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CGC ND 2021 FULL EVENT

INTERVIEW WITH GOV JOHN KASICH, SECRETARY JULIAN

CASTRO

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* * *TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE: SPEAKERS SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND DUE TO PRODUCTION PERSONNEL VOICES OVERLAPPING.* * *

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(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

KELLY EVANS:

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Thank you, Bruce. Hi, everybody, and welcome to our hybrid virtual event tonight. I say hybrid because while this is obviously virtual, we do also have a large number of students who are gathered at Notre Dame right now for a socially distanced watch party.

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So, they, you will all have the opportunity later to ask our panelists some questions. We really are looking forward to that part and we wanna make sure we save plenty of time-- to hear from

you. We're also livestreaming right now on the Common Ground Committee's Facebook page and its YouTube channel.

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So, you can tell everybody to tune in. If you're tweeting about the discussion tonight, you know we're using some hashtags. It's #NewEconomy and #FindNewCommonGround. And that will help us just make sure that we see-- everybody's thoughts and remarks.

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So, all of that said, let's get started. Let's get right to it. And I extend my welcome also-- to our great panelists. I'm really looking forward to hearing how they-- share or I guess cross swords over some of the topics we're gonna discuss tonight.

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So, the goal is to talk about how we're gonna find solutions to the challenges of the new economy. We know we are in a time of hyper-polarized politics. So, we all wonder are these

challenges that-- where we can find common ground or will division stand in the way of solutions and in the way of progress.

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So, finding common ground on the new economy is our topic. And again, that's in part why I'm here. And this is a pressing, pressing concern for everybody right now. Listen, there's plenty going on in the news about-- divisive and pressing topics-- these days.

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And in a way, the economy is underneath all of it and kind of overarching-- question for people like yourselves who are graduating into (?) millions of students will face a workforce that is radically altered this year, both by the pandemic but also by changes in technology and energy and other sectors; things that have been going on for years.

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The current administration obviously wants to play a big role in shaping the future economy and

the kind of jobs that will be available, going forward. And we're gonna talk about all of that. As of tonight, President Biden's been in office for 85 days.

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He already signed a \$1.9 trillion COVID relief package into law. That was \$1,400 stimulus checks to most Americans, extended unemployment benefits. On top of that, two weeks ago, the president laid out his \$2 trillion infrastructure and jobs plan.

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Let's take a quick look at what he's proposing in the Build Back Better plan. Over \$600 billion would go to modernize the transportation infrastructure. Another \$600 billion-plus for, quote, unquote, "At-home infrastructure," like safe drinking water, universal broadband and a modernized electric grid.

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There's more money for manufacturing and R&D and there's lots in there that would go towards clean

energy technology and climate research. So, the president is saying in order to pay for this plan, he would raise the corporate tax rate to 28% from 21%.

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He'd put penalties on companies with (?) jobs overseas. And S&P Global is saying this claim (?) can create 2.3 million jobs by 2022. Let's take a quick listen to what the president said in announcing this plan.

PRESIDENT BIDEN:

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Let me be clear. These are my ideas on how to pay for this plan. Others have additional ideas? Let 'em come forward. I'm open to other ideas, so long as they do not impose any tax increase on people makin' less than \$400,000. Let me close with this.

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Historically, infrastructure had been a bipartisan undertaking, many times led by Republicans. It was Abraham Lincoln who built the transcontinental railroad. Dwight Eisenhower, a

Republican, the interstate highway system. I could go on.

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And I don't think you'll find a Republican today in the House or Senate-- maybe I'm wrong, you know-- who doesn't think we have to improve our infrastructure. You know, China and other countries are eatin' our lunch. So, there's no reason why it can't be bipartisan again.

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The divisions of the moment shouldn't stop us from doing the right thing for the future. I'm gonna bring Republicans into the Oval Office and listen to them, what they have to say, and be open to other ideas. We'll have a good faith negotiation with any Republican who wants to help get this done. But we have to get it done.

KELLY EVANS:

00:04:19;24

On that note, let's go to our two distinguished guests, Governor John Kasich and Secretary Julian Castro. Both have worked in government and both are well versed in the art of compromise and

deal-making. The president, as you just heard, says he welcomes bipartisan ideas.

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But he has pushed back on the Republican side, and even on the Democratic side, over the tax increases proposed to pay for this bill. And then progressives don't think the plan goes nearly far enough. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez wants to spend \$10 trillion over ten years.

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So, Governor Kasich, let me start with you. I read an op-ed in *USA Today* at the end of February where you were against the \$1.9 trillion bill-- quite vehemently. So, I presume you'd be against the Build Back Better plan as well. Are there elements of it that you would be excited or hasten to agree to or to sign on with?

GOVERNOR KASICH:

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Well, first of all, I was not opposed to the \$1.9 trillion package. I announced that on CNN when questioned whether I would support it. But let me tell you the situation that existed. I talk-- I

talked to some Republican senators and urged them to present their reduced package.

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You know, I mean, the president's at 1.9. You can come in at 1.1, 1.2, and you can get ten senators who agree to support that package. The senator I talked to said it was not possible to get any of the ten Republican senators to do that. At the same time, there was a meeting in the Oval Office.

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As soon as the meeting was over, people felt pretty good about it until the White House staff said, okay, don't-- don't take that meeting too seriously. I don't believe there was any effort (any real effort) to try to reach any kind of a bipartisan agreement on the \$1.9 trillion package.

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I think they could've agreed to 1.1, 1.2, and they didn't do it. But at the end of the day, had I been in the Congress-- I think I would've

supported it because we were in the midst of this pandemic and people needed help. However, I don't think they needed to spend that much money.

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And I would've worked, had I been there, to try to reduce that package to make it-- more fiscally responsible and-- and have it make more sense. And I can tell you that states are awash (?) and they don't even know what to do with it all. I mean, it's unbelievable how much money has been-- has been passed out.

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Now, we're lookin' at an infrastructure package. And-- first of all, we oughta-- we oughta do infrastructure as infrastructure, not 18 million different things and try to jam it through in an infrastructure package. It oughta be broken up and considered separately.

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So, when it comes to infrastructure (UNINTEL) highways, whatever, yeah, I th-- I think we should have it. I think there's unique ways in

which we can do infrastructure. I actually had a program to allow the federal government to-- m-- maintain a few pennies to maintain the interstate while turning the bulk of the program back to the states, which would give them more flexibility, an ability to spend the money the way that they see fit. That's--

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(OVERTALK)

GOVERNOR KASICH:

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--Washington--

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(OVERTALK)

GOVERNOR KASICH:

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--go with that. But I think there are ideas in that package that they-- you know, we-- we can do things. I did it in Ohio. We can-- we can toll roads. There's a number of things that we can do. And I know they're gonna look at the gas tax. Let's see where that ends up.

