Wow! God bless RedState. Jim, thank you for that incredible, that extraordinary, that unbelievably kind introduction. Thank you for your leadership. Let me tell you, Jim is a fearless conservative fighter in the House of Representatives. You know, in Congress, you can pretty much measure how strong you're standing for conservative principles by just how much you need a food taster in the member's dining room. And I think Jim employees 5 food tasters.

It is great to be back. You know, we had a nice, quiet evening in Cleveland a couple of days ago. What an incredible array of candidates for President we have this year. I have to say, looking up and down that stage seeing the young, dynamic, optimistic, forward looking conservatives, it was powerful. Then you have the democrats. You know, I'm pretty sure the Democrats debate is consists of Hilary and the Chipotle clerk. That's not fair, that's not fair, Bernie Sanders has entered the race. Now the Democratic field consists of a wild-eyed socialist, with ideas that are endangering America's place in the world, and Bernie Sanders. What a statement about the two sides of this debate and the conservative movement – there is life, there's vibrancy, there are 10 candidates, there are 17 candidates, there are 156 candidates. On the other side, it's like That 70's Show. They're not even having a debate. You're hearing their newest thing, maybe we'll move it to October, November, December, maybe 2017 we'll schedule the Democratic primary debate. Actually, they did plan to have a debate earlier, the problem was the invitation was emailed to Hilary.

There is a reason the life, the vibrancy, the excitement, the energy, is with conservatives this year. Our country's in crisis. We know it, all across this country. You know, yesterday I had a rally Charleston, South Carolina. Had a woman come up to me at the rally, she said, in 2008, I voted for Barack Obama. She said, in 2012, I didn't vote for anyone, I was so upset, I just stayed home. And she said, in 2016, I'm with you. What I want to talk to y'all about today is this is our time.

I want to talk you as the leaders of the conservative movement. RedState is an incredible gathering. This is the 7th RedState, this is the 7th time I've been at RedState. I remember the first RedState at an Atlanta hotel with a gathering that wasn't much bigger than this right here. The men and women who are here, y'all are leaders, you're bloggers, you're journalists, you're activists, you're informed though leaders. Every person sitting here touches hundreds, touches thousands, touches tens of thousands. Listen, I know it firsthand I wouldn't be in the United States Senate if it were not for the men and women in this room, if it were not for the leaders at RedState. There's a reason that when I launched my campaign for Senate, we did it on a conference call with bloggers, because we understand the power of serious, conservative thought leaders.

You know for a long time the conservative movement, we've been lamenting for decades, how come nobody will stand up? How come we elect one leader after another after another, they talk a good game and then when it comes to the fight, when the shooting starts, they end up cowering under their desks? This is something we've said over and over and over again. We've got to distinguish between campaign conservatives, who on the campaign trail suddenly discover they're the most conservative soul to have ever lived. It is amazing what happens on the campaign trail. Have you ever noticed, okay, last night in Cleveland, I'm pretty sure not a single person in the debate stood up and said, I'm an establishment moderate. I stand for nothing. Have you noticed that they run as us. That's how they run. By the way, if they say you're actually us, you're unelectable. But yet, when they're running they understand that they're message doesn't sell. The men and women in this room can play a critical role leading the conservative movement in assessing the record of very candidate. I'm going to suggest a simple test, each of you, I would encourage, make a list of the 10 or 12 biggest issues, the biggest fights of the past several years, and you decide, based on what matter to you, whether it's fiscal conservative issues or social conservative issues, constitutional issues, or national security issues – you make the list and ask every candidate running if he or she has stood up and led on those issues in any meaningful way. This is a room of serious, educated political observers, activists, and leaders. Ask any candidate, here's my list, when have you stood up to stop Obamacare? Not talked about it, but stood in the foxholes when incoming was coming at you. When have you stood and fought President Obama's unconstitutional and illegal executive amnesty? When have you stood and fought against the debt that's bankrupting our kids and grandkids? When have you stood and fought to defend the First Amendment – free speech, and especially, especially, especially religious liberty? And I got to tell you, Indiana was a time for choosing. There were so many Republican leaders who ran for the hills. On the Second Amendment, where were you when Harry Reid and Barack Obama were trying to come after our right to keep and bear arms? On the Fourth Amendment, what have you done to keep the federal government from seizing the cell phone communications and emails of law abiding citizens? On the Tenth Amendment, where are you on Common Core, and did you always oppose it, or di you just magically oppose it the day you announced for President? On marriage, are you willing to stand up and lead, or when the Supreme Court justice's violated their oaths and issued their lawless decision, did you come out with some statement about law of the land, etcetera, surrender, move on? On life, when have you stood and fought on life? On Planned Parenthood, how are you leading, and are you looking for a meaningless show vote, or are you actually looking for leadership to stop, what appears to be, an ongoing criminal organization of Planned Parenthood? On Israel what have you done standing and leading the fight to stand with Israel on ISIS and radical Islamic terrorism and Iran? When have you stood and fought to lead? That's the test – those are my dozen. But I encourage each of you, find your own dozen that you think are the biggest fights of the day, and ask of every candidate, what's their record? What have they actually done leading on those issues. That's what the men and women in this room can do more effectively than anyone else; dive down, below the talking points to the actual records.

