

WWE's Kane on Liberty, Wrestling, and Life as a Mayor

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SUMMARY

Glenn Jacobs, the mayor of Knox County, Tennessee, discusses his transition from WWE superstar to a politically active mayor, emphasizing the importance of local governance and community involvement. He reflects on the challenges of navigating political ideologies, the impact of cultural shifts, and the necessity of maintaining a balance between individual freedoms and government responsibilities.

- Jacobs believes that politics is about persuasion and relationships, skills he honed during his wrestling career.*
- He critiques the current political climate, suggesting that many politicians prioritize personal power over serving their constituents.*
- Jacobs advocates for term limits in Congress, arguing that incumbents have too much advantage and that fresh perspectives are needed.*
- He identifies as a "conservatarian," blending conservative values with libertarian principles, emphasizing individual freedom and limited government.*
- Jacobs highlights the importance of local politics, stating that most impactful governance occurs at the city and county levels rather than federal.*
- He addresses the opioid crisis and economic development as key issues in his administration, focusing on not raising taxes and promoting job growth.*
- Jacobs expresses concern over cultural Marxism and its effects on society, advocating for traditional roles and values.*
- He envisions a future where local governments have more autonomy, allowing states and cities to differentiate themselves and better serve their communities.*

Glenn Jacobs, welcome to Dad Saves America. Thanks for having me on. I appreciate it. So, before we got started, I was telling you a little bit on I'm sort of a I've been adjacent to your former life as a wrestler, but that is not what I'm excited to talk to you about today. I am excited to talk to you about being a philosophically rigorous mayor. Because that and and a liberty-minded one at that. So, you um your alter ego is Kane.

Um how much of Kane has come into being a mayor? Uh not much, actually. People will ask me what did I learn in WWE that that could apply to uh politics. And it I always say, you know, obviously it didn't want me to body slam someone. Someone was like, "No, you know, it's not the in-ring stuff, but it is in a personal relationship skills and being part of a team and uh understanding leadership and all those sort of things.

Uh and the politics are just part of society. I mean, we think of politics and governmental politics, but I mean it is everywhere. And ultimately, your ability to succeed and and politics something it gets bad it gets a bad rap,

the term does. But, you know, ultimately all it means is just your your ability um to convince other people, uh persuade them that your viewpoint is correct, and move forward. So, uh I I did learn that in WWE cuz WWE is actually pretty political backstage.

The you know, one of the things that's been interesting is that there is a couple intersections. Uh Donald Trump is one of them, right? Because he he had he he played a role from time to time on screen in in wrestling. And there's this other uh sort of public intellectual, Eric Weinstein, who years ago wrote this piece about American politics and basically calling everything that's happening kayfabe. Are you familiar with this? Yes, yeah. So so what was he getting at? How do you how do you see the role of kayfabe in American politics?

yeah, so And what is kayfabe? In wrestling in wrestling it just means that that's you know, that's part of the show. Okay, you say the kayfabe something means you know, that the the public or outsiders you know, this is part of the show. So be careful what you say. It's kind of code for classified information as the federal government would say, all right. But it is a lot of what and and a lot of what I see in the ways talk about wrestling and how it's just like politics and they have opposing figures who are often actually really they're okay behind the scenes but they put on a heck of a fight for the public.

But there's there's a lot of other things that go into that as well. And we're seeing it right now with with Trump's second term and how the Democrats literally they're freaking out over things and you know, why are they freaking out? Well, because it's Trump doing it or it's Elon Musk doing it. And it's all about power and being afraid of losing that power and really standing in the way of someone succeeding. And that's something I can't understand. What I'd like to do over the next period of time is ensure that the next person has the ability to succeed, right? I can't understand this idea of you're on the other team so I don't I don't want you to succeed. I'm going to throw as many roadblocks in your way as possible.

But you know, it's things like that that are actually bigger and in many ways professional wrestling is a lot more real than politics is. What do you mean by that? Dig into that a little deeper because that's people when they watch when they watch all this stuff on TV and they think, you know, oh my gosh, this person they're for me. They're not for you. They're for themselves, you know, and they're using you basically as a pawn to put themselves in a position to gain more power and not lose the power that they already have.

Uh, they're not working for the best interest of their constituents. They're working for themselves, okay? Um, but because they're respected figures, elected officials, we tend to think that, "Oh, they're a wonderful person." Maybe, but what they're doing is not serving you or the public. Okay, I'll keep this quick. Be sure to hit that like button, subscribe to the channel, and ring the bell so that you won't miss more Dad Saves America as our videos come out each week. And it also really helps us because when we reach out to guests, they look at how many subscribers there are to decide if they want to come on and share their ideas.

So, please subscribe to the channel. It really helps us out, and thanks for watching. Now, back to the show. There's always been this, um, dichotomy of "Well, I hate Congress, but I like my congressman." I think that might still be true, but why do you think that is? Why do you think people can hold like a contempt for like

politics as a whole, but then they like the guy that represents them? In many cases, it's because he's the person that brings the bacon back to the district, he or she.

In other cases, it's just because, you know, that they're good politician, they're good campaigner, and they get out, and they have a connection with the people that they serve. Um, and also, obviously, what they do is they're up there they're up there fighting for you against all these other people that you hate. Um, so I there I think there are a number of factors, um, there, and and you're exactly right. It's it's baffling, uh, to think that, you know, Congress has an approval rating in the single digits, but when it comes re-election season, over 90% of house members go back every cycle. Uh, so it's it's there's definitely something strange going on there.

That's always been such an interesting thing. You hear these oh, it's a wave. It's a change election, but the incumbency rate is like always over 90 even the wave. It's like oh, it almost got below 90%. Right. Incumbents reelected. And a lot of these things is basically the way that the way that elections are run nowadays and the fact that the incumbents just have huge advantage because they're on TV all the time. They can they can raise more money because they have the connections to do that. In Tennessee, last session, our house just passed a resolution joining the other states calling for Congress to impose term limits.

I was the head of the US term limits the chairperson of the US term limits in Tennessee which led that effort. And really it's you know, you'll hear some people say well, you know, the term limits are elections in Congress. Well, the problem is when the founders were putting the Constitution together, election campaign wasn't like it is now, you know, and now the incumbents have so many advantages. It's very difficult for an incumbent to overcome those. It's So, one of the arguments I've heard about term limits in opposition is that you want in theory politicians to be there long enough to have skin in the game of the outcome of what they're doing and to actually develop knowledge. If you if you like your senator and he's doing right by you, let him get to be McConnell age because he's there and he understands the way things work and he can and you can in theory hold him accountable for that law he passed 10 years ago where he said, "I'm going to make magical things happen." And when magic doesn't happen, you can theoretically hold him accountable. Right. Um, what's your response to that?