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As it relates to the rest of this package, Kelly, it seems to me they oughta be (UNINTEL). And there's good ideas in the other ones. Oh, just

one thing about broadband. We know that we need better broadband, particularly in our rural areas.

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But one of the things I don't wanna do is turn this over to some sort of government program. I would like the private sector to be able to run this. And I think the answer, frankly, as I-- I had my own business where I advised people on a lotta things, and one of the areas-- on broadband in rural areas can be solved in these little places where there-- you're not gonna get the companies to invest in those areas using some sort of a satellite effort to do it.

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But let's break the package up. But when it comes to infrastructure, all Republicans and Democrats like to cut ribbons. I hope they just don't cut more than what is necessary in our country because, at some point, the costs are comin' due. You're an economics reporter. You just--

KELLY EVANS:

00:08:28;07 Right.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:08:29;03 --spend trillions and trillions and trillions and trillions without a consequence down the road. So, I'm sorry--

KELLY EVANS:

00:08:33;09 But that said-- well, and-- and before I bring Secretary Castro, Governor Kasich, let me just come back with something you said that was remarkable, and, for many, sort of symbolizes-- where we are right now, which is in the opposition that you-- stated to the \$1.9 trillion bill, you said but, you know, at the end of the day, we're in a pandemic and I probably would've supported it. So, what leverage do those have-- in--in other words, it almost sounds like you're ceding the very ground that you're standing on. I just don't know if you wanna respond to that before I bring Secretary Castro--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:09:04;24 Well, no, I would-- I-- like I said, I think they

could've probably reached an agreement at one point-- you know, not at-- at-- 1.1 or 1.2. But there was no effort on either side to really bridge that. Were there things in there that were necessary? Absolutely.

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I mean, at the end of the day, bein' in public life, and I know that-- that Julian would-- would subscribe to this, it's about tryin' to make people's lives better. So, when people are on the edge of-- you know, on-- on the edge here because of the pandemic, you know, you wanna help them.

00:09:33;24

But I don't think we needed to spend that much money to achieve the things we needed to do to help people, because I'm mindful of the cost of these programs. I was the Chairman of the Budget Committee when we actually balanced the budget and paid down debt.

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And all these students out here who are watchin' this right now, they need to know, at some point,

they're gonna have to pay for this spending today. And their children will have to pay for it. And so, I wanna be mindful that we have good priorities, that we strip the-- the-- the things out that shouldn't be in it-- but yet, there's a need for-- for a lot of these things. It's just not a simple yes or a no, however.

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One final thing. You know, in America today, the problem is bigger than just politics. Robert Putnam's written about it. I have spoken about it for 20, 25 years. We've moved from-- from a we culture to an I culture. So, everybody's concerned about what's in it for me.

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It affects our politics. It affects business. It affects sports. It affects religion. And we're gonna-- begin to think back to how we can get to a we culture where all of us are responsible for our brothers and sisters. It will help us to provide a path (a moral path) to doin' the things with public policy and in these other sectors of

the business and sports and religion. It'll help us be able to-- to navigate a stronger and better America.

KELLY EVANS:

00:10:52;02

Secretary Castro, I guess the one way in which we are all in this together is the debt issue-- that the governor raised. So, I know there are many in the progressive wing of your party who would say it's insane to worry about the debt because we have-- a current crisis and fixing that crisis will make for a better economy, less of a debt problem, going forward, than not fixing it.

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But what if we don't know? And what if we're headed to a place where, all of a sudden, interest rates are going to go up? The room that we thought we had to spend is gone and it's too late to go back and say maybe we shouldn't have spent all that money?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:11:26;05

Yeah. And, Kelly, thanks a lot for the-- the question-- and for moderating tonight. It's

wonderful to be here with Governor Kasich. Just a couple of things and then I wanna just answer your question directly on that issue of debt. I-- I think that-- one place where we can find common ground is that we need to change that culture-- and find-- more unity in our country, and also do some things like redistricting reform and getting around Citizens United in Washington, D.C., so that you take more of the special interests out of politics.

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And also, through redistricting reform, you encourage folks to have to talk to more than just their side of the aisle in the future. When it comes to-- to racking up debt-- right, there's spending and then there's also revenue. And I think what President Biden is doing-- is acknowledging that on the revenue side, that there are very many things that we can do-- to garner more revenue.

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In addition to the economic boost I believe is

gonna happen is already we're seein' the evidence of, through the investments that we're making with this stimulus-- and then we're gonna see in the future, we also need to increase the marginal tax rates on folks who have seen their, you know, top-end marginal tax rates go down tremendously over the last three or four decades.

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We also need to address corporate tax issue (?). And just the other day-- you know, Senator Sanders, in a very compelling tweet-- you know-- I don't agree with every single thing that Senator Sanders has put out, but I thought in a very compelling tweet, listed-- some very big companies in our country that effectively play-- effectively pay zero-- in federal taxes every year.

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We need to revamp our federal c-- tax structure so that we're putting the burden-- not only on everyday Americans, and particularly the middle class, but also wealthy Americans and these big

corporations-- too many of-- of which have been-- able to avoid paying taxes for a long time. I think that's the beginning of addressing that revenue issue, which goes to the question--

KELLY EVANS:

00:13:42;24

Do you-- secretary, just to jump in on that point then, do you think this current proposal and what the president-- has done so far doesn't go far enough? 'Cause it sounds to me like what you're saying is you'd like to see tax rates maybe go up even more, and for that-- that revenue side to get even bigger.

SECRETARY CASTRO:

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Well, I think that there are additional ways to garner revenue, of course. There are also tremendous (UNINTEL) that we have. In my own neck of the woods, with housing, what I see out there are a lot of Americans on the brink of eviction right now.

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I see-- the cost of housing spiking across the country, and a need to build hundreds of

thousands of units of affordable housing every year for multiple years, just to meet the demand so that the middle class and lower-income families will have housing that's affordable to them.

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It's been a long time since we invested the way that we should in housing that is affordable to many Americans. And that's just one example. Even if we were to do this \$2 trillion infrastructure package, that won't get us all the way that we need to to catch up with the fact that we've been neglecting investments in infrastructure for decades.

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So, there is more work to do, more investments that we need to make. And, yes, of course we have to address the revenue side. I thought that-- you know, I think that Vice President Biden is putting this on the table as a good first start to how to do that, and doing it in a way that-- that will not impact the vast majority of

American families; will not raise their taxes.

KELLY EVANS:

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I wanna just have secre-- I'm sorry-- Governor Kasich respond to this before we move on to some of the more nitty-gritty issues like student debt and-- nature of jobs and that sort of thing, because this kind of underpins the rest of what we're gonna say tonight.

