

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

A LEGACY OF SERVICE:
9/11 VETERANS CONTINUING THE TRADITION
OF GEORGE H.W. BUSH AND JOHN McCAIN

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Panel:

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ADAM LA REAU
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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. STICKLES: In the last year, the country bonded over the loss of two great patriots. In August and November, we lost Senator John McCain and President George H.W. Bush. What a lot of people forgot is that as young men in two separate wars -- they were both lieutenants in the United States Navy, and had catastrophic occurrences happen to them.

George H.W. Bush crashed in the Pacific and was rescued by a submarine - - lost his co-pilot in that accident; and then Senator McCain not only was involved in the mishap on the Forrestal -- one of the nation's deadliest naval mishaps -- but then wound up as a POW in Vietnam prior to their political careers.

Now, as we enter budget season -- I know it feels like the summer outside, but it's still spring in D.C., and it's still the budget season. Acting Secretary of Defense, Shanahan just submitted a budget to Congress that required \$718.3 billion for the Department of Defense. A third of that money is going to personnel issues. That's separate from the \$220 billion request by the Veterans Administration. So, we're looking at in fiscal year 2020 a \$460 billion request just for personnel and investment in human capital. That enormous resource only make sense if we continue to have some citizens who are able to survive; fight our country's wars; deter our enemies; but then continue their ambition to serve the highest responsibilities of citizenship in government once they're out of uniform.

So in that, I've brought four people here to Brookings to talk about those issues; find other ways that veterans can continue to serve; any barriers to entry that we could maybe avoid; and find other ways that we can use this under-utilized resource which is the veterans of September 11th.

Our plan today is we're going to have a conversation for about 40 minutes; and I know there're lots of veterans in the audience, as well as military members, founders of non-profits, and also members of the private sector who might have questions; so in the last 10 minutes, we'll make sure we have some time for questions.

To my immediate left is Ellen Zeng. Ellen is an undergraduate at Cal-Berkeley Electrical Engineering, is that correct? And then Ellen went on to Harvard Law School where she graduated with honors. She worked on both the House and the Senate side and is now vice president at With Honor. With Honor is a fascinating organization. They're a super PAC dedicated to electing veterans to Congress to find bipartisan solutions.

They fund equally veterans of both parties; and Ellen had a very good mid-term election cycle that we look forward to talking about.

To her left is Jessica McAndrews. Jessica spent 11 years on active duty in the JAG Corps. She's a lawyer. Her life was just like the TV show JAG; so that's pretty much all you need to know. Now, she's a vice president for programming services at the USO of Metropolitan New York. An organization for almost 80 years has worked privately funded to support active duty military and veterans.

To her left is my good friend, Adam La Reau. Adam was an active duty Navy SEAL for over 11 years -- all operational with East Coast SEAL teams. Adam runs a for-profit company now that he founded with some co-founders called O2X. It's a human performance consulting firm that works primarily with first responders; credited with saving \$6.5 million to the City of Boston and the Boston fire department. He also works with sports teams and some boards of directors.

What we're going to primarily focus on today is his work with his non-profit, One Summit. One Summit partners active duty Navy SEALs and former Navy SEALs with children going through cancer treatment to work one-on-one as mentors and teach resiliency. It's an unbelievable organization that I'm really proud of him for working with.

On the end is Sean Hughes. Sean is also a Navy veteran; went to business school; a graduate of the United States Naval Academy. He does two things; one is he works full time with Intuit in the technology sector. What we're going to talk primarily about today is his non-profit, Care for Us, which provides, free of charge, counseling services to families affected by autism. Sean is also a prolific writer, second only to probably Michael

O'Hanlon with words per year; and his website, chartwellwest, has had over 1.7 million visitors, including one article on a veteran's perspective of the 2016 election that got a lot of attention and got published as a series of essays for his book -- *Sixteen: A Rational Account of an Irrational Election*.