Uh, theoretically, sure. The problem is we've moved in a world which is so far away from that. Um, there is something to be said for institutional knowledge, obviously. Uh, you know, and I think specifically for term limits, obviously I'm not not the person that would uh contemplate or uh talk about proposing the exact measure. You know, but for me it's like six years and or six terms in the house which is 12 years and you can still go to the Senate two terms which is 12 years. If you don't have your act together after a couple terms anyway, you know, and and something else that you know, I don't know how you address this, but the fact that that House members only serve for two years, so they're just always campaigning and always out there uh and I think that that puts them at a deficit. Uh, and I think if the founders were doing it all over again, they'd probably extend those to four-year terms. Um, just the two-year seems to you know, you do you do end up losing things or could possibly uh lose a lot of institutional knowledge and and there's that is a valid argument, you know, cuz you do have to kind of um, you know, navigate this matrix of Washington D.C.

At the same time I'd argue though, real underlying issue of all this is the government's just way too big and these people have way too much power and they're into way too many things and ultimately it should be simplified for everybody. How did you first get into political philosophy? What was the Was there Was it like reading like Atlas Shrugged as a kid? Like where What was your entry point that set you on a path towards eventually like running for office and becoming mayor of a city or a county with over half a half a million people I think, right?

Yes. Yeah. My first memory as a child was riding in the back of my family's Volkswagen Dasher station wagon passing under some of the high voltage power lines and hearing my parents talk about how bad eminent domain was and the fact the government could just take people's property from them. So, that probably colored a lot of my political philosophy. My mom and dad were what I would call Goldwater Republicans. But, it wasn't like we talked about politics at the kitchen table or anything.

But, I I just had a kind of a natural curiosity when I was in school. History and and politics, you know, were were always my favorite subjects. Then, went through college and kind of heard the the left side of things. Not nearly as much as kids do today. The professors were, you know, they had their philosophy, but they they weren't aggressive in promoting that. And they certainly didn't punish you if you had if you want to ask questions or had different ideas.

Which is frankly is fine. It's how the how things should be, right? Then, when I got out and and into WWE, we're independent contractors. So, we're responsible for paying our own taxes, for doing a lot of things that employees don't have to do. So, you were running Kane Inc. Yeah, pretty much, right? And I'm going to tell you something. If if we want to see this country change, instead of people getting a refund on April 15th, make them write a check to the IRS once a quarter. And then, watch how that money is spent. And it just becomes enraging.

So, for me it was it was just, you know, you had those personal issues. At the same time, a friend of mine when I was I was kind of a political nomad. I didn't I didn't have a home. And because there were stuff that I agreed with the right on, stuff I agreed with the left on. Yeah, this is before the left completely went off the rails, by the way. But, you know, issues like free expression and free speech, you know, on the left.

They they used to be There was a time when they were the they were the strong ones on that. Yeah, unfortunately, yeah. You know, they they weren't the authoritarians that they are today. So, I was but I wasn't in the middle either. You know, and a lot of times you hear people describing themselves as a centrist, which is actually kind of the worst because what often happens is you pull the worst of both sides in. Um, so I was like an anti-centrist um in that I agreed and agreed here, agreed here, uh but not all of it. And a friend of mine just you know said, you know, you should check these things out and um I did and then I went down the rabbit hole and eventually I was like, my gosh, you know, uh this idea that there's only two sides of the political spectrum uh is nonsense. You know, it's much more of of the Nolan chart, right? Where the important thing is not if you're on the left or right, is if you agree with uh freedom or authoritarianism, right? And once I discovered that I was like, my problem is I I believe in in freedom and liberty. Uh and unfortunately both sides, especially back then, it it's changed a lot, but you know, both sides had some failings in that regard.

So do you call yourself a libertarian? Is that Yeah, I would. I would describe myself as you know, I'm a I'm a conservative and I believe in the ideas this country is founded on. Um and those ideas are frankly are libertarian. Uh I I consider myself a conservative because I believe in the ideas that this country is founded on. We should be conserving those, but those ideas are mostly libertarian ideas. So uh a term that's probably better for me is conservatarian.

You know, it's one of the things that's you know, we're here at a conference that's a liberty-oriented conference and I think one of the things I found myself uh as I get older, it's like you know, freedom is essential, but it is it is essential for a purpose. You know, I I had a conversation yesterday that irked the person I was talking to cuz I was like, no, freedom is good in and of itself. It's like, well, yeah, but it's isn't it good because humans flourish in freedom and flourish has a particular character and it's different for every person. Like, how do you think about why freedom works?

So, Ludwig von Mises um would talk about how certain ideologies uh just can't make it in the real world because eventually when the rubber meets the road they're they just the the results they produce are unacceptable. Um freedom produces the best results. Prosperity, peace. And the American dream is about freedom. It's about people being able to take advantage of their gifts and skills and talents that benefit other folks and thereby benefit themselves. Uh so, ultimately, not only is it, in my opinion, the most moral social arrangement, it is also the most effective one for producing prosperity and peace, which is something that we all want, obviously. Was there thinkers or books that you that really were like the key to unlock the door to the way you think or organize your thinking? Sure. I mean, there's actually too many to mention. Um now, I I was I was a big fan of of former Congressman Ron Paul. Uh you know, kind of the 2006, his campaign uh made me realize I wasn't the only person I wasn't the only person in America that thought like that. Um We have that in common. Yeah. Um him, Judge Napolitano when it comes to legal issues, uh Mises and Rothbard when it comes to economics. Uh Rothbard also, you know, just on um you know, the the Basically, again, when when we talk about libertarianism, what we're talking about is is more of a legal system than anything else, right? When when is it And and politics in general, but when is it okay to use force against people? Um you know, so uh I mean, Hayek, you know, just everybody.

And it's kind of interesting with with the with those thinkers of how you know, they they thread all these things together. Whereas on uh or with a lot of authors and pundits, they treat, you know, individual liberty, your what you do with your body and your relationships with people, that's different from economic freedom. Yeah, they can't be. They're the They're the same thing. They're part of our lives. They're part of this overall liberty as a philosophy that people should have as much freedom as possible within society, which means they have to respect other people's freedom as well.

So, I think one of the major differences is you can see kind of a comprehensive philosophy as opposed to that we agree with this over here and we agree with this over here and not seeing the relationship and how they're really the same thing. Where have you been most challenged on your philosophy? Has there been especially as you, you know, gotten into practical politics, have there been things that have been like, well, that makes me that challenges the way I thought about this in theory or it rounds it out and adds more nuance. Like, give me like

Sure, there's um where our country is right now with the cultural Marxism is a real thing, okay? And I mean, you can point back to the historical beginnings and you can see how it's evolved now.

And, you know, some of the things that I would be normally be like, oh, you know, people should have choice to do that. It's like, well, they're actually using that in a way to really destroy society. You know, so how how do you deal How do you deal with things you normally be like or even some of the some things that Trump's doing right now. You know, I'm not a big fan of executive orders, but he's literally fighting fire with fire, you know?

Obviously, you don't want that to keep on going because at some point Congress has to legislate, but it almost feels like our country's in this somewhat of a crisis. You know, so things that I normally be like, "Ah, I don't know if this is such a great idea." Like I you're almost forced into it, at the same time realizing that you don't want to open the door. You What always happens then is the other side will use whatever you've done against you. So, how do you make sure that the door closes, hopefully after you after you kind of address some of these issues? Is there like a specific You said cultural Marxism. What does that mean to you?