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So, Governor Kasich, hearing everything that Secretary Castro just outlined-- maybe you see a lot of dollar bills (LAUGH) in everything he's describing. And being such a budget hawk yourself, what is your response to whether that's reasonable for us to go-- sort of embrace the current proposals and-- and even go beyond that? We're talking about maybe spending additional trillions more.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:15:43;09

Well, you know, it-- it's interesting because, first of all, the 1.9 trillion has been printed. And that's on top of all the Trump stuff where

they were spendin' money. So, you know, Republicans and Democrats, they all like to spend. It's just that Republicans feel guilty when they spend.

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But you know, we're spendin' money like crazy. And everybody knows it. There's nobody, you know, who's-- except for some economists that say, oh, well, if we get inflation, we'll deal with it later. It-- it's really an issue. Now, let's-- let's talk about-- let's ta-- talk about the tax on business.

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Now, I-- nobody wants to see businesses not pay their share of taxes. The question is why did they not pay them. And-- and when you start raising those taxes, by the way, then you-- you have to figure out whether it's going to lead us to less investment from businesses that create jobs.

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Now, I was the Chairman of the Budget Committee

workin' with the Clinton administration to balance the budget. We didn't raise taxes. We actually cut them. We cut the capital gains tax and we had the first balanced budget in a generation and paid down the largest amount of the publicly held debt in-- in-- in modern history.

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So, look, if we wanna look at loopholes and things that are unfair, I-- I'm all for that. But there is just a price to pay. There's a consequence when you start raisin' taxes. And I thought it was very interesting that Janet Yellen-- the Secretary of the Treasury, is now goin' around the world sayin', by the way, you can't-- you can't cut your taxes 'cause ours are goin' up and we don't like the fact that businesses are gonna move to where you are.

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I mean, come on. And is all this gonna be paid for outta this? I don't think so. So, what I'm concerned about is, yes, these-- I agree with--

with the secretary on the issue of infrastructure. I completely agree. We have to do something-- with out basic infrastructure.

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And if we wanna consider housing, other kinds of things, I'm all for that. But just don't put it through on one-- you know, in one fell swoop here on an infrastructure package. Secondly, a lot of the money that got spent in the 1.9 trillion, it isn't gonna be spent for years.

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Did you know that? It's-- it's like it's not gonna be spent for two or three or four years. So, if that's the case, let's meet the crisis. Let's deal with the crisis. Let's not be-- be frivolous with this because there's gonna be other needs that we have in this country where we've gotta be careful about what our priorities are.

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And if you look at the interest on the debt right now, it's-- it-- if you look at what people pay

in taxes, the biggest chunk of what they're paying right now is interest on the debt, is my understanding. And so, we just gotta be careful about this.

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But this is why we can come together, because a good man like the secretary and I, we can sit down. I have no doubt the two of us could sit down and figure some things out. That's the way you do it. It's-- it's give and take. And-- and we may reach a point where he's gotta compromise; I've gotta compromise. But you know, right now, I'm just concerned about all this.

KELLY EVANS:

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And so, Secretary Castro, I'll give you the final word on this as we move on, because I am curious where the common ground that you share with Governor Kasich is when it comes to the budget-- and spending, specifically. Are there any of his points, his concerns, about the spend that you would agree with?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

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Well, I'll say this. Look, when I was at HUD, one of the questions that I always asked is about making sure that the spending that we do, the investments we make, are actually paid off. I think in general, we need to be better in the federal government about measuring the impact.

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And you know, when programs aren't working, then, you know, to steer investments in the direction of programs that actually are working, are producing the results that you want. I also think that there are ways that you can compromise on the infrastructure investments that are there to be made.

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There's some that are gonna be more popular than others, whether that's, you know, highway investments, broadband investments; also things like-- rural public hospitals across this country. I bet y'all-- those of y'all in Indiana, you've seen this.

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We've seen it in Texas. I imagine y'all saw it in Ohio. A lot of rural public hospitals closing down over the last 15 years. So, there are-- there are areas that I think are ripe for compromise. And even on the revenue side, whether it's compromise on raisin' the corporate tax rate-- or-- on marginal tax rates for individuals, I believe that at least-- if you have folks who are willing to make that compromise, that there is good policy that can be met.

KELLY EVANS:

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Absolutely. All right. I think you both-- and we'll kind of move on to some of the more nitty-gritty-- issues that especially the students who are graduating into this workforce are now gonna face. So, there's a couple of different ways we can come at this.

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Governor Kasich, I'll ask you what role does the government have to play in the shifting workforce

and everybody. In other words, is-- is President Biden right, is Secretary Azar right, to even speak of government driving these changes and perhaps incentivizing them with tax dollars?

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Or should the private sector, as it often does, be driving a lot of this innovation? And to the students who are listening, can they be confident that if it's the private sector leading the way, there will be jobs for them (good paying jobs for them) as opposed to, if it's the government kind of taking the lead in this transformation?

GOVERNOR KASICH:

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Well, I-- I'm-- I'm not-- I'm not sure what you're talkin' about. But if you're s-- askin' me do I think that we need to have some sort of government program that can actually train people, yeah. You know how many government training programs we have? And you know (?) how many of 'em work?

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So, I'm actually involved in a program now that

I'm really excited about. And-- and secretary, I--
- I think you'll-- you'll love this. I've called
CEOs of big companies here in central Ohio. And
I-- we have an online education company. I don't--
- I shouldn't do an advertisement on here. But
they do deep education (online education) in
technology.

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What we've been able to do is go to the private
sector companies and-- and this is a government
program. It's a local workforce board (?)
program. It's sort of groundbreaking. And what
I've said to them is we know what your needs are.
We know what your technical skills are in AI,
machine learning or just-- just basic-- basic
technology.

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So, we're gonna train these people and give them
a nanodegree. And when we give them their
nanodegree, will you agree to interview them?
Because you have a job that you need and we're
going to give them the skills they need to fill

that job.

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And every single one of these companies have said yes. The issue of job training-- both in the workplace and job training-- and-- and by the way, this job-- this program I'm talking about is aimed at people who are unemployed or underemployed.

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We've gotta make sure-- it's sorta like with infrastructure. You go to product-- if you have something that produces greater productivity, it works. So, when you look at job training, if we can have a program that actually trains people for jobs that exist, and a cooperation between government and-- and the private sector is great.

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But I will tell you this. This program we have is very limited in terms of the-- the-- the qualifications, who can get in, who parti-- and it's just a big bureaucracy. And it's preventing us from-- hopefully, if this works out here,

we're gonna be able to expand this around the country.

