in to register to vote, they're printing their name on the application. So, if we as a society have decided to stop teaching script or cursive, we're not going to at least teach our children how to sign their name. I mean, even if you have an e document, do you not have to sign your John Hancock? Right. This is what's going on today. So, first and foremost, as governor, my job is to get our educational system back in track all throughout the state, but particularly in those school systems that are failing their students. And with educational opportunity, then comes economic opportunity. So, let's get our schools to be performing well. Something else I want to do in our major urban centers. We need urban revitalization while being very, very sensitive to gentrification. Now, we've seen magnificent urban development, urban renewal on what is called the Gold Coast of Jersey City. There's only one problem with that. gentrification in a very very insensitive way. The people who lived there for decades were relocated, dislocated, and shown no respect for. If we're going to have urban redevelopment, the people who live there now have to be given the first opportunity to take advantage of the economic opportunity that comes with urban rede redevelopment. And so that's what we're going to do in our major urban centers. and in so doing make people of all race, creeds, and color want to live in our urban centers. Again, many of the suburbs that we see all throughout the New Jersey are beautiful, but suburbs are not the engines of economic growth. Vibrant cities are the engines of economic growth. It's vibrant cities. And so, we need to make our cities vibrant again. We see pockets of vibrancy. We see business owners taking it upon themselves to open up their businesses. But what I want to see in our major urban centers are two additional things. One, our banks are not adhering to the commercial lending act. What does that mean? You know what that means? They're not making a certain percent of their loans available to minority communities in our urban centers. That was the whole point of the commercial lending act, so that people of color can get access to capital. As governor, I'll make sure that our banks adhere to commercial lending. What I also want to see us do in our major urban centers is set up through the economic development authority within state government something I call franchise universities where you go and you can attend a course over one two or three months and learn how to own a franchise. Right? And so with the type of urban renewal I've spoken of, and that includes low, moderate, and market rate units, and with the type of economic development I've spoken of, that really touches upon something that's critically important for our minority communities because in this country, you build equity through home ownership, you build wealth through business ownership. and we're not seeing that happen in our communities of color and that's wrong. So, I'm committed to making all that happen. I do want to open up the floor for questions. I'm not somebody that likes a long monologue. I prefer a dialogue and Jessica's not allowed to ask the first question. Okay? She's from Mammoth County. I want to hear from somebody from Irvington. I want to hear from somebody in Essex County. But there's a couple things I want you to know about me before we get to the Q&amp;A. I've already told you that three generations of Cheddarellis have achieved their American dream right here in New Jersey. And I've already told you what my primary motivation is for running. Because of our hard work, three generations of Cheddarellis have all been pretty fortunate. So the point I'm trying to make with the utmost humility is I don't need this job. Well, let me make one thing perfectly clear on your behalf, on our behalf, because we're all in this together. I want the job. Something I love is broken. Something I love is broken. I want to fix it. Leadership matters. I believe this can be fixed. Second thing I want you to know is I'm not owned by any special interests. So, you don't need to worry about me being compromised. I'm not trying to do the difficult things like we've been talking about since I started talking a few moments ago. Things I'm talking about are not easy. That doesn't mean we shouldn't do them. That's right. Right. I always say there's one four-letter word you won't find anywhere in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution. That four-letter word is easy. Okay? As John F. Kennedy once said when he was talking about us going to the moon, we do this because it's hard. And there's another saying I like in real life. Whatever man has created, man can solve. But there's one I like even more. Best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. That's right. The second best time to plant a tree is tomorrow. Tomorrow's coming real quick. Tomorrow comes in 63 days. It's called election day. And what I say to people all across this state, no matter what their race, creed, or color, if you want change, you got to make a change. Now, I'm