I mean, you know, just like you know, the the DEI stuff, the LGBT stuff, you know, all of that, okay? I'm a big believer in in in live your own life, you know, do do what you want, but don't push it on other people, and certainly don't mandate other people, you know, to do these things. But, all that stuff just went so haywire, and you could literally see it was being used as I said, I'm a conservative. It was being used to destroy the foundations of our country. Uh and that's something that I have to really push back against.

Where have you seen that? You're in Tennessee. Um Yeah, not not not so much for us, you know, because we're watching it on the outside, you know, but it's it's just those thoughts of, you know, uh your initial reaction is, uh you know, no one should They shouldn't be getting involved in this, but then you realize, "Oh my gosh, if no one does anything, this is going to be very bad in the end." This has been one thing that's been really interesting in um the changing shape of like, I guess you could say like the right, maybe, but you know, so Christopher Rufo, who I've known for a while, you know, a lot of people who call themselves libertarians don't like Chris Rufo, cuz he's come out hard against DEI and in schools, and he's been very He's also been very critical of libertarians, but he's he's saying the schools are run by the government.

Yeah. So, government is involved, pretending you can't only be for dismantling government involvement. You have to that's great, right? But you also have to not let the pro-government people just run the whole thing because that's what that's when you get Exactly. drag queen story hour in kindergarten and all this crazy stuff. So is that how is that kind of how you understand it? Um I was reading something by Jeffrey Tucker the other day and he was talking about this as well. Uh you know, all this talk about the food chain, you know, and you know, oh my gosh, you know, we we don't want government to mandate these, you know, you can't put this in it, you have to put this in it, you know, and a lot of those things, which I still agree with at the same time, a lot of that stuff happened because of government involvement to begin with. You know, you think about the you know, the nutrition pyramid, right?

Yeah. That was all the result of dairy lobbyists pushing, you know, pushing milk or or whatever or the various

special interest groups. So when you start peeling back the layers, it becomes very difficult because you realize, oh my gosh, you know, so many of these things had government involvement to begin with and now it's flipped and being used against us. When was the very first time you engaged in politics? Did you start off like volunteering in a committee or something like that? What How did you get your feet wet?

was the Ron Paul campaign and I was just involved not, you know, um volunteering uh doing some things in that uh and in 2008? 2008, I'm sorry. Yeah, yeah, I guess. That would have been really my first foray into Yeah. And and it I had kind of I never wanted to get involved uh even before that uh and then I kind of after that as well. Um but, you know, for me I have I have a two daughters and I have two grandkids and uh I was like, gosh, man, this this whole thing has been great to me. I mean, I've lived the American dream. It's been awesome.

Uh and it just it's almost like I got sucked into it because I'm like, what happens to them? I you know, I'm a good person. I think I have the right ideas and if people like me just sit on the sidelines, what kind of world are we are they going to inherit? Uh and I just couldn't I literally couldn't live with myself thinking that I might have the opportunity to at least in some small way impact things and I just wasn't going to do that cuz I didn't want to get my hands dirty in politics.

[illegible]

Well, yeah, to some extent, but also we're pretty much live and let live there, you know, so it's the perfect place for someone like me, um especially, you know, my interest is really economics. You know, the the personal liberty side's important, but to me it all stems from economic side of things. Uh and we're all fiscal conservative, well, not all of us, but the vast majority of us are fiscal conservatives in East Tennessee. Um so I fit in really well uh even before I became mayor, you know, just helping other people out and so forth.

When um, when did you decide, "I'm going to run for mayor?" And, uh, and how did your how did your family take it? Uh, about a year and a half, uh, before the election, uh, I thought to my and I this is one of those things where it probably the idea float of of, uh, running for office had been floating around in my brain, but I'd never really been never really seriously considered it. Um, our, uh, mayor, who is now Congressman Tim Burchett, who's great, he's wonderful, uh, but he was term limited. So, uh, literally one day I woke up and I thought,

"Wow, he's out of office and it has an open seat. Um, you know, as mayor, especially of of a larger place like Knox County, you can have a pretty big impact and have a pretty big voice.

Uh, that might be cool." Uh, and, uh, talked to a couple people that that were, uh, supporters and thought that I would do well at it. Uh, my wife never wanted to be involved in politics at all. She's like, "Well, no." What are you roping me into? Yeah, but, uh, but she's awesome and, uh, she said, you know, she always says, "I'll support you no matter what you do." Now, sometimes, you know, sometimes it's like, "Okay."

Um, but my family was, you know, was overall supportive. I think that I had, uh, an advantage in that I was already in the public eye. You know, that's that's difficult for someone maybe who's never been there before and then they run for office and all of a sudden the media is talking about them and all these sort of things. Uh, for me it was it was already happening, so it didn't really matter. Different though, uh, you know, and when you when you receive criticism, uh, and unfortunately I was social media, you know, so many times it's just people that don't even know what they're talking about. Uh, it's actually harder on your family, um, because for me I realized that you know, these people don't know me, you know, they're just they want to about something. They want to yell at someone. Uh my family doesn't, you know, they don't they don't think like that. They think he's attacking my husband or he's attacking my dad. Yeah. Um so it becomes harder on them. Uh so when when the elected officials do talk about how important their spouses and their families are, that's true. I think that they actually bear the brunt more than we do because for us it's part of the job, uh but they didn't sign up for that. How did you think about the like your own identity before going into this because one of the things that I think is so hard, you know, there's that famous uh saying that, you know, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Right. And the more you know, power, fame, these these are all forces that can twist our twist our our ego and our identities. How How have you protected yourself against that? And how do you know when you're going off the rails? Yeah, I'm uh I'm probably wired a little maybe differently in that respect. Again, um you know, I I already had fame uh from WWE. Well, start there. Like how did did that How did it did it screw with you?

What's that? The fame? No, man. I was I've always been the same person. Um and that that's just how I am and I realized that that Kane is a persona and don't get me wrong. I mean, it was it was wonderful. Um my family benefited tremendously. Uh at the same time, that's not who I am and I could see other of my colleagues and sometimes very dear friends and they would kind of get pulled into the hype and then ultimately that's self-destructive. Uh I always had a goal in mind. The goal in mind is I was trying to take care of my family and then when I retired, hopefully we're in a position where we wouldn't have to stress about missing a paycheck, right? Um but my goal was never hell to be Not my goal, you know, I am very success driven, okay? And I'm very competitive.

People I'm pretty laid-back guys. People may not think that, but I am. If I If I do something and I want to be good at it, I generally want to be the best at it. Um so, that did propel me, obviously, but the end was not was not oh, I want to be famous or I want to be super wealthy or anything like that. The end was I want to be able to take care of my family.