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I'm really excited about this 'cause we're gonna give skills to people who are unemployed, underemployed, and give them an opportunity to go to work in the private sector. And the private sector, in one case, is actually involved in-- in helping to put together the curriculum so they can actually hire these people.

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So, anything that we can do like that I think makes sense. And for our people in school, in college, you know, this is another really interesting question. Are you getting the education you need for the job that you want? And-- and this is a whole big discussion about higher ed and how it works and why it costs so much. And this is somethin' I think we'll get into. But anything that can be targeted, that can give people skills, give them skills for something that exists, is something that I think

will work. But too much of it doesn't go that way.

KELLY EVANS:

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And Secretary Castro-- 'cause I-- I can't imagine you would-- disagree with-- with that kind of approach-- to-- to job creation or-- or that sorta thing. I wanna ask you kind of a related question, which the governor touched upon, which is the cost of education.

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I mean, if the federal government, which is responsible for 95% of the existing student loans-- it almost seems like their loans are the problem. The lack of oversight. You know, you talk to people who are in student loan counseling programs and they say, you know, it's criminal the way the government-- hands out money to people who they should know won't be able to repay it down the road.

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So, how much has the government's intent to help actually created the problem (UNINTEL) higher

education? And how is it gonna be resolved? And one of the key parts of obviously what the president is doing is allowing for some forgiveness on the student loan front. As you know, it's a great help for borrowers. But it's also pretty expensive.

SECRETARY CASTRO:

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Yeah. Well, I mean, look, I have no-- no doubt that there are instances-- where-- whether it's in a housing context a decade ago or-- or now, right, we see-- folks take out a loan that-- they're not able to repay. Perhaps they bit off more than they could chew in the first place or didn't understand their obligation or-- were overconfident about actually bein' able to finish their educational program and then be able to repay the debt.

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But I think much more common than that is-- that, right now, we have a lotta students who have to take out this massive amount of debt and then they find that the economy that's waiting there

for them, the job opportunities, really don't afford them-- the wherewithal to repay that debt-- and-- and live, you know, a decent quality of life.

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And so, you have people that get saddled with decades and decades' worth of debt-- is what we see. I mean, I've heard stories out there in our country of people with \$200,000 worth of student loan debt, \$150,000 worth. I think that we have to tighten up the regulations on those programs.

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But also, I-- I wholeheartedly support efforts-- for student loan debt relief, which I believe will make it more possible for this young generation to be able to-- purchase a home, for instance. Because, right now, we see people putting that off; this generation putting that off; much more stable in their late 20s and 30s and so forth, and be of overall benefit for our economy.

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And we can do that, all things considered-- in a relatively affordable way for our country. So-- I think we can do both of those things. We can make sure that-- that we're-- we have the right standards, but also address this huge mountain of student loan debt that-- that exists in our country.

KELLY EVANS:

00:26:48;00

Okay. Governor Kasich, where would you-- go ahead. Yup.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

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I wanna speak to this a little bit because, first of all, do you realize how inefficient our universities and-- and colleges are? Do you have a clue about how-- they can't change things. I mean, I know that there are professors who have, like, one or two courses over the year.

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And-- and when they-- they say, well, we-- we gotta get rid of that, we gotta move on from that, it's like-- it's like a riot breaks out. And innovation that should happen at our

universities doesn't happen either. We had a president of Ohio State, Gordon Gee, one of the great presidents.

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He went to-- to lease the-- the parking lot and the parking garages. You-- you wouldn't have believed the uproar over becoming more efficient. Our-- there's one thing that I know about most college presidents. The one thing they wanna be tomorrow is a college president. And anything they do to reform that institution and reduce their cost causes 'em trouble.

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In addition to that, they have to actually advertise a high fee because if the fee that they charge is lower, people think the school's not very good. I mean-- and so, okay, now let me tell you what we did out here. We gave kids in high school college credit-- college-credit-plus program.

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They would earn credits for college. It's amazing

how much they were able to do and earn to be able to get credit for a four-year school. Secondly, if they go to community colleges here in Ohio, they can go two years and even go three years, which dramatically reduces the cost of-- of education.

00:28:20;06

And look, we've had a black swan event in this economy. It affects jobs, how we go to work, where we-- you know, where we work for home; all this kinda stuff. This online education's gonna grow. And those people, entrepreneurs, who can figure out how to do online education at the same time with a real college experience, they're gonna be a winner.

00:28:39;20

And then finally, there is-- Mr. Secretary, there's been a program to reward people who are teachers and some of these occupations that, if they will work for a period of time, they'll get loan forgiveness. I don't know how you give a loan forgiveness for some-- to-- to-- to person A

when person B worked two or three jobs and went and-- and paid off all their debt, but we-- the person that has the debt, we help them but we don't have the-- help the person that already paid off their debt.

00:29:07;11

I mean, I've looked at this when I was governor. It's very expensive and hard to do. We oughta look at these programs that provide-- that require service because I'm-- I'm comin' around to the idea that we oughta have mandatory public service in this country for a year or two for everybody, to bring us together; different types of folks workin' together, solving problems at the local level.

00:29:29;24

But to me, we-- we can look at that, expand that. Now, why don't we know much about that program? Because it's so bureaucratic, most-- most of my friends have told me-- my young college friends tell me, or just graduates, that nobody can get in the program.

00:29:44;24

You know, it's-- you can't get into the Hotel California, let alone get out. So, I-- I'm just suggesting that, yes, we believe in higher education; it's critical. But we-- we've gotta think about different ways to do it. And we must demand these universities and community college begin to become more efficient and more effective and offer something that it gives 'em quality education at a lower price. They can do it--

KELLY EVANS:

00:30:07;19

Mr. Sec-- Secretary Castro, I mean, are there elements of that that you, tonight, could sign up to and-- and agree with? I mean, can we walk outta here and say, okay, here's at least three ways in which we have common ground, bipartisan agreement that the system is broken and-- and we-- where we can specifically change?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:30:22;24

Yeah, I mean, I think we can agree I'm a fan of these programs, for instance, that give college credit to high school students while they're

still in high school so that they get a running start on their college education. Also, these ones that are partnerships with companies out there and different industries that, you know, where they're vocational and they're oriented toward folks who wanna go directly into the workforce-- but if somebody does go to college, they have that running start.

00:30:47;22

And it means that it's less expensive to them and also they're able to finish more quickly and get into the working world and start supporting themselves and/or their family. I think we can agree on that and that we need to make investment there, into all of the infrastructure that goes around that.

00:31:04;05

I also-- look, I believe that-- higher education, like any other industry-- can create efficiencies and that it should always look to do that. But I-- but where I take a different view on this is, yes, let's say that we have somebody that's

graduating next month, in May, and they're gonna start at a community college or-- or their public university, regional university.