not a hyperartisan. I'm a New Jersey. I'm an American. I'm a CEO. I think that this state desperately needs is a hands-on CEO that's going to go to work every day and solve the problems we're talking about today. But you don't need to worry about me being compromised because I'm not owned by any special interests. And the other thing I want you to know is the most important to me because over the last 40 years, Democrats and Republican governors in this state have used this position to try to get somewhere else. So, let me be clear. I've been asked to run for Congress. The answer has been, always will be no. I've been asked to run for US Senate. Answer has been, always will be no. Okay? Nobody's asked me to run for president. But the answer is no. And one other thing, I don't want to write a book. Everybody's writing a book. I just want to fix the state we all love. I want to believe you love it, too. That's why you're here tonight. And together, I'm confident we can do this. If I wasn't, I wouldn't be doing this. But let me say this. when it's all over in four or eight years, I'm going to the beach in Surf City. That's where I hang. Okay. But, uh, this is home. And, uh, I'm excited. I will tell you this. Uh, I really thought we were going to win in 2021. I'm still in therapy. You know how to get me out of therapy with a win. So, I will tell you as I go around the state this time around, the energy is electric. And I'm not just talking about in Republican audiences because one thing I've always prided myself on doing is going places other Republicans don't or won't. And to bring that point home for you all, I want to share something with you. Yes, I've been a business owner over the last 30 years and created jobs for fellow New Jerseyians. But during that time, I also had the privilege of serving two terms in the little town my grandparents immigrated to over 100 years ago, Raritan Burough in Somerset County. And then I left politics after my two terms. And then they recruited me to run for county commissioner in Somerset County. And I won two terms there. And then I left politics again. Demetri, what's that line? They brought me back in and they asked me to run for the state legislature. And I won three two-year terms there. Now, my opponent likes to say I'm a career politician. I turn to myself each and every time. But the point I'm trying to make is that town that I won twice, that county I won twice, and that legislative district where I won three two-year terms, every single time, Democrats outnumbered Republicans, sometimes very significantly. How did I win those races, Jeff? Jeff, by the way, man, this is the 83rd Chedarelli event you've been to. You now have groupy status. The man's a groupy. Let me tell you, I won those races. I've always gone out and talked about the challenges we face each and every day and what my ideas are to solve those challenges. And you know what gets people excited? Ideas. And the biggest compliment I'm ever paid when I leave an event, somebody comes up to me at the end and says, &quot;You Republican or you Democrat?&quot; I said, &quot;Why does it matter?&quot; Why does it matter? Why does it matter? So with that, Yes sir, you had your hand up. Yeah. Um trade station, New York buildings. At one time they were Can you hear me? Okay. Um, over past decades, our industries, our manufacturers going overseas, over to China, whatever. We need to reshore these industries back here in the United States, and it has a lot to do with we're talking about the bolstering inner cities, Jersey City, New York. What can we do in New Jersey to reestablish that? So, one thing I do not want to be is the governor of a state where more than one out of every two people feels the state's on the wrong track. Two out of three people are looking to leave. It's ranked the worst state in the country in which to retire. We'll talk about that. We're also the worst place in the country to do business. Our taxes, business taxes are amongst the highest. Our regulations are the worst. Our labor pool is shrinking because when our K through 12 kids go out of state to college, they don't come back. And fourth and the most acute right now, energy. You talk about manufacturing, you already know how electricity intensive are manufacturing companies. They use a lot of juice. Has anybody seen what's going on? Your monthly electric bill. What's going on? We are now an electricity importer. We used to be an electricity exporter. When Phil Murphy took office, we had six additional electricity generation plants that he has closed down. He didn't expand our nuclear footprint in South Jersey. He didn't accelerate solar. And where are we today? Energy shortage. And why are all the data centers that are needed to support artificial intelligence located in Pennsylvania, which represents an economic development opportunity, construction, jobs? Pency's got the juice. Why? Because the Democratic governor of Pennsylvania is burning seven coal burning plants. I'm not here to have a debate as to whether or not that's good or bad for the environment right now. I'm