Um And the all this other stuff was basically just a fringe benefit, if you will. Um so, this is the same way. You know, I don't Man, I could I could leave tomorrow and I'd be fine. You know, I'm not one of those that's like, "Oh my gosh, I have to do this." I think what what I do is important and again, I think you need good people in it. But for me personally, you know, I'm I'm like a hardcore introvert, which is really strange cuz I keep on picking these occupations where where I'm right in the public eye. Um I've gotten used to that, but ultimately, you know, at my core, man, I'd be fine just, you know, at at home reading a book or watching TV or playing video games. Um and you know, I just I don't need I just don't need that this stuff that comes along with this.

Uh so, it it also, you know, I'm in a position that it's not like I need to do this job, you know? Um and all that that helps me because I can do the right thing because of like at the end of the day, man, if if I I can't get voted out now cuz I'm term limited, but, you know, still, at the end of the day, it's like I'm going to do the right thing and that's what matters because I have to live with myself and I have to live with that. And if I don't have this job anymore, it's okay.

The I just I wish more I wish more elected officials thought like that as opposed to, you know, I have to keep this job no no matter what I have to do. One of the things and I'm going to we'll come back to the the political life, but one of the things this just makes me think about is, you know, this show is called Dad Saves America cuz I cuz I just think that that is a central role we play that's heroic.

And um so many young men are lost and they're looking out into a culture that on one hand has been bashing them. And and young And you have daughters, so you know, girls are facing all kinds of trouble of different kinds and similar kinds, social media and all this stuff. Um how do you think about, you know, the boy crisis? You know, you you know, especially like WWE, like a lot of those the guys that are the young guys that are showing up, the kids, you know, they're in the thick of that.

They're in the thick of like, "What am I going to do with my life? Am I just part of the patriarchy?" There's all these messages that have like landed on our boys. And I'm sure there's hundreds of thousands of boys that have like looked up to you. How do you think about like what does it mean to be a man? One of the reasons that the left despises Donald Trump is he is an alpha male. I mean, that's just that's just it. They don't they don't like that. Uh he is the ultimate in toxic masculinity, right?

But that's not a bad thing. And I for for the young men out there, you know, our jobs is to be the strong one, you know, the uh in ancient times, the the women were the nurturers, uh but the men were the warriors. And we have lost that, I think, to a lot of to a large degree. Um you know, we're we're not the same. Men and women are not the same. We are different. Sorry, folks, but there's just biological differences between us, which translate into into social roles.

That's just how it is. Um but those roles, you know, throughout history have been, you know, the men are And when I say strong, I just mean physically strong and willing to defend their families. They're the protectors. You know, the women are the nurturers. They're much better at that. My wife can My wife can read my mind half the time, I swear. You know, um Probably better than you know it. Better than I know it, exactly. She knows

when something's wrong before I know something's wrong. Um but at the same time, my job is to protect my family. Uh and men's job is to protect society, to defend, you know, in our country, to defend the ideals that we believe in. Uh there's honor in that and there's nobility in that. Uh and I think that again, going back to kind of this cultural Marxist revolution we're seeing, which is counter-revolution to the ideals of 1776, frankly. Um that's part of it is to literally neuter men so that they will no longer take on the role of standing up and pushing back. So, you look at a guy like Donald Trump, you look at a guy like Elon Musk, and the fact that they're pushing back and that that that is everything that the far left, everything that's cultural Marxist, hate. Because imagine all of a sudden if you had a nation of those guys saying, "We're not going to do this anymore, and we're going to push back." This whole thing changes. Uh so again, you know, when you hear the term toxic masculinity, you don't need to be a jerk, obviously. You know, we can all You know, I I I believe that kindness is not a sign of weakness. I believe that that actually being kind is a sign of strength. At the same time, in your core, it's all right to be strong, and it's all right to do the right thing, no matter what folks might say about you.

One of the things that was funny about that, about like the that masculine projection, it was probably most visceral at the RNC, where you had Dana White Yeah. and your fellow former colleague Hulk Hogan on stage. Um did you Did you feel like that was a good thing that these were images being put forward to the whole country or Was it You okay? I do because, you know, just politically you compare then leadership on the Democrat side and there there is a distinct difference between, you know, strong men and, you know, guys that are just you know, frankly playing a role.

So, I think that's a very good thing. I think it, you know, not not to get partisan here, but I think it's good for the Democrat party. I think it's good for folks on the right because, you know, people see that and they go those that's, you know, that's what I want to be affiliated with as opposed to the guys that were here to just cry and whine about everything. You have You said two daughters? Yes, sir. What has that How has that changed your conception of masculinity?

What have you learned from being a dad to two daughters? My daughters are awesome. They're both nurses with advanced degrees. One is a nurse practitioner, the other one has an MBA in health care administration. And they do they do great. You know, so when I say that, you know, men are the protectors and the defenders, you know, that doesn't mean that women can't be very strong. My daughters are really strong and they're great people. Uh At the same time, like when I think about my granddaughter and you this stuff with boys and girls sports, you know, it's it's just ludicrous, right? You know, we're different and we're strong in our own ways. Society needs all of that, you know.

So, I've It's funny because if someone were to think, you know, oh my gosh, you know, you don't think women whatever. No, you need to meet my daughters. They're they're pretty awesome. At the same time, you know, they they also take on those roles as being the nurturers, as being, you know, my my daughter that has our grandkids, she's the best mom I've ever seen. I think a lot of that's due to she's she's strong, she's self-confident, uh you know, all of those things. Um so, I get I guess what I what I would learn is or what I've learned from them is there's different kinds of strength, you know, and maybe what we're seeing politically is not only the demasculinization of men, but it's just removing strength from the individual uh so that we turn to government

to protect us and take care of us and do everything for us. One of the things that's been so weird about the like this woke um stuff, the Marxist sort of flat flatten flatten everything out, is that at the way it's expressed itself in popular culture is that it's a copy and paste of a woman put into a masculine role.

Yeah. And and that I like that's always been weird to me because like see it seems like what you're saying is for women to be strong, they just have to be men with like long hair. Right. Right. As opposed to like actually being, you know, celebrating the things that are uniquely feminine, it's like no, no, no, you know, Captain Marvel needs to be able to kick Captain America's butt in the same way as, you know, what like whatever the Red Skull would and that's that and that's that's what it means to be like a strong female lead. Like how do you think about the culture you know, you spent so much of your life in like the cultural space?

Yeah, I mean, um you're exactly right. Uh going back to boys and girls sports and that's really what it is, right? It's like, you know, there there are just physical differences between men and women. Um when it comes to basketball, I actually like to watch women's basketball more than I do the guys because the women it's all about teamwork and playing the game. A lot of times with the guys, it's just who's the best athlete and get them the ball and let them roll. Uh, you know, so um I watch the women, I'm like, "Wow, you know, they're they're working together and you know, they're a great team." Um, but they just don't have the physical, they don't have the size, they don't have the the athleticism, frankly. It's not saying they're not really good athletes. Um, so yeah, you just you just can't mix those roles. They're different, but that doesn't diminish anything. I mean, think of a strong woman. Think about Margaret Thatcher. Yeah. I mean Lady. Yeah, the Iron Lady. Um, you know, so it doesn't diminish anything. At the same time, we're just different, you know. Talk about women in the military.