00:31:31;05

The-- the forces that we're talking about, the improvements that need to be made in higher education, that's gonna be a multi-year effort. And that's something that's bigger than any one person. And for that student that is the first in her or his family to go to college, and they're looking for a good, higher education, and to do it without a mountain of debt, I'm not gonna say to that young man or young woman, hey, look, hold up. I-- you know, I just-- we can't do this right now because, you know, we have all of these things to solve that are gonna take many, many years. They need to have that great opportunity right now-- to reach their dreams. And I think they need to be able to do it without (UNINTEL) \$100,000 worth of debt.

KELLY EVANS:

00:32:13;02

And Governor Kasich, final word on that, then.

As-- as the secretary was specific in a few areas where he thinks there should be change--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:32:18;11 I don't-- I don't--

00:32:19;07 (OVERTALK)

KELLY EVANS:

00:32:19;17 --you've given us a couple as well. But--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:32:21;03 Think we have any--

00:32:21;17 (OVERTALK)

KELLY EVANS:

00:32:22;07 Yeah.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:32:23;11 I mean, I want kids to be able to go to school. But you know, it's like anything else in life. Is there a way to do it-- first of all, I believe all these schools can dramatically improve their cost structure, which means kids don't have to pay.

00:32:35;02 Now, you go to a college today, right, and you say to the university, what's it cost to come

here, it's like goin' and buyin' a car. The sticker price is \$60,000 but nobody pays \$60,000. So, why don't they charge \$40,000? Well, because people say that's not a very good school.

00:32:51;20

I know a lot about this. Runnin' a state and watchin' the way that higher education worked, the college-credit-plus-- if every state did that, that would be fantastic. And I gotta tell you, do not dismiss the community college opportunity. That's not like bad education. That's good education. And I think we're gonna see online-- look, people are not gonna ring up this debt-- if they believe that they can get a degree, it gives 'em the skills to get an in-demand job. There's big changes comin'.

KELLY EVANS:

00:33:22;03

Okay--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:33:22;11

And by the way, Mitch Daniels, over in Indi-- in-- at Purdue, I think he's got a program where businesses will actually work to help you pay off

your debt if you commit to go to work for 'em. I mean, down sides to that. But it's interesting. We should look at everything.

00:33:35;24

So, with the secretary, I-- I think we could sit down and be in great, great harmony on-- look, it's about common ground. He's a great guy. You know, (LAUGH) we can sit here and talk about this. He's a good man. He-- you know, he is. And if we sat down and talked about HUD or we talked about Ohio, whatever, we could find things that we could agree on because he and I are not in this-- here's the issue.

00:33:57;24

We're not in this to get elected or score a point. I could care less about all this political garbage that's out there. I wanna solve problems and help people. And when he talks about housing, of course we've gotta give people housing. We gotta think about different ways to do it.

00:34:12;12

And if we gotta spend some money, God bless it,

we gotta do it. This is the problem with politics today is that people are lookin' to-- they're lookin' to bang each other around or just get reelected. I don't-- neither of us live in that environment now, which is why we can be pals.

KELLY EVANS:

00:34:26;24

So, let me ask you then, before we open this up to students, we're-- we don't have a ton of time. But probably one of the issues that has rallied the younger generation more than any is the universal basic income. And I am curious if you guys have any common ground on that.

00:34:39;08

Governor Kasich, as you know, on the conservative side, there are some who say you could do \$10,000 a year and basically replace a lot of us-- sometimes dysfunctional entitlement programs. Obviously, on the left, they would perhaps like to expand-- UBI on top of those existing programs. So, where is the common ground that you two might have on the future of these payments, which we've gotten a taste of in the current--

COVID relief plan--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:35:01;24

Yeah, Kelly, I was involved in the welfare reform of '86 with-- with Bill Clinton. Okay, it was another thing that-- that I was involved with. And it's 20-- what is it, 30 years ago? Whatever it is? Fourteen? And-- and I mean, it's been a long time. So, we have to revisit the issue.

00:35:16;05

Here's what I know about what we wanna do with our-- our poorest folks. We wanna make sure we take a holistic approach. Why are you in the situation you're in? What is it that we can do to help you get out of that situation? I think the cred-- the child tax credit-- I like that. We gotta get our kids outta poverty.

00:35:34;22

In terms of the-- the universal basic income or-- does it create disincentives for work? I talked to somebody just over the weekend who used to run programs on jobs and family, who grew up-- you know, on-- on relief, on-- on food stamps. And--

and sh-- and her comment to me was we don't wanna give people something without giving them a way out of where they are, and that requires a holistic approach, which we started back in the day when I was governor.

00:36:02;01

We're gonna help you but tell us what you need and how do we get-- we gotta teach you how to fish is what we're gonna do. And so, I think it's-- the holistic approach is something that appeals to me. And all these programs need to be looked at very, very carefully to make sure that we're not gonna have an adverse-- effect by what we do.

KELLY EVANS:

00:36:21;24

And Secretary Castro, before I get your response, we actually have a sound bite from Elon Musk. This was back in 2017. But I also think it gets to the heart of the appeal of universal basic income 'cause it's paired with a fear that reliable work won't be available as the economy continues to change. Take a quick listen to what

Elon Musk has said.

ELON MUSK:

00:36:42;03

There will be fewer and fewer jobs that a robot cannot do better. What to do about mass unemployment? This is gonna be a massive social challenge. And I think, ultimately, we will have to have some kind of universal basic income. I don't think we're gonna have a choice.

UNIDENTIFIED INTERVIEWER:

00:37:01;08

Universal basic income--

ELON MUSK:

00:37:02;01

Universal basic income. I think it's gonna be necessary.

UNIDENTIFIED INTERVIEWER:

00:37:05;17

So, to mean that unemployed people would be paid (UNINTEL)?

ELON MUSK:

00:37:10;24

Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED INTERVIEWER:

00:37:11;16

Because there is no job? Machine, robot, is taking over?

ELON MUSK:

00:37:14;11 That-- that's simply the-- th-- and I wanna be clear. These-- these are not-- things that I think-- that I wish would happen. These are things-- things that I think probably will happen.

KELLY EVANS:

00:37:26;24 And, Secretary Castro, before you respond, I should note, since 2017, we've probably seen some of the lowest unemployment rates-- in a generation. But go ahead. What-- what would you say about all this?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:37:38;24 Well, I mean, first, you know, I hope that that's not our future. And-- and more importantly, you know, that-- that we work so-- so that it is not our future-- in terms of policy and the investments we make, the creativity and innovation.

00:37:54;08 However, I am glad that we're getting more evidence from pilot projects on UBI that are

happening, whether it's in Stockton, California, or a couple of other places. And so far, the data are encouraging to this question of whether UBI would discourage people from seeking work or stayin' employed.