So, I'm very excited to have all of you here; and I look forward to the conversation -- but Sean, if you can start in the spirit of both Senator McCain and George H.W. Bush. When we say veterans -- post-September 11th veterans -- frame for us who are we're talking about; what makes that generation different from previous generations, keeping in mind that just yesterday we lost three service members in Afghanistan. So, we're still in the midst of the longest war in U.S. history; so this is a current event story, not a historical story. But what's your perspective on that? When I say post-9/11 veterans, who are we talking about?

MR. HUGHES: Sure. Moment of truth -- so there's the obvious things that we think about when we talk about post-9/11 veterans where it's an all-volunteer force, and that's something we hear a bunch about. World War II -- if we think about World War II and Vietnam -- World War II is about 2/3 draftees; Vietnam about a 1/3 -- with a good deal more than that enlisting to avoid the draft. So somewhere between 1/3 and 1/2 is the folks who joined up voluntarily.

But the other interesting thing -- which is a little bit closer to obscure is -- from a timeline perspective -- we're on 18 years of post-9/11. If you want to think about what that means historically -- if we were to line up 9/11 and Pearl Harbor Day, World War II would have been over before the Battle of Romani started, which puts it in perspective just how long the two conflicts we've been in right now are going on.

And so, the other interesting thing that differentiates post-9/11 vets is the environment that they're leaving the service into. Even as recently as the 70s, we were still largely a manufacturing economy that drew vets out into a very different job force. World War II -- they left into one of the most booming manufacturing economies that the world had

ever seen; and we had substantial growth for decades upon decades.

The vets today are leaving into a service's economy that has seen the majority of the growth through tech sectors that are pretty substantially different from the work that they had. So, it's not quite the transition there; and kind of the end result to that is their easiest path into transitioning out is the military industrial complex that's grown substantially -- even since Vietnam.

And so, there's factors like security clearances which serve as, frankly, a professional license that keeps you involved and able to work in that military industrial complex; and what we end up seeing is similar to how there's a cluster of technology talent around Silicon Valley, we see the clustering of the post-9/11 vets in this military industrial complex where they're not bringing the lessons that they learned and the skills that they developed over the years of fighting a conflict into the general population.

And just in kind of closing it, if we think about World War II is about little bit shy of half of every military-aged male actually served. So, if you went into a cab with another person, chances are one of you, actually, was in the war. There was in a sense that you had to then leave service and go join the rest of the country because it was already out there. There was just the general movement into the population. Dick Winters of Easy Company fame went to work in the personnel department at the Nixon Chemical Company in New Jersey. E.B. Sledge didn't write his book with the old breed until the 70s.

So, the novelty is much, much less and so what we see is that divide is substantial; and it's really getting in the way of a lot of our ability to continue on in service, and do the unfinished work that Lincoln talked about on the Gettysburg Address.

MR. STICKLES: Some of those numbers, I think, are shocking in the historical context. So, right now there are about 326 million people in America, and almost exactly 326 thousand sailors on active duty. So the number is literally 1/10th of 1 percent currently on active duty in our service -- the United States Navy. So, when you compare that to the World War II generation, like you said, where close to 50 percent of the people had

some frame of reference.

And then, Ellen, I think the number at the time was about 70 percent of congressional representatives in the wake of World War II had military experience. And I know that number is way lower now. So, if you can explain to us what problem did With Honor seek to rectify with the organization, and then how are you working to solve it?

MS. ZENG: Great. I really appreciate being here today. With Honor is a pretty new organization. We started in 2017. We're a veterans group that's really trying to just think different and try to get at polarization and gridlock in Congress. As Brendan mentioned, there was a time when veterans represented 70 percent of members of Congress. This was five decades ago -- not that long ago -- and now veterans represent a historical low of 18 percent. At the same time there was a time when, you know, Congress - or government in general -- was more functional. People worked across the aisle. You know, you mentioned McCain earlier -- people did work across the aisle -- there was level of civility; and now, you know, there are some measures that say Congress is the least trusted institution, you know, even lower than I think U.S. car salesmen. It's just a joke, but it's sort of not funny in some ways as well.