Women are better fighter pilots than men are because they have quicker reaction time. They're actually better marksmen than men are. They have quicker reaction time. You know, they're not very good at hitting I don't want to say they're not very good, but against men, they're going to have an issue with things that take strong physical strength and stamina just because that's not what they're built for. Um, so it it we're just different and we should The left is all about diversity, right?

We should be celebrating the diversity between men and women instead of literally trying to make us the same thing cuz we're just not. One of the things that um the president has really gone after is this DEI structure. This It is a philosophy. It's like a nicely It's a nicely named philosophy that each of those letters represents almost the exact opposite of what you think Right. Right. How have you um What do you think of the way the president is going about that? And, you know, as the mayor of a city with half a million people, you know, how have you confronted these impulses? Cuz I'm sure there's people inside of the, you know, the um city council and and the body politic that want DEI or want DEI style stuff. Again, not so much in Tennessee.

We we really don't deal with that as much as other places do, yeah. But you're exactly right. I mean, you know, I I when I think about people from different backgrounds and different perspectives, that's really valuable. Right? And we should celebrate that. That's actual diversity. You know, the left's idea of diversity is we look different, but we think the same. Right. You know, um who doesn't want, you know, equality? Well, they What's

equality means you have equal opportunity. That's awesome. What they've done is they talk about equity, which means you have equal outcomes.

There's only one way to get an equal outcome and you can only raise, you know, you can only raise these people up so far, what you have to do is you have to bring these people down, you know? So, ultimately, equity means government mandating equal outcomes, which is not equality. Inclusion sounds great. It's wonderful. But what they're really talking about is certain people have more rights because they belong to a group than the rest of us do, you know?

So, yeah, they they've they've just flipped it all around and uh you know, really created a straw man where you hear these words and it sounds great and it sounds very fair and it's something we'd all want, but they have used those to push an agenda uh which is the antithesis of everything that that I think that the average person would go, "Oh, those those are good things." Um we haven't seen it so much in Knox County.

Um you know, uh we have the University of Tennessee and uh our our the the assistant president is awesome, um but a lot of times it's the faculty that kind of run the institution, you know? So, there's been pushback on that. Our state legislature has has really been pushing back on that. So, I mean, one example of that is I think Vanderbilt's in Tennessee, isn't it? Yeah. Vanderbilt I mean, I paid very close attention in last year to the uh or I I guess 2023, um and into 24, the college campus stuff in the aftermath of the um the Gaza the the Hamas attack, like right after, before it got into a messy war.

And it was like, my god, like all the Ivy Leagues went nuts, but Vanderbilt really didn't seem to have the same kind of problems. It hasn't been in the news for becoming a like a a fifth column of America-hating terror communism. Right. And and And UT's been like that. I mean, they've had their stuff, but for the most part, uh it's been confined. They've done a They've done a good job with it. Um so, I I would argue that, you know, uh Tennessee, we're we're just in a good We're we're in a better place than a lot of other places around the country are.

You know, yes, you do still have people trying to push that, uh but for the most part, our our folks and the majority of the population thinks that thinks these things are nuts, frankly. Um when did you uh first become mayor? It was September of 2018. 2018. Yes. So, is this a So, um is this the Are you rounding out a second term? Yes. Yes, sir. So, you got reelected. Did you gain ground between the first election and the second?

Um local politics are interesting. Am I touching on a soft soft spot? just in elections are interesting. Um in 2006 2018, excuse me, when I ran the first time, uh on the ballot, there were all these races. There was a governor's race, there was a Senate race, uh there was congressional race. Uh fast forward to 2022, none of that was on the ballot. Um Democrats are really good organizers at the local level. Um so, I actually and it was true for every county-wide race, I actually lost ground. Uh but, I think the reason is because folks didn't see There wasn't a presidential election, you didn't have all these other things to vote for. Um So you had really more the activist types who were actually out in force. Not the general public. And that generally tends to be, you know, in our case, the the Democrats are the ones that are more well-organized in that case than the Republicans are.

You know, so Yeah, unfortunately and it again that wasn't just me, it was every every local race up and down the ballot was the same way. And I tell people you know, here's the thing about it is we lost a winnable school board seat in 2022, which is rather shocking to me. We're coming off of COVID and everything that happened in Loudoun County, Virginia and everybody's focused on that. And here we have a school board seat that that we could have won on the Republican side, really good candidate and he lost it to you know, someone who's on the very far left actually.

So my message on that would be local government matters and local elections matters, not just the president, it's not just the Senate, but it's also the local stuff. Um what has it been like to be mayor? Like what is that like? I've had the two best jobs anyone could ever have actually. I've been a WWE Superstar and mayor of Maury County, Tennessee. Um There are some really great days and there are some not so great days because it is politics.

But in the end you you do position of mayor you you have an enormous amount of influence over your local community and you can push things in certain directions. Um I've tried to do that without growing government, you know, more by using the bully pulpit, more by getting the public involved, the nonprofit and the private sector and we've had some big wins there. So even though sometimes you do have to struggle a bit with your ideological purity, at the same time, you know, what what you really have to do is you have to figure out how to make it work in the real world and how to think I don't even use the term outside the box because sometimes the box is fine. I use the term to think like there is no box. Right? Um, and when when you do that, you're like, "Oh, wait, you know, we can do this this way and you know, not not putting a higher burden on the taxpayers, you know, really we're handing it off to the private sector or whatever." Um, so we've had we've had some pretty good wins in that area, um, and I think it's made our community a better place. I hope. That's that ultimately that's the goal. What when you when you first entered at the beginning of your first term?

Wait, let's start with your campaign. So, what were you running on? I mean, you had some celebrity, so that was that had to be helpful. But but what was your platform? What were you saying you were going to do for the people in Knox County? Yeah, so, um, even my celebrity was kind of a double-edged sword because on the one hand uh, obviously we get my You want a wrestler to be your mayor? That's it. What a kind of knucklehead is this guy? I get my foot in the door, but uh, I'd also have to show people that it wasn't just they weren't voting for Kane, you know, I had some pretty good ideas, hopefully, uh, on my own. Um, and I ran on not raising taxes. We actually haven't had a property tax increase in Knox County since 1999, which is remarkable. Can you move to Austin?

Um, what what and what's becoming, you know, and it's been pretty difficult in the past several years because just with inflation and some of those issues, uh, our property tax is not indexed to inflation. So, uh, folks see our our overall budget, the absolute dollars have gone up, but the real dollars have remained flat uh, for 10 years. When you adjust our when you adjust our budget This is this is this is you're making me I'm sorry. You're making me When you adjust our budget for inflation I'm so jealous. our per capita spend is literally what it was 10 years ago as is our debt. Um you know, I'd like to see that moving the other way, but obviously we do have things that we have to do. Um Well, according to Congress, spending the same amount is the equivalent of um murdering grandmas.

Yes, uh I guess. Isn't that It's like, "No, no, no, that's You You've instituted radical austerity." Can I Can I Let me tell you a story though, speaking of grandmas. Uh one day it was about a year ago, I came into my office and uh there was an older lady sitting uh in the lobby. Yeah. And she was crying. Uh my folks had already talked to her cuz my my team is great, you know, about doing that sort of thing. Um but she wouldn't talk to the mayor.