00:38:14;15

The answer, at least from what I've seen, is, so far, no, that people still are motivated to go out and work. That might be because the amount of UBI that we're talkin' about is not-- you know, an exorbitant amount of money on a monthly basis. But it does provide enough of a boost to help ensure that people are able to take care of the basics if they-- you know, they don't have other means to do that. And I-- I believe that we should continue down that path of bein' able to gauge the effectiveness of UBI.

KELLY EVANS:

00:38:48;24

In which case, I don't think the two of you have common ground on that topic. Final word, Governor Kasich, and then we'll (UNINTEL)--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:38:54;09

Think about this is-- look, the-- the difficulty has been-- we saw it. You get this clip (?) when it comes to relief; you know, whatever help you might get. You-- you lose more money in the-- in the-- in what you get from the government than you can earn in a job.

00:39:09;23

We f-- ran into this when it came to (UNINTEL) care. That makes no sense. We want to incentivize people to be able to still get some things but yet be able to work. And so, these are-- these are things that have to be looked at. By the way, the-- the universal basic income was-- was-- a thing that came out of the Nixon administration, believe it or not. It was Republicans that actually talked about this. But I think we would both agree we don't wanna have a system that encourages people not to work. But we also don't wanna have a system that doesn't help them as they make their way to work. So, you gotta th-- thread the needle.

KELLY EVANS:

00:39:45;02

All right. I would like to ask our students who are-- goin' (?) to share their questions, and our speakers, to keep this part as brief as possible. We just wanna get in as many questions as possible. Obviously, we're all here to hear directly from-- all of you. So, with that said-- let's go to our first question.

LUCY:

00:40:03;12

Hi. My name is Lucy. And firstly, I want to thank you for being here tonight. Governor Kasich, I know you went to Ohio State. But I'm from Cincinnati so--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:40:11;22

Yes?

LUCY:

00:40:12;03

--on behalf of my parents, go Bearcats. (LAUGH)
My question is on the effects of globalization which have precipitated the amplification of the pandemic in certain regions, especially in developing countries. The pandemic has tested the capacity of developed nations (like the U.S.) to

respond to a global health crisis and has exposed the inability of less developed countries to control the pandemic and the larger effects of globalization due to poor infrastructure and lack of access to resources. So, my question is: What responsibility does the U.S. have in shorin' up the vulnerabilities associated with globalization that expose the fragility of our interconnected economy?

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:40:56;07

Kelly, what do you want? You want me just to-- to go (?) or--

KELLY EVANS:

00:40:57;24

Yeah, let 'er rip.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:41:00;24

America's gotta be a global leader, you know. And it--it takes not just government but also NGOs. One of the groups that I'm trying to work with right now on the issue of pediatric mental health or mental-- mental health for young people is Global Citizen.

00:41:14;20

And we know the work I was involved with Bono back in-- in the-- in-- in the late '90s to-- try to do debt relief so we could help people. And a lotta people don't wanna talk about foreign aid or immigration or whatever. You know, I don't feel that way.

00:41:29;15

I feel like we're all made in the image of-- of God and that we have to respect one another and help one another. We're-- even though you live on the other side of the globe, I'm conc-- I gotta be concerned about you 'cause we're-- you're a ci-- you're an individual. You're a human being.

00:41:43;24

So, I think we have a responsibility. And hopefully, in this pandemic, as we-- we see the rollout of-- of all this different vaccines, that we just can't get it to people who are successful. We gotta get it to the-- to the poorest people. And we can play a big role in that, and not just governments of-- of all types across the globe, but also with these NGOs that I

think can be instrumental in-- in helping to--
to-- to deal with this problem.

KELLY EVANS:

00:42:09;24

Yeah. Let's go to our next question.

RACHEL:

00:42:13;24

Thank you so much for being here, just like Lucy said. My name's Rachel and I have a question for both of you. Recently, there's been a lot of debate about what the term, infrastructure, actually encompasses. And I was just wondering if both of you could take a few seconds and explain what you think it means and also why you think there's been such a divide recently about what the term actually means.

KELLY EVANS:

00:42:31;19

Secretary Castro?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:42:34;08

It's a great question and a very timely one-- as you say, based on the debate that's happening around-- President Biden's proposal. So, I take an expansive view of infrastructure. And what I believe that we need to do in this country in the

years to come is to ensure that everybody can live with dignity and that everybody counts and that there are different ways that we can define infrastructure: The traditional way of bricks and mortar and highways and airports and, you know, bridges and so forth; a 21st century way of broadband, for instance; but also-- human infrastructure.

00:43:07;24

Or, as-- I have a twin brother, Joaquin-- who says that I am one minute uglier than he is. He represents the 20th Congressional District of Texas. And I-- his one phrase that I always like to steal is he talks about an infrastructure of opportunity-- and that just as you need a road to get where you're going, you know, physically from here to there, that in life, to reach your dreams (to get from where you are to there), you need an infrastructure of opportunity.

00:43:36;01

And that means investing in a lot of what Biden has identified in this legislation; investing in

this care economy so that people are able to-- you know-- go out and work but they have children that-- need daycare, child care, or they have a parent that needs elder care and so forth. It means investing in higher education and in K through 12 and pre-K and so forth. So, that's the way that I look at the infrastructure of success in our country.

KELLY EVANS:

00:44:11;20

Governor Kasich, I think you just described infrastructure as the economy. (LAUGH) So, I'm curious--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:44:18;12

Yeah. There wasn't anything that fit in there. Look, (LAUGH) infrastructure is w-- look, I-- I was in Congress for 18 years, you know. As governor, I was in charge of tryin' to make sure we had good roads. I look at infrastructure fundamentally-- of highways, bridges, you know, that-- the things that help to build the country.

00:44:38;24

And at the same time, these other issues, which I

think we're concerned about, and the question is, do you put a bunch of-- of green jobs in this. Do you do stuff with labor unions in this? I mean, what-- the package, to me, oughta be a thing that we all agree upon is infrastructure.

00:44:53;24

When we talk about broadband, I think you can make a case that broadband would fit in that. And I like the infrastructure 'cause it could in-- it could improve productivity and-- and large-- and to some degree, begin to pay for itself. My concern about the broadband is you gotta take a look at what they're talkin' about.

00:45:10;24

And I think the broadband solutions are basically government-run programs. You know, I don't-- I-- I don't-- I just don't think that's the way to go. I think we do need to use the technology of the private sector and think about creative ways to do it.

00:45:26;08

But, look, on these other issues, I think they

oughta be considered. But they oughta be considered separately, not in one big package that gets jammed through the United States Senate on a party-line vote. That's just not the way to do things in this country. So, break it up. Break it up into smaller pieces and let's-- let's see what we can agree to.