here to tell you the Democratic governor of Pennsylvania is burning seven coal burning plants. He's burning natural gas like there's no tomorrow. He just cut the ribbon on a new nuclear reactor. Pennsylvania's got the juice. It's less expensive. It's reliable, which means there's more money in your pocket each month. and businesses are located in Pennsylvania. My job is to make New Jersey regionally competitive. So those businesses come here. Those businesses come here. Now, so what do they look at? Taxes. The Democratic governor of Pennsylvania is lowering their business tax from 10 to 5%. What did the opposing party do here in New Jersey last year? Raised ours from 9 to 11 and a half. I'll lower that just as Pennsylvania is doing over a six-year period to get it down to five so we could be uneven steep, right? Um, what else is Pennsylvania doing? We already know what they're doing when it comes to electricity. They've lessened their regulations, making it less regulatory. Now, I believe that we can lessen regulations here in New Jersey without screwing the consumer or doing irreparable harm to the environment. It's about finding the right balance. You know that uh those coal burning plants in Pennsylvania that are seven of them being used to generate electricity when the westerly's come blowing over the mid-Atlantic states. Where does that air go? Where does our clean air go? Out over the Atlantic. I'm not saying burning coal is a great idea. I think we need to complete the transition from what was coal, then it was oil, now it's natural gas, but you get my point. That Democratic governor of Pennsylvania is open for business. That creates jobs. He's getting manufacturing. He's getting into data centers. He's getting all the above. Right now, we're not. We need to compete. We need a governor who's going to be pro business. We haven't had that with this governor. You need a pro business environment. create that tide that lifts all boats. Now, for the Chedarellis, I have a soft spot in my heart for small business. So, if you're a small business owner in this state, the first $100,000 of business income taxfree. The first $100,000 of payroll exempt from employer payroll taxes. Easier to set up your business. And when it comes time to sell your business, we won't tax the gain on the sale of a family-owned business. Watch entrepreneurship take off in the state. If you added up the total number of people employed by our small businesses, it's more than the number of people employed by the Fortune 100 companies in this state, of which there's only 15 now. You go back to 1970s, New Jersey was home to more Fortune 100 companies than any other state in the country. Now, I just sat down with the leadership of one of our leading corporations, been here for a couple hundred years, and they were very respectful. But here's what they said to me kind of defiantly. We're not leaving New Jersey, but we're not expanding here. They just poured two billion into another state. What would that mean to us? Construction, jobs, all the above. We need to compete. And we will. We will. What's going on, man? I'm praying for you, sir, right now. Right now. God bless. You know, somebody said something before during the introductions um that I think is critically important. My first job as a candidate, my first job as your governor is to listen. Anybody who stands before you and pretends to have all the answers is lying. Now, I'm a CPA, so you want to talk tax code. I go on for hours, but I won't do that to you tonight. That's called unusual punishment, excessive punishment. But there's things we need to do to our tax bill. Um, but my first job is to listen. My first job is to listen. Yes, sir. So we have 564 towns. Each one has a mayor and council or township committee. We have 600 school districts. That's 600 board of educations. We have 21 counties. We've got about 500 different authorities in the state. The bridge authority, the this authority, the that authority. We've got a state government with 120 legislators and then there's one governor. All told, there's about 10,000 people that serve in some type of public office in this state across the state. And wherever there are people, there is unfortunately But let me say this. That's corruption. But let me say this. Um because when you talked about corruption specific Democrats, I don't think Democrats have a monopoly on corruption. So I've been very very clear that I support the president that anyone who came here illegally that has a history of criminality in their country of origin has to go back. I agree. Anyone who came here illegally and committed a crime after coming here has to go back unless that person violated you and we're sending them back to a country that doesn't observe the rule of law and they're not going to be incarcerated upon return. Justice was not served. you were violated. It's not fair for someone to go back and be free. So, if their country is not an ally that observes the rule of law, is going to incarcerate you upon return, we're going to incarcerate you because you deserve justice.