Um for for reasons completely out of the side of the county's control. Uh I you know, I don't want to get in the weeds too much, but her her property The city and the county are two separate entities in Knox County. So, the city, if you sit live in the city, you have to pay city taxes and county property taxes. Okay. We can't control So, the city So, Knox County that you are the mayor of is a larger area and Yes. And I'm I'm not Is there a city of Knox of Knoxville, yeah. And I'm not the mayor of city of Knoxville. They're their own thing. And what's the population of Knoxville? It's about 180,000.

Okay. So, the county's actually much The unincorporated area is much larger than the city. Got you. But, you know, we we don't set policy in the city. Uh I can't do that. Um so, anyway, her taxes She lived in the city. Her taxes had gone way up. They'd almost doubled. Um and they didn't want There were other factors involved here as well. Um she was on a fixed income and her husband had just passed away and she had come down to the trustee's office to pay her taxes.

Uh got hit with the bill which she was not expecting. So, she showed me the envelope that had cash in it and she had I don't know how much it was, but it wasn't much money to get to the end of the month. That's That was a grandma. And you know, this idea that, "Oh, you know, we're going to raise taxes." We always forget about those folks, the people that can least afford it. Um I hope people say, "I don't care if you raise my taxes."

I'm like, "We'll take donations." Okay, so you can do that, but I'm not raising her taxes. I just I'm not going to do that because I have to explain to her that somehow I need her money more than she does. Um so, that's very important to me. This is keeping taxes where they're at, you know, um so we can pay the bills where they're at. So, let's do that and we don't need to, you know, have these ideas all these fancy new shiny objects that we need. Um I also, you know, economic development, jobs, basically what that is. That that was a big deal for me. Um our our median salary, I'd like to see that much higher than than it is. Uh and the way you do that is basically, you you know, able to um the private sector is able to provide those great careers for people. Um I was also the only candidate that was talking about the the drug epidemic and the opioid epidemic, which obviously is particularly uh hit Appalachia, where we live, particularly hard. Um so, those those were the things, you know, and also just, you know, just not growing government, you know, and and trying to as much as we possibly could stay off of people's backs. Uh so, those were the things that that I really emphasized.

Tell me about your constituents. Like, what I'm I'm sure you know, with 500,000 people, that's going to be a diverse group and you've got a city in the middle of that. And so, but is there a are there distinct characteristics? You're saying like it's part of Appalachia, so help me understand kind of what Eastern Kentucky that you are governing looks like? Yeah, uh so, we're we're the capital of East Tennessee. Um the our population of our county is about 500,000 people. When you take in the MSA, it's about 1.2 million. So, we're certainly not What's an MSA? the metropolitan statistical area. So, we're not we're not a little bitty place by any stretch of the

imagination.

Um we are the home of the University of Tennessee, which is the state's flagship uh university. Um, Knox County itself, because of of all that, we're we're actually very diverse as far as uh downtown, uh we have an area called Market Square, which was recently voted like the hippest place in America. Um, it's just, you know, they cool restaurants and that sort of thing. Um, I live out in an area town called Halls, which is still kind of country, and then we have some areas of our county which are very very rural. Uh, so we hit everything. Um, and because of the university, we actually do, you know, we have um probably have a very at at the university anyway, we have progressive element, um but for the most part and in the city, obviously, it it is a lot further left than the county would be, uh but the county overall is a very red county.

And and and since the city is actually has its own mayor and city council, does that mean that they're kind of like a cutout in your governance, like a donut? Yes, that's exactly what it is. Okay, so you really are it really is like you're the county, but really from it in terms of your policy making, it's minus the city of Knoxville. Exactly. Yes, exactly. Um, I my wife and I, for the first time, we live in we live in Austin, but we live in a little like city within the city called Sunset Valley, which is only got like 700 residents, and so as a fairly like fairly libertarian couple, we've actually like both volunteered on city committees and stuff. Like it's free, there's not it's not there's not no salary.

So, one of the things that is so interesting in America today, and then you alluded to it, is most of the government stuff that actually touches our lives, our schools, our roads, our you know, our quality of life, like you know, the policies that impact the jobs that are accessible to you in your area are city issues. They're not even state issues as much it seems like to me as city. And yet like participation in voting and in city government is nowhere near it it is at the national level. And any and everybody whenever you talk politics, you're just talking about the president and Congress. You're just talking about Washington. How do you Is that how you see it at like in the ground, you know, from where you're at?

100%. That's exactly right. Uh and you can see the difference though even within Tennessee. You've got Knox County. Uh we're the third largest county in the state of Tennessee. Uh you've got Shelby County, which is where Memphis is. We're very different. You Memphis Memphis and and uh Davidson County, which is Nashville, uh and now they're kind of vying for the number one population in the state. Uh but unfortunately, you know, Shelby County's got some real issues, things like crime and and mismanagement. And people People are leaving Shelby County. Uh meanwhile, they're coming into uh Davidson County, Nashville, this is the super hip place to be right now. And they're coming into Knox County as well.

Um so you just see even even locally and even within the state of Tennessee, there's differences depending on and as you alluded to even within Knox County itself, you know, if you live in the city, it's a little different than living out in the county just because the policies that we have in place. Uh so it it makes it makes a huge difference. Uh and that is one of my frustrations is is when people talk politics, they're talking the president, you know, and that's important. But school board, you know, school board, your roads, public safety, your tax rate, all these things are determined at the local level.

What do you wish more Americans understood as a matter of like civic knowledge about local politics? Like give me a primer like let's like for like the young young adult maybe just new dad who is like finally starting to turn your eye towards like the world beyond just my career. Help me understand where I should be spending my attention. Sure. You do need to be paying attention to local politics because the services that we generally think of government providing they're done to local level. With the exception of things like national defense, but they're done to local level. Now, obviously, uh we have to conform to the laws of the state of Tennessee. Uh so, there is some um you know, there is some homogeneity there, but nevertheless, you know, it all these things are are local. Your quality of life a lot of it depends on your local government and the policies that they've put in place. Uh I would, you know, I I I think Knox County's doing great and the reason we're doing great is because just you know, it's not because of me, but it's just because our overall attitude is let the market work. You know, um let people keep their money.

We do is we we um we fulfill the roles that we have to that we're required to, uh but at the same time, I believe in we don't micromanage people's lives. You don't micromanage people's businesses. Um so, you know, when we think politics, it has to be more than just national or federal politics. Uh because so many of the things that we talk about, you know, uh the president is not making he's not making curriculum decisions for Knox County schools.

You know, those are made by our school board and the state school board. Uh he's not making decisions about, you know, this road needs to get repaved. This this this uh uh park needs to be mowed or needs some playground equipment or that sort of thing. Those are all local decisions. Uh but you can see it, you know, you you pair a place like Knox County to obviously it's a lot bigger, but Chicago. Yeah. Uh Where would you live at this point? Um and again, it's not because of change numbers probably tell the whole story.