And so, we don't think those two things are a coincidence that decline in veteran representation in Congress and also the lack of civility -- the sky-high polarization. So, With Honor, as an organization started in 2017 to really take a different approach to this problem. We're not a policy-focused organization. There are no policies that we require veteran members to abide by; but, instead, we ask our members to take a values-based pledge to lead with integrity, civility, and courage. You know, things like I will be honest -- that is the first plug of the pledge just in case you're curious. You know to work across the aisle; you know, meet with someone from another party once a month. It's a very different approach based on values. Veterans served our country and took an oath to defend and support the Constitution. We're asking those who want to run for Congress to take a similar oath to lead with integrity, civility and courage; and that's what With Honor tries to do.

MR. STICKLES: What I saw that was fascinating -- correct me if I'm wrong -
- that prior to 2012 there was only two women veterans elected to Congress in the history of
the United States; and then just in November a huge amount of the swing states --
specifically, Mikie Sherrell from my home state of New Jersey and a few other women -- like
part of the swing to the Democratic Party was by veterans, but also by women veterans, is
that correct?

MS. ZENG: Yeah, I think that's definitely correct. I think the freshman class
has the largest number of veterans, historically, which we're really proud of. There're 16
new freshmen veterans in Congress -- you know, men, women, Democrat, Republicans, so,
we're really excited, sort of hope to reverse the trend of veteran decline in Congress.

MR. STICKLES: I know that the first candidate -- I think Rye Barker I
mentioned -- the first candidate that With Honor got to agree to sign the pledge; work across
the aisle; was also a part-time Saturday Night Live cast member; and former Navy SEAL,
Dan Crenshaw, is that correct?

MS. ZENG: Yeah, we definitely wanted to support Dan, among mainly
Texas as an earlier primary; but, you know, our pledge is a values-based pledge, you know,
and we care about things like integrity which veterans, you know, I think that's intuitive. It's
surprising sort of having done this for a couple of years, people often ask you have to
actually ask people to have integrity. You know, it's part of where we are as a country --
which, I think, says a lot, I think.

MR. STICKLES: So, the number, 17 to 18 percent of Congress with
representation, in some ways is over representation as a population even though it's so low.
I think the number is about 7 percent of America right now will ever serve in uniform. So, in
some ways there is a high number, but compared to historical (inaudible), it's obviously low.

Jess, a lot of people at Brookings do research and writing on exactly that --
the civil, military divide -- the difference between people who've served verse people who
haven't and how can the people who haven't support those that have. I think that falls

squarely in the wheel house of the USO, which a lot of people, traditionally -- myself included -- think of the USO, I think of Bob Hope and Marilyn Monroe on a stage talking to the troops; or to the country concerts that I saw in Bahrain on deployment. But what's the current status for the USO, especially the USO of Metropolitan New York?

MS. MCANDREWS: Yeah; so the USO, as Brendan mentioned, has been around for over 77 years, which is incredible; and did start with the Bob Hope tours, which a lot of people still associate with the USO, which is fantastic. You know, it's a brand that the public knows and that the military knows; but, you know, I would say that the military versus the public and what they know about the USO is a little bit different.

The military -- our goal is to be basically by the side of the military from the moment they enter service. So, when they go into a MEP Center and, you know, raise their right hand -- till they actually transition back to the civilian community. So, you've probably seen the USO at airports; you also see it overseas in Bahrain, Iraq -- we're kind of that constant throughout their military careers. And we, as an organization, you know, 200 locations worldwide; over 30 thousand volunteers -- a huge organization -- we still do the entertainment tours; but we're also really trying to make a concentrated effort in the recent years to become that organization that is there for the service members as they transition back. So, we now have a pathfinder program that, you know, I know you have all gone through -- many of you may have gone through the military program, which I think is now maybe a week long -- does not necessarily -- it's a good program, nothing negative about it - - but our program aims to kind of take in the entire family; you get assigned a scout who can help you with everything from financial wellness to helping you work through a VA loan -- which, if you've gone through that can be very confusing -- the GI Bill and education; as well as being there as a service to your family. You know, transitioning from the military is not only difficult for the service member, but for the family. You know, you're used to being taken care of -- your medical; your dental; the family community on an installation -- and all of a sudden you're being thrown out into the general public, which can be scary for the entire

family. So, our goal with our pathfinder program is to be that source for that year after you transition, as well, to be there for the entire family with some programming.