Now why does it matter so much? You know it matters, because over and over again, we keep winning, and we lose. We win elections, but the people we elect don't do what they said they would. We were told, if only you can get the House of Representatives, then things will be different. So I 2010, millions of Americans, led by the men and women in this room, we rose up and won the House, and virtually nothing changed. Then we were told, okay, the problem's the Senate. You guys don't understand, it's just a half of the third of the government, you can't do it with just the House. So we said, fine, Harry Reid's the problem. So, in 2014, millions of Americans rose up in a historic election. We won the Senate, we retired Harry Reid as majority leader. And what exactly has this new Republican majority accomplished? It's actually even worse than that. I've got to say, in hearing nothing, I'm reminded of one of those great scenes from The Untouchables, where Robert De Niro as Capone says, "Man stands at the plate with a bat in his hands, alone, but without his team what is he? Nothing" It's worse than that, in this case, our team's playing for the other side. November 2014, we won historic majorities in both houses. What happened since then? What happened is the Republican leadership joined with Harry Reid and passed a trillion dollar Cromnibus plan filled with corporate welfare and pork. Then the Republican majority voted to fund Obamacare, to fund Obama's executive amnesty, to fund Planned Parenthood, then Republican leadership led the fight to confirm Loretta Lynch as Attorney General of the United States. Here's one simple question, which of those decisions is one iota different that it would have been with Harry Reid and the Democrats.

This is why we're frustrated. And this is why the men and women in this room have such an important role to ask of every candidate running, don't just tell me how you've stood up to Democrats, particularly in a context that didn't matter much, show me when you stood up to your own party; show me where you've stood up to Republican leadership and the Washington Cartel and stood with the people. Now, a lot of folks in the media want to convince us nothing can be done; it's too complicated, it's to big, you can't change the country. They want to tell us everyone here give up, go home, abandon hope all ye who enter here.

Let me take a minute to expand on my closing statement in Cleveland. Let me tell you what I intend to do on my first day in office if I'm elected President. On January 20th, 2017, the first thing I intend to do is rescind every illegal and unconstitutional executive action taken by Barack Obama. And that's why we're going to win. You know, the President is fond of saying he has a phone and he has a pen. Well, you live by the pen, you die by the pen. But it's not just been the White House and executive orders that have been lawless. The entire executive administration has been corrupted by the partisan lawlessness of this administration. If I'm elected President, the second thing I will do on January 20th, 2017 is instruct the Department of Justice to open investigation into Planned Parenthood and to prosecute any violations that are uncovered. The rule of law matters, the Department of Justice is a fair and impartial enforcer of the laws, regardless of which party is in power. That's how our constitution is designed to work. The third thing I intend to do on January 2oth, 2017, is instruct the Department of Justice and the IRS and every agency of the federal government, that you will cease today persecuting religious liberty in this country. The Little Sisters of the Poor, the Catholic charity persecuted for standing for their religious faith instead of receiving a legal summons from the Obama Justice Department, will receive a notice in the mail that the case against them has been dismissed. And accompanying that will be an invitation for the Little Sisters to come to the white House and tell their courageous story to the world. The fourth thing I intend to do on January 20th, is rip up and rescind this catastrophic Iran nuclear deal.