Yeah, and then that's what I tell people, too. You know, we have a lot of issues uh in Tennessee and in East Tennessee because we're seeing an influx of people coming in. And they're coming in from the crazy liberal areas. And everybody's Not everybody, but a lot of folks like, "Oh my gosh, you know, these liberals are moving in." I'm like, "They're not liberals. I talked to them. And they're tired of what's going on in other places." So, I understand that it it does present us some challenges, but at the same time, would you be Would you rather be the place where people want to live or the place that people are just dying to get out of?

I vote for being the place where people want to live. One of the things that um you know, I did a couple videos about the LA fires, and I had um Michael Shellenberger on this the show to talk about it. And you look at Los Angeles. You look at a you know, a giant city. Look at Palisades. These are in many cases not just Hollywood celebrities, but very successful business people. Some of whom are voting reasonably, but a lot of them weren't.

Yeah. And basically got the politics that they asked for. You have rural folks and and urbanites. And I I've I've thought for a while that that is actually the way bigger cultural divide in this country than left versus right, Democrat, Republican, even though it somewhat maps Democrat, Republican. How do you think about that tension between people in cities? And cities offer a lot of great stuff now for opportunity and density and food

diversity. There's all kinds of stuff that makes city I mean civilization itself is basically derived from the word for city. Right. Um how do you think about that tensions given that it's like you know, right there. It's part of your jurisdiction. Like you know, rural folks not liking the urbanites who don't know where the hell their food comes from. They think it comes from the grocery store and pre-wrapped.

And urbanites thinking like the the rural people don't have any money and are whatever. Like how do you what are what's your observation of those dynamics? Yeah, that that's interesting you bring that up cuz it's absolutely true. In fact, we see that across the state. Uh uh in in our legislature, uh the the rural counties are somewhat overrepresented compared to their population just cuz that's the way things work out. Um so a lot of times things go to the legislature that have a negative impact on the larger counties.

Uh and no one no one's doing that on purpose. It's just like we're like, "Hey, wait wait a second. Before you do that, you need to need to think about this." Um so that's Can you Can you give me an example? Just just like spending bills. You know, we're going to spend this money out in in the rural areas and we're going to take it from from like Knox County. It's like, "Wait a second, you know, or or economic development." Economic development, you know, the rural counties don't have the infrastructures support a lot of things that we do, but it spills over into the rural counties and helps them out. You know, so when when they're talking about, "Oh, we need to do this in this county over here."

Okay, the problem is they're not going to be able to support that, right? We we we can. Um and and just other things a lot of it just has to do with funding or or things like that. Um which you know, we're always you know, always vying for for that obviously. Um but it's it's interesting because then you'll kind of see us align with the the other two big counties who are not where we are politically, but just you know, politics make strange bedfellows. And just like that that's bad for for the big counties. Um yeah, it's helpful for the smaller counties, but it's bad for us.

It used to have to work those things out. And in the end, generally you do and they realize, "Yeah, we need to change this or whatever." Within Knox County specifically, yeah, we do have that. You know, and to me it again it just goes back to we're not going to we're not going to push anything on anybody as much as possible. You know, I believe the government's there you know, ultimately to protect people's rights. But at the same time, you know, locally we are required to you know, to do things like roads and and schools and those sort of things.

But you just you basically you basically just try not to push things on anybody so that you can't say, "You know, oh my gosh, you're favoring this group over this group." No, that's not the case. We're trying to make things as much as we can, you know, fair for everybody. You got elected in 2018, which means you were the mayor through the BLM riots. Yeah. How did you navigate that? How have you managed the police force? You know, what is it like to be the mayor and of a of a large area where the I assume you have a police chief that reports to you or how does it work?

it's different. So, with the city of Knoxville, their police chief does report to the mayor. In Tennessee, the sheriff is a constitutional officer. So, they're their own they're actually it's it's not the sheriff's department, it's the

sheriff's office. So, the sheriff has certain duties and responsibilities that the constitution requires of him. And they're actually not law enforcement, which is interesting. His What does that mean? His his only duties according to the constitution are to run the jail and to serve warrants.

Okay? However, we they do law enforcement, but you know, what's happened say in Nashville is Nashville has They still have a sheriff's department in Davidson County, but then it's it's the Metro Nashville Police Department that actually does all the policing, and the sheriff runs the jail and issue or serves warrants. And And that's it. Um but we're an elected office? The sheriff's an elected office. the sheriffs are running for office. Yeah, they're running for office. Now, our role is And And we're on our budget uh our budget season right now. You know, so the sheriff prepares a budget, comes to us, how much does he need? What does he want to do? And we have to figure out how to make that work, you know, can we accommodate all of it? Can we not? You know, so that's really our role. But once once, you know, once that budget is in place, it's his. He has to go back to commission if he wants to move some money around, but he is responsible for the day-to-day operations of his organization. So, if I'm a citizen of Knock Knock uh Knox County, that's not part of Knoxville, um what cop cars am I seeing? You'll You'll see giving me a ticket?

Knox County Sheriff's Office. Okay. Yeah. And And they do a great job. Our sheriff is wonderful, you know, obviously uh he did does a very good job. Uh specifically for like the BLM riots, it was very interesting cuz again, we're East Tennessee. So, we didn't we didn't really see much, but the fascinating thing was um the people who peacefully protested, you know, were the folks that I talked to all the time, you know, and and generally leaders um and whether it's the black community, you know, whoever.

They went out and marched and and peacefully protested, made their point, and then they went home. At night, the people that showed up and started breaking windows and things were young white kids. I saw the video of it. And it was basically And this is what's what's sad about that whole that really to me about the whole thing was, you know, um, the left took a discussion about, you know, about policing and these are legitimate things we need to talk about and then spun it for their own purposes and literally used black community as pawns in that case and I think that's disgusting actually. We had, um, Wilford Riley on the show who's an African-American, uh, academic, you know, conservative guy.

It's, you know, social science guy and he he he said he looked he like followed the money and he's like the the the sources, the things that the BLM organization was funding were Wacko stuff. It was it was far left far left political fronts. Trans organization, all kinds of stuff where it's like, what does that have to do with anything? Oh, no, it's just all communism. And and then what happened was this very serious issue that does need to be discussed is just lost.

You know, and and and initially you had folks on the left and the right saying, you know, this was, you know, this was something that we need to look at. It's really bad and then you just ended up having everybody at each other's throats because the left in my opinion, you know, took it and used it the far left, not even the left, but yeah, the folks you're talking about took it and spun it into something completely different and used it for their own purposes and because of that, you know, that that really that really hampered any discourse that we could

have had.

The, um, how What what's the demographics of Knox County look like roughly? As far as Just like like race racially. Uh We only have a a black population of about 12%. I'm sorry, it's actually about 9%. I'm sorry. Okay, so a little lower than the US average. Yeah, it is. Yeah, um, but you know, we we have other minorities as well, um, in Knox County that, uh, yeah, for the most part I think we're about 80% white in that neighborhood. One of the things that's hit our politics pretty hard and I have very mixed feelings about how to understand it is, um, immigration and its impacts on kind of everything. I think some of that has is legitimate and some of it is seems like it might just be scapegoating for stuff that's unrelated. Has there been an impact of the Biden era massive influx of illegal immigration on your cities? Like how has that impacted you?