KELLY EVANS:

00:45:45;09 Well, let's see if we can find more common ground on some of the other questions. Who's up next?

J.F.:

00:45:50;02 Hello, my name's J.F. I'm a first year. And my question is-- you guys had a clip from Elon Musk earlier. I was just wondering-- what are your opinions about the morality of there being billionaires in the U.S. and just having so few people with so much capital. That was my question.

KELLY EVANS:

00:46:10;09 And I'll remind everybody-- I'll go to Secretary Castro because you cited a Bernie tweet earlier and I believe he has a famous one-- from the last

year or so where he says, "Billionaires shouldn't exist."

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:46:20;24

Yeah. I don't know if I would go that far, that, say, no billionaires should exist. But-- I would say that we've reached an egregious level of inequality in our country and that that inequality has been growing. And we see people trapped now, unable to reach the middle class in a way like almost never before.

00:46:47;00

And especially after the experience of this pandemic where we saw that the most vulnerable people in our country were hit the hardest in just about every way that you could be, and has set them back even more, I think that's part of why, in poll after poll right now, you see such support for making this investment of the American Rescue Plan for this infrastructure investment; for raisin' taxes for folks making over 400,000; for raising that ta-- that corporate-- tax rate.

00:47:16;23 Even when Warren and Sanders had their wealth plans out, well, you know-- tax plans during the campaign, there was solid support for that because more and more people recognize that we can't go on with this kind of inequality in our country.

KELLY EVANS:

00:47:33;16 Secretary Kasich, should billionaires exist? And put differently, would you--

00:47:37;22 (OVERTALK)

KELLY EVANS:

00:47:39;01 On the side-- let me--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:47:39;18 I drive a Tesla, so, (LAUGH) you know--

KELLY EVANS:

00:47:42;04 But--

00:47:42;14 (OVERTALK)

KELLY EVANS:

00:47:44;01 So, you're part of the problem because you're creating a billion? No, but listen, when it comes to the issue of the wealth tax or extremely

progressive income taxes on the wealthy, is that an area where you would find common ground with the left--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:47:55;20

I don't-- I don't like that. No. I mean, let me suggest to you if we think that we can tax our way out of our spending, let me tell you what happens. You raise taxes and they spend it. I mean, why do you think we have the debt we have right now? You know, in other words, there's-- there's no-- there's no effort to try to create more efficiency. And when I say efficiency, I say reform. And what do I mean by that?

KELLY EVANS:

00:48:19;22

But, governor--

00:48:20;17

(OVERTALK)

KELLY EVANS:

00:48:20;21

--real-- real quickly, let me just jump in because--

00:48:22;19

(OVERTALK)

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:48:22;16

--well, there's no-- there's no real quick on

this, Kelly. We're talkin' about basically saying that if people have been successful in life, somehow there's a penalty for them, and I don't like that. You know, if they are using loopholes or, you know, if there-- there's things that are goin' on that allowed 'em to do that, okay, well, I-- I'm-- I'm willing to look at it. I was one of the biggest sponsors and supporters of corporate welfare reform, not just for-- welfare reform for poor people, but welfare reform for-- for-- for rich people and businesses. I was one of the leaders in that.

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:48:52;21

I mean, I-- I would just suggest, though, that that's a large part of our tax system right now is loopholes, whether you're talkin' about the local level and economic development incentives that give companies-- millions and millions of dollars without-- of incentives without taxing them for 20 years or federally.

00:49:11;12

I think that our-- our-- we fundamentally need to

revamp our tax system to-- ensure that lower-income and middle-class Americans can make it in this country, instead of giving an advantage to companies and persons that are already doing well. And I think we can do that without taking away an incentive for people to do well.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:49:30;20

But let's talk about opportunity zones. So, all of a sudden, we have people that can invest in an area where there's no jobs. I don't think that's a loophole. I mean, we can take a look at how that systems work. And I'd be willing to-- to-- secretary, with you, to agree we should re-look at that; those opportunity zones.

00:49:48;12

But that was-- that goes all the way back to Jack Kemp. That goes back to the growth issue of trying to have opportunity. You know, he used to run HUD. You know, you have opportunity to give people a chance to get a job where there's no job.

00:50:00;18

So, I-- I think there's an issue about whether there has been some abuse of it. But I don't think it's somethin' that should be viewed or just gotten rid of, because it's getting people to invest in areas where they wouldn't normally invest.

00:50:12;24

See, all I'm-- all I'm suggesting is we need to be careful. We have to realize where the investments come from. And if we-- if we do not-- if we don't-- are not aware of that, then we could kill investment and I don't wanna do that. One of the things that I wish that we could do, and I think we do have an issue in this country with income inequality or with wealth inequality, perhaps.

00:50:37;09

I mean, one of the things we gotta teach people is how to invest in the American dream, how to invest in the American economy in simple ways. 'Cause a lotta times, when people have money, they invest, they get nervous; they pull out. We

know what happens. Kelly's a economics reporter. She can tell you what happens when people invest in the American economy in a safe investment sorta like what federal employees have, you know.

KELLY EVANS:

00:51:00;24

Right. And listen, you know, you invest in the stock market, you get a 7% return over the long run. And you try not to jump out at the lows. And I think that's the truth for everybody. Governor Kasich, before we move on, let me just quickly--

00:51:10;21

(OVERTALK)

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:51:11;07

One other thing I wanna say and that is our education system. Our K-through-12 education, by and large-- not by and large, too much of the time, is not giving our kids the education that they need so they can then go on to college and be able to improve their lives.

00:51:27;17

And look, nobody-- you see what the administration's tryin' to do. They're tryin' to kill choice. If you got people that wanna take

their kids and go to some sort of a charter school, let 'em go. Why do we try to shut this stuff down?

00:51:39;24

We need to give them choice to get their kids in a place where they can be really successful. And we see it out here in a KIPP school. These KIPP schools all acro-- n-- you know-- whatever the knowledge program is. These KIPP schools are unbelievable what they do. Or the-- or the Catholic schools that have-- Cristo Rey-- it's amazing what they can do. We can't shut that down because some labor union says we oughta get rid of it. I'm for the kids.

KELLY EVANS:

00:52:06;15

Secretary Castro, are you-- are you a fan of charter schools? Do you guys have common ground in that area?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:52:13;05

What I would say is that I'm a fan of excellence. And I think the priority should be in public education. I once (?) spent most of my life goin'

to public schools in K through 12. I went to Catholic school for a year. I know that you can find excellence, you know-- private schools, public schools and charter schools.

00:52:30;06

But I think that our first priority should be our public schools. I don't think that we should do away with charter schools or-- or shouldn't encourage-- you know, excellence in charters. What I think we're missing right now is that one of the rationales for charter schools in the first places is that that would help public schools; that you would-- they-- they would basically be laboratories of excellence and that that would-- that would migrate over into the public school system. And we don't see enough of that right now.