A couple of weeks ago, I observed that if this deal goes into effect, the Obama Administration will become the world's leading global financier of radical Islamic terrorism. In response, a little over a week ago, President Obama, from Africa, took time out of his busy schedule to attack me directly for daring to say such a thing. He seemed very dismayed – and I do so hate dismaying the man – very dismayed, he said that language is too much, you can't say that. Sadly, a number of Republicans have echoed the rhetoric. Have said the rhetoric is too much, don't use language like that. That's what Mitt Romney tweeted, that's what Jeb Bush has said. No, no, no, don't say such things. Let me say something right now: truth is not rhetoric. Nowhere in his attack on me from Africa did President Obama actually dispute the facts of what said. Here are the facts: Iran is today, and will remain, the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism. Number two, if this deal goes through, over 100 billion dollars will flow directly to Iran. Number three, of that money, billions will be given to Hamas, to Hezbollah, to the Houthis, to radical Islamic terrorists around the world. Now, if there are hundreds of billions of dollars in the control of the American government that go directly to jihadist that use that money to murder Americans and Israelis and Europeans. And the facts are incontrovertible. If President Obama doesn't like the rhetoric, then he should stop being the world's leading global financier of radical Islamic terrorism. That he should stop financing radical Islamic terrorism! And we will not win if we're afraid to speak the truth. To speak the truth with a smile, to speak the truth from love, but to speak the truth, with absolute courage that the truth will set us free.

The fifth thing I intend to do on January 20th, 2017, is begin the process of moving the United States Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, the once and eternal capital of Israel. You know, candidates for President, Republican and Democrats, have promised to do that over and over and over again, and when they get to the White House, one after the other after the other doesn't follow through. Let me give you a very simple difference, I believe, between me, and the other folks standing on that debate stage in Cleveland. With me, you know what you're going to get, and I'm going to do exactly what I told you I would do.

Let me make a final point about how we win. You know, the media,, the Democrats – although I repeat myself – they love to tell us a conservative can't win they say it over and over and over again. Here's their basic rule: anytime you stand up for conservative principles, you'll get the living daylights beaten out of you. Democrats will attack you, the media will attack you, Republicans will attack you, and then they immediately say, well if you've had the living daylights beaten out of you, then you can't be elected. That reduces to, we can only nominate someone if they've never stood for conservative principles. And every time we do that, we lose. You know, Heidi and I spent many months thinking about and praying about whether to launch this campaign. Our daughters, Catherine ad Caroline, they're 4 and 7. You don't lightly throw a young family into the maelstrom that is a political presidential campaign. The single biggest factor that led us to go forward is that we have to win this race, and as I look at the rest of the field – there's a lot of young, talented candidates who I like, who I respect, who are friends of mine – but I don't see a lot of candidates who I think can mobilize and energize and inspire and bring back millions of conservatives – the evangelical Christians, the Reagan Democrats, the young people that we've got to bring back to win. And the reason we decided to run is, I believe, I'm in the best position to energize and mobilize and bring back to the polls those millions of conservatives and to rebuild that Reagan Coalition, to bring together conservatives and evangelicals and libertarians and young people and Hispanics and women and Reagan Democrats. That's how we win. We win by standing with hardworking men and women, a populist campaign against the bipartisan corruption of Washington.

When we launched the campaign, the New York Times said, Cruz cannot win because the Washington elites despise him. I kind of thought that was the whole point of the campaign. But here's the thing that's powerful, that's transformation. You know, the Times went on to say, okay, fine, the grassroots will be with Cruz, but he ain't going to have any money, because the lobbyist and Washington Cartel they control all the money, and all the lobbyists are with other candidates running, because they're not going to rock the boat or need the gravy train. All of us filed our first fundraising reports a couple of weeks ago. Out of 17 Republican candidates running, you know which candidate raised the most hard money for the campaign? I'll give you one tweak to that, I didn't do that. You did. We raised just over 14.3 million dollars over three months. Second place was Jeb bush at 11.4 million. Now, if anyone would have said that Cruz was going to outraise every Republican candidate, including outraise Jeb Bush by three million dollars, you'd have said I was stark raving, bark at the moon nuts. But here's how we did it. We had over a 175,000 contributions from all 50 states and all 5 territories. The average contribution was $68. We have people from all over the country go to tedcruz.org – tedcruz.org, tedcruz.org. Here's an amazing statistic – we have donations from roughly half the zip codes in America; 48.1%. That is the power of the men and women in this room that is the power of the grassroots. If we're going to beat the Washington Cartel, the only way it's ever been done was in 1980, the Reagan Revolution, it came from the people. If we do it together, if we stand up together – the only force strong enough to turn this country around is "we the people", and that's exactly what we're going to do, because this is our time to take America back.