MR. STICKLES: Jess, with regards to the entire family, I know your husband was also military -- you were both military at the same time. Jess was a prosecutor in the U.S. Navy when we first met. She deployed to the Middle East and the Western Pacific. She worked on Capitol Hill as a legislative affair and a social aide in both the Bush and Obama White House. Are people surprised that you're a veteran, or is it a --

MS. MCANDREWS: They are. You know, I work for the USO and -- but, you know, I will say as a female I will go into many meetings and it's not people's first assumption I served on active duty, which I think is indicative of something we all need to kind of embrace -- that, you know, the military population now is not what it was back when it was the World War II and even Vietnam veterans -- it's me, you know. And so, I look at people and think, you know, look me up before you go into a meeting with me. Know that I know what it's like to live on a ship for nine months, you know. So things like that, I think, just as a population, we can do a better job at not making assumptions of some of our veterans; you know, their background; where they came from.

I was, as Brendan mentioned, a prosecutor for most of my career -- 11 years -- and I got out and started applying at law firms in New York and said wow, I can't do this. This is not where I see my future; and I came to the USO 7 years ago, and still here because it feels good to be able to have that connection to the military and be able to continue giving back a little bit. And so, that's one thing I really encourage folks when they're looking for new careers as well -- to look other places. You know, it's very easy to get into that little niche of the government contract work because that's what I know; but there are so many more things out there for you and that you feel good about doing.

MR. STICKLES: Adam, I know you had a similar experience. If you don't mind, can you talk about the news you got? I believe you did seven deployments, is that number correct? On one of those deployments I know you got some tragic family news.

Can you talk a little bit about how that shaped your journey once you got out of the uniform?

MR. LA REAU: Sure. I'm honored to be here. Thanks for having me, and it's an honor to be with all of you guys up here. So, I'm originally from New Jersey as well. We try to stack the panel as heavy Jersey as possible so people would laugh at our jokes -- at least up here. But I grew up in New Jersey and I went to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and I got my commission from there; and I went in active duty; and I went back to the East Coast base SEAL teams; and my first deployment overseas is kind of where the origination of, you know, everything that with One Summit, how it came to be, and my interest in pediatric cancer -- cancer as a whole; and doing things to just kind of help solve this problem; help shackle some of these challenges that people are facing day in, day out.

My mother -- I got news probably within a month and a half into deployment that my mother passed away. It won't be pretty unforgettable to me because it was like my first time going to sleep after three consecutive days of operations and then, you know, my buddy kind of woke me up and said hey, your mom just passed away -- and like that's how it happened. And, you know, so, I had that opportunity. It was like do I stay with my team -- because I was one of the officers there -- do I stay with my team because I was one of the officers there; do I stay with my team because here's my family; but then I got my family in the United States so I come back; you know, how do I do that. I'm glad I had an opportunity to get back; and I know a lot of service members, you know, because, you know, special operations was able to kind of use -- some of our assets -- to kind of get back to see my family.

So, I started after that -- I didn't know anything really about cancer at all. Didn't know much about it besides what my mother endured, embattled. I started volunteering at cancer foundations. I'm like all right; I need to get closer to this disease to find more about it. I needed to see where I can make an impact; and through that exposure, I saw a lot of children being affected by cancer. I was surprised on how many kids, how pediatric oncology -- pediatric cancer -- was such a big thing; and one in five weren't going

to make it.