00:52:57;02

The other thing is-- is that, you know, th-- when you actually compare them head to head, there-- you know, the average charter school does not necessarily do better than the average school in

many places. And so, there's-- there's a misconception there.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:53:11;13 We-- we--

00:53:11;23 (OVERTALK)

KELLY EVANS:

00:53:12;06 Governor Kasich, since we have to wrap this up, let me just go back.

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:53:15;20 Okay--

KELLY EVANS:

00:53:15;24 Let me just--

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:53:16;24 One last thing, Kelly. I just have to say it. Poor-performing charters should be treated very harshly. In fact, some of them probably oughta be shut down. The same way, when we have failing public schools (like we've had in the city of Youngstown, forever)-- oughta be held to a standard where we take the power from the school board and give it to administrator that can fix that school.

00:53:38;17

I did it in Cleveland with the Cleveland reform; Republicans, Democrats, liberals, conservatives. This is so important because when kids don't get the skills, they can't climb out. And that's what we have to do. And I think, Mr. Secretary, you and I both agree w-- these children are precious. They're our future and let's give them the opportunities that they need. That's--

KELLY EVANS:

00:54:04;07

Governor Kasich, because we're outta time-- but I just wanna go back to the-- the previous student's question to have you answer this one-- to-- issue that I-- I just wanna make sure we got an answer to. Do you think the existence of billionaires in America is symptomatic of an immoral economic system?

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:54:18;20

You're kidding to ask that. You're really ser-- I mean, did Elon Musk or-- or Warren Buffett or Bill-- how 'bout Bill Gates? Did he-- is-- is he immoral because he-- he amassed wealth? I mean,

no. I mean, the issue, though, is, in our system, you wanna talk about morality, the morality is that everyone is important.

00:54:39;24

And our systems oughta work, both public and private, to make sure that everybody has a chance; everybody has an opportunity to rise. And if we took all the politics out of all of our decision-making and everything we do-- in everything we do-- and think about what Bill Gates is doin' right now to try to fight disease all across the world.

00:54:58;08

He's takin' his money and he's givin' it away. God bless him for what he's doin'. So, no, the immorality is when we-- when we take care of ourselves and we don't go back into we, where I started at the beginning of this; an I culture where we are today doesn't work very well.

00:55:14;24

We need to get to a we culture that has a moral foundation that gives people a purpose to bring

justice where there is none. And that's where the secretary and I would look at some kid or some situation in some place and say we gotta fight for them. 'Cause we can't just leave them there. That's immoral. That's what I would define as immoral.

KELLY EVANS:

00:55:35;00

Secretary Castro, do you have common ground on the issue of morality of our economic system?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:55:40;24

Oh, I mean, I-- it certainly-- I agree with the governor in reaching a place where we're all concerned about one another and that we make policy from that standpoint. I completely agree with that. I do think that there is some immorality in-- you just look at how-- how much money billionaires have made during this pandemic when so many people have been suffering-- in our country and the gap there. I do think that there is immorality in that. I-- I don't-- I wouldn't say that the people themselves are immoral. I would say the system has become-- in some ways,

immoral and that we need to fix it.

KELLY EVANS:

00:56:16;07

Right. Right. Well, gentlemen, thank you both. That's about all the time we have, as everybody is aware. We really appreciate the questions, especially-- these provocative ones at the end here from our students. We just wanna end with a quick word of wisdom from both of you on working with others and how students in particular can get involved in making a difference. Because we went a little long, Governor Kasich, just kind of your-- your quick thoughts. What's the most important thing a student right now could do-- if they want to look for solutions in all the challenges that we've described?

GOVERNOR KASICH:

00:56:49;20

Well, have a purpose and realize that you're important, that your voice matters. That's number one. Number two, all the pressures of going to school and tryin' to get your grades and tryin' to tell your family how you're doin', if you have a challenge, if you're-- if you're worried about

something, if you can't deal with it, get help.
Get help.

00:57:08;16

There's no shame. You know, those who are-- who are weak are actually strong when they can admit their (?) challenges. And those who are strong that deny their challenges are really weak. So, if you need help, go get it. Find somebody. And then believe in yourself and think big, dream big, and it can come true. It has for me.

KELLY EVANS:

00:57:28;24

And-- I would echo that. And Secretary Castro?

SECRETARY CASTRO:

00:57:32;24

Yeah, I always say also to believe in yourself. Have confidence in yourself and realize that there's nobody else in the world that is exactly like you. Like, you have something to offer-- wherever you go. Surround yourself with people who believe in you as well.

00:57:47;14

And when it comes to-- to making an impact, I hope that folks will consider public service.

Both Governor Kasich and I-- you know, have been public servants. We know that you can make a world of difference. There are a lotta people-- you know, you can find purpose and do great work in the private sector, the nonprofit sector or the public sector. And we need more folks who are energetic, creative, have integrity, to go into the public sector.

KELLY EVANS:

00:58:13;10

Well said. Guys, thank you both very, very much, and to our students as well. It's been a great discussion tonight. Maybe there's hope-- for some common ground on all these important issues for our country. So, Governor Kasich and Secretary Castro, truly thank you so much. Before we go, I just wanna throw it back over to Bruce Bond. He is the co-founder and the CEO of Common Ground. And he'll give us some final thoughts here. Bruce?

BRUCE BOND:

00:58:36;00

Thank you so much, Kelly. It's been a very enlightening evening. And I do think it lived up

to Common Ground Committee's motto of bringing light, not heat, to public discourse. After listening to tonight's discussion, I hope the conversation between these outstanding guests from different perspectives has brought you a sense of hope that we can heal our divisions.

00:58:54;24

We can do that. And the inspiration to engage civilly and productively in your own political conversations-- and frankly, to expect, maybe even demand, the same from your political leaders. On behalf of Common Ground Committee, I want to thank all for attending this-- event this evening. Please check out our research guide to see both sides of tonight's issue and a space for you to note where our panelists found common ground.

00:59:19;12

You'll find it CommonGroundCommittee.org/NEguide. And with that, many thanks to University of Notre Dame for hosting tonight's event and to our two-time, now, partners, Professor Christina

Wolbrecht of the Rooney Center, and to this next generation of wonderful bridge (?) ND students.

00:59:38;09

And finally, a big thanks to tonight's terrific moderator, Kelly Evans, and our very distinguished panelists, Governor John Kasich and Secretary Julian Castro. We hope to see you at our other upcoming events later this year. And-- with that, thanks for attending. Goodnight, everybody.

00:59:55;17

(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

* * *END OF TRANSCRIPT* * *