**Marco Rubio’s Speech after Finishing Second in the South Carolina Primary**

**20 Feb 16**

Thank you! First of all, I want to begin by congratulating Donald Trump. We haven't had a chance to speak yet. But he won here tonight. But after tonight, this has become a three-person race and we will win the nomination. I also a few moments ago got to see on television, I've not a chance to speak to him yet, Gov. Bush and his announcement. I have an incredible affection and admiration not just for Gov. Bush but for his family and for their service to our country. Jeb Bush has many things to be proud of. He is an extraordinary husband. He's an extraordinary father. He's the greatest governor in the history of Florida. And I believe and I pray that his service to our country has not ended. And I thank Jeb Bush for everything he did for the state of Florida and for running a campaign based on idea. And I pray for him and his family tonight as they move forward in other endeavors in their life. Tonight, here in South Carolina, the message is pretty clear: This country is now ready for a new generation of conservatives to guide us into the 21st century. For the time has now come after eight years of failure to return to the Constitution of the United States that made us the freest people that have ever lived. The time has now come for leaders that will re-embrace free enterprise, which made us the most prosperous people that have ever lived. And the time has come to rebuild our military because the world is a better, a safer, and more stable place when we are the strongest military in the world. We as a nation has faced troubling times before. In fact, 36 years ago this nation faced a period of doubt. After a failed presidency, it felt like America was in decline, our economy was stagnant, and the American dream felt like it was slipping away. And then we elected a president that inspired us -- a president who asked us to remember who we were and who believed as we do that America's greatest days always lie ahead. Ronald Reagan made us believe that it was morning in America again and it was. Well now, the children of the Reagan revolution are ready to assume the mantle of leadership. Now, those of us who grew up when it was morning in America and Ronald Reagan was in the White House are ready to do for our generation -- are ready to do for the next generation what Ronald Reagan did for ours. And who is this conservative movement in the 21st century? Because our principles remain the same. But who are we? My friends, the 21st century conservatives are the son of a single mother who grew up in poverty and who was almost lost and today he serves this state as its junior senator, Tim Scott.

The 21st century conservative movement is the daughter of immigrants from India who wanted desperately for their children to have all the opportunities they never did, who faced a string of prejudice and yet because of the greatness of our country, today Nikki Haley is the governor of a state where it's always a great day. And 21st century conservative movement is the son of a bartender and a maid from Cuba who tonight stands one step closer to being the 45th president of the United States of America. We are a nation and a people that celebrates success. We are nation that admire people who have worked hard and moved ahead. And as conservatives we will always celebrate success. But we fight for those who are still trying to make it. If tonight you are that single mother who has made it the purpose of your life to leave your children better than yourself in the 21st century, we conservatives will fight for you. If you are watching tonight and you are that father that works two jobs so that your kids could have all the chances that you never did, in the 21st century we conservatives will fight for you. If you're the 17-year-old high school student who wants a big future and so you get up well before dawn to get two buses to a better school halfway across town who gets home late at night to do homework because you know that God has made you for more than what people around you tell you you are made for, in the 21st century we conservatives will fight for you. We will fight for you because we come from where you are now, because we lived the way you live now. And we know that limited government and free enterprise and a strong national defense is a better way forward for you, for me, for us, and for the United States of America. Tonight, for those watching at home, I ask you to join us in this effort. This has been a long road. There were many people on this campaign when it first started, many good people, many of whom in any other year would have been a frontrunner. But now practically speaking it's down to three. And I know that our campaign gives us the best chance not just to come together, not just to unify our party but to unify our country and to grow this movement. I ask you to go on our website. If you're watching tonight, I ask you to go on our website right now -- MarcoRubio.com and join our campaign. 60 years ago, a young couple from Cuba came to America in search of a new beginning, a second chance, a fresh start, and America changed their lives. Of course, I'm talking about my parents. 10 days ago their son arrived in South Carolina after a difficult election in New Hampshire in search of a new beginning and a fresh start. And many thought it was over. Some had doubts whether we would wind up here even now. For me, the state of South Carolina will always be the place of new beginnings and fresh starts. I know that God's hand is on everything, and so whatever God's will is in this election is ultimately what will happen to us and to our country. But if it is God's will that I should serve as the 45th president, if it is God's will that we should win this election, then history will say that on this night in South Carolina, we took the first steps forward in the beginning of a new American century. Thank you, South Carolina! Thank you! God bless you!

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