Seem like, you know, they should be living a life of, you know, being children on playgrounds playing sports, and academics, and things like that; and then their childhood got pulled from them. So, I kind of said this is an unfair fight to me and let me see where I can even the odds -- started looking at different ideas. You know, as I was transitioning -- transitioned right after a little after 11 years -- I had this idea -- I was serving alongside some of the best trained, you know, warriors in the country, and I saw what made them special was just an immense amount of resilience -- just to be able to bounce back from some of the hard hits that they have. And then I looked at these kids battling cancer and I said, you know, there are some similar qualities here. There's some -- I think this is going to be a mutual beneficial relationship. And I had the idea -- actually one of my former SEAL officers became a medical doctor and I called him up with this great idea. I said I've got a great idea. I'm going to merge Navy SEALs and kids with cancer. It's going to be an education program. He said that is the worst idea that I have ever heard. He's like first of all, no one wants -- you know, how you guys going to interact with kids. Second of all, you're taking this demographic that is the most sensitive demographic -- children the most sensitive demographic -- children with cancer; with low immune systems even more so. So, you're going to take them and you're going to take them rock climbing; and not to mention, it's kind of like a sick idea. You're going to immerse more adversity into a life that they've already have -- it's got a ton of adversity going on.

But that sounds counter-intuitive, but that's what fosters growth. We've been going now for five years. I've an executive director, and a marketing director. We started in Boston, Dana Farber. Children's Hospital -- I know a lot of you've heard of that -- very progressive; they gave me my first shot. You know, they were like all right, this sounds great, let's do it; and after a quick pause, I'm like, really, you said yes. Then we did our first event in Boston; then we extended to Mass General and Tufts; we came down in New York; did NYU, Columbia; then expanded to San Diego; and we put over 200 kids through the

program; we've expanded to, you know, children, like, obviously siblings -- there's no sibling program -- so we learn from the people that are in the trenches every day, which are the child life specialist and the pediatric oncologist -- like there's nothing here for this program; and then also bereavement. So, the program has generated more than just a mentorship, a lifelong mentorship; because it last far after the climbing, but now involved in post-traumatic growth studies. I'm not sure if anyone's heard of that but post-traumatic growth is the ability to get stronger from adversity. You go through some dramatic events and emerge stronger from it; and the skills and things you learn, which build immense amount of self-confidence, courage. So, we're into independent studies now and growing more from there.

MR. STICKLES: Adam, what made me nervous was not the children.

When Adam won the Robert F. Kennedy Public Service Award from the Kennedy School for this charity; so, that's when we first started talking about it. I wasn't nervous about the effect on the children. I was, frankly, more nervous on the effect of SEAL warriors coming home from combat and then plugging them into a very emotionally charged environment. But you swear to me that the SEALs get more out of this than the children. I find that hard to believe; but can you talk about that for just a moment.

MR. LA REAU: Yeah; sure. It's, you know, something that I think the guys don't even want to admit because it doesn't feel right. You're like they're there to give back, and, I think, for the veteran community in transitions, it's like, hey, you're taking the uniform off but you don't have to not continue to serve, give up on that, right. There's finding other teams, and there's a lot of people that need help. But I can say that working with the children -- and the children are inspiring, inspiring these warriors and helping guys. Even on this transition, the impact that it's had on them -- we don't necessarily hear from them because you'll know with running an independent study on post-dramatic growth when you ask a SEAL like, on a scale from 1 to 10, how is that; and they're like oh, it's about a 2, you know; and so, it's kind of hard to kind of get that real feedback; but we hear from the spouses. We hear it from them kind of talking about it and they're saying, he needed this;

and the impact that it's had on them in perspective; and ability to also showcase -- you talked about skill sets -- and to be able to how do you take what you've learned in a completely different combat environment and how do you transition it to the civilian world.

MR. STICKLES: So, Sean, speaking of those transitions, I know you had a similar experience. Sean and his wife, Annette, founded Care for Us based on their experience with your son, Adan; and like Ellen, I think you saw a deficiency and you thought maybe your skill sets could transfer from an operations perspective in the special forced community into something completely outside of your comfort zone. Can you talk about that a little bit?

MR. HUGHES: Yeah; sure. So, a pretty common experience is things happening in our lives while we're deployed; and we had a similar experience. I was deployed with SEALTeam 1 in 2009 to Iraq Romani, and my wife sent me an email -- she asked me to call her, which she almost never did. It was our third deployment together. I called her and she had told me that she was worried about our son Adan who'd stopped talking after I deployed -- he was 2-1/2 at the time, on his way to 3 -- and he'd completely stopped talking. So, she took him to the doctor and had him assessed; and he was diagnosed with moderate to severe -- we know now it's more severe -- autism. And so, I was away from the family. My wife had a 3 year old, a 2 year old, and a 4 month old; and the 2 year old had just been diagnosed.