Because you're boots on the ground. Yes. So it it's interesting. Um the Trump administration that they were there for 2 years when I would first came there. They were actually very commutative communicative with local governments. When I first got into office, my chief of staff and I went to Washington D.C. They had like county day on the hill where we got to meet with some of the the White House officials. Sonny Perdue who was secretary of agriculture spoke to us.

Mick Mulvaney was still the White House chief of staff. The White House chief of staff comes out and talks with a group of county mayors and county commissioners from I think it was North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee. Right? Man, I I actually became friends with like the deputy director of intergovernmental intergovernmental affairs which is the person that when you're having issues you talk to. So it was great. I mean I could call him and we had flooding in uh in early 2019, we had some flooding and I'm in the sheriff's helicopter and I'm basically live streaming uh the the flooding in our in our county and he sends me a text. He's like, "Man, I'm watching your Twitter." He's like, "You know, if there's anything we can do, let us know. If you need help with FEMA." All this stuff. I'm like, "Wow, that's awesome." It's like the White House has your back.

When Biden came into office, even even it was the same through COVID. I mean, you had regular meetings. Obviously, the president wasn't on the call, but White House officials were. When Biden came into office, that all stopped. He didn't They didn't talk to anybody. So Do you think that was just cuz you're a red state, I I don't know. I don't It just stopped. However, um we had uh we had an airplane of unaccompanied minors from you know uh the I don't even know where they're No one else even know where they're from. We just unaccompanied minors uh who were not US citizens land at our airport.

I found about it at I found out about it on the news cuz no one told us. I mean, there was just I would talk to our the the Biden administration was just shipping people Yes. Now, supposedly they supposedly these And it's terrible because these are kids without parents, right? This is awful. Now, uh it's supposedly they went different places. We don't know because no one talked to us. I would talk with our congressman. Again, Congressman Burchett, great. Talk with Senator Hagerty and Senator Blackburn who I have good relationships with, you know.

Homeland Security wasn't talking to them. State Department wasn't talking with them. So, no one in the state

No. No, we we don't even know. Like, other than kind of anecdotal evidence, you know, I do know that um you know, some of our schools are seeing a big influx of Spanish-speaking students, which puts pressure on us because you know, that that's just those those kids cost you know, they just cost more because of English as a second language and all those sort of things. But, otherwise, we were literally blind as to what's happening.

Have you seen a change in the way the state is relating to the new administration? Or is it um is it too early to tell? I think I think it is a little too early to tell. Uh but, I I do believe based on my experience in the previous administration, uh it's going to be a lot better. Uh and the frankly, the Trump administration is just much much more transparent uh than the Biden administration was the first time. And I'm sure that's going to be true again.

Now, he's been too he's been almost too busy trying to fix things this point. Uh but, even even the National Association of Counties uh when Trump was in office uh was thrilled at how much the White House communicated with the counties because that doesn't normally happen. Um, you know, earlier in our conversation you mentioned Murray Rothbard as one of the people you've read who I know Ron Paul knew personally and you know, so if you come into this world of ideas through Ron Paul as I did and you did, you encounter Rothbard, Mr. Libertarian.

Rothbard is like an anarcho-capitalist. He doesn't believe in any government at all. Um, how do you think about in in in in a little bit of like a high-minded abstract way, like not just like brass tacks, the role of cities in the future of like government? Because one way one thing I've thought about is you know, we have these massive massive government like never no one's ever seen before. You know, is there a world where like technology and everything that's happening will almost take us back to like the age of you know, 1600s Italy where you like the city of Venice is actually really the main thing and and we have more like city-states like take take me into the future as a libertarian and thoughtful guy and a mayor, you know, is your role is that role going to be elevated in the future? How do you think about that? I hope so. Um, the America our system of government is actually a lot based on the the Swiss, right? And how they did things.

In Switzerland, they're it's flipped between local and federal, okay? Only like 20% of the spending is is federal, 80% is local. In the US it's the opposite of that. And it's the federal government that has all the power and local governments have very little. According to our constitution, the states are actually supposed to be the most the most powerful political entity. Um, I think we have to get back to that because there are just massive differences culturally and politically between the states. I mean you think about California, you think New York, you think Illinois. You compare them to Tennessee, to Texas, to Florida.

We're very different. Um and the way that we can all live together is through federalism. It's It's It's basically the federal government backing off on all these things that it shouldn't be doing uh and going back to what it should be doing and allowing the states sovereignty over the many things they're supposed to control. And of course that would radiate down to the cities as well. Um and literally I think that we have to do that because I think that these differences are becoming so acute and so profound that it's it's causing schisms within our country. Uh and I think that the outcome of that could could be less than all.

I mean you're you're alluding to if not civil war then certainly like unresolvable social strife. We're forced to all be at the same federal trough at each other's throats instead of And that's that's where we're at right now. Yeah, instead of saying, you know, we're not going to fight over this stuff because we don't have to. You know, California, you want to do your crazy stuff, that's cool. We're going to do what we would consider common sense stuff in Tennessee. Leave us alone, we're going to leave you alone. We can trade, our people can travel, but you ain't doing that here and we ain't going to make you do this there. Uh and and ultimately I think that's the solution for a lot of the things that ail us. And then also what it it makes the country stronger cuz we could actually compete with one another and you know, again, you know, we're seeing this influx of people from California come to Tennessee. Well, imagine what that would look like if we're really able to differentiate ourselves. Um so I I think that would I think that's the way to go.

A move a kind of 2.0 version of these United States. Exactly. Exactly. That's the The federal government is just way too powerful. Um uh I remember talking uh I heard the last speech that former Tennessee Governor uh Bill Haslam gave to the to the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce. And it was remarkable because Governor Haslam he's a great guy. Politically he's probably a lot more moderate than someone like I am as far as being a centrist. He sounded just like Glenn Jacobs though. It was amazing. He'd been he'd been the mayor of the city of Knoxville.

And he said as mayor of the city of Knoxville I knew exactly where our budget was and I knew how many people worked for us and how many vehicles we had and knew all these things. When I moved up to governor I would have to call the commissioners to find out a lot of those answers. Back then I could still call them. He's like you move up to the federal government they have no idea. You know they have no idea what's going on but they're making all these decisions that impact the local people.

So it's true I think that government that is more local is more tuned with the people of that area more more tuned to the needs than you know these people that are hundreds of miles away and just clearly removed. Glenn I ask this of every guest. You know like I sort of said before we call this show Dad Saves America because I think it is a role we play that starts at the family and radiates out to the community to the county and ultimately to the country. And it's a place where we can really make a difference as men. How do you think about your role in the American story?

That's a that's a great question. Um for me I just want my grandkids to know that the old man fought as hard as he could. They both keep the American dream alive. That's it. Thanks for being on Dad Saves America my friend. Thank you.