So, I had a similar experience. The skipper sent me home -- told me it wasn't a choice -- sent me home for a couple of weeks -- just over Christmas -- probably saved my family. But the hole that we ended up digging up after that deployment really, really materialized for us -- an underserved group, which is the parents and caretakers of special needs children. And so there is no diagnosis for having a special needs child; there is no formal problem to solve; and so, therefore, insurance companies and insurance plans don't actually fund any support. And what I know about my deployments in the military and my experience parenting special needs children is the stress level is a lot closer than you

think. In fact, there is a duration to the special needs parenting where we're likely in this for 50 to 60 years. And when you're staring up at that level of mountain, it's really helpful to have somebody to talk to about it -- to have real live cognitive behavioral therapy the way you have to when you have other tangible diagnoses.

Because there's a trick; and there's rules of thumb; and there's skills you need to learn in order to keep moving that pack up the hill; and if given the opportunity to invest in themselves or their children, almost everybody will invest in their children. And so, what our organization does is it eliminates all friction. You contact us, you schedule; and you can talk to a licensed therapist, psychologist, counselor -- we have a few. Mostly, and this is interestingly enough -- it's my wife who was a teacher -- educator by profession at the time of the diagnosis, but actually used the post-9/11 GI bill to go back to school and get her degree in psychology and to get her license to practice marriage and family therapy.

MR. STICKLES: So, that's a really interesting thing. I think not a lot of people know is that the post-9/11 GI Bill is transferable to family members. After 10 years, you transfer it to your spouse. I think after 16 years, you can transfer to your children because so much of the stress of being an active duty service member is transferred physically and emotionally to family members. So, the GI Bill, I think, is a great piece of legislation that helps bridge that gap.

MR. HUGHES: Yeah; with pay, too. That's the fascinating thing. You have to stop work to start work.

MR. STICKLES: Sure.

MR. HUGHES: And a lot of the goodness the GI Bill is, things like stipend -- my wife's salary was gone while she went back to school when I was transitioning out -- was super helpful.

MR. STICKLES: So, Ellen, I think Adam and Sean both hit on some of the challenges just as well. Some of the challenges going from being a professional and then jumping into something that's outside of your comfort zone and finding those transferable

skills. How has your work been with people going into the political realm which -- like I'm on active duty right now; so I'm A-political; I'm allowed to vote; I'm allowed to donate; but I'm not allowed to wear my uniform; I'm not allowed to attend rallies, or do anything of that nature. How has the experience been with some freshmen congressman that you've worked with or freshman people -- or really campaigners -- going into politics for the first time?

MS. ZENG: Yeah; that's a great question. Last cycle With Honor was primarily a super PAC because our operating thesis is veterans are running these great campaigns; or over 400 veterans who decided to run for Congress. Last cycle, they're, you know, we can come in at the end; give them a little bit of a boost; they'll be fine. Post-election we did a pretty extensive, sort of after action analysis -- talked to veterans who ran; those who won and lost; we talked to their staff; we talked to consultants; we talked to partners; we did some polling -- and one of the most interesting, but probably not surprising finding, is that veterans often are at a disadvantage when they run for Congress. You know, these days, it's no surprise the cost and the barriers entry are super high, generally, for people. It's like 1.5 million is the average cost of a congressional

MR. STICKLES: And that's every congressional race, right?

MS. ZENG: Yes. On average it's like 1.5 million. The veterans, specifically -- you know, they often served in the military to serve our country; they didn't serve to build some of the -- unfortunately necessary these days -- political; and more importantly, fundraising networks that you need to run for Congress. And so, with that information in these conversations, we learned, you know, veterans are sometimes taken advantage of by local consultants with a candidate life cycle who is like 100 votes away from winning a primary, and his consultant was like, this is a primary republican candidate -- we (inaudible) partisan, I think, you mentioned work with democrats and republicans, and the independents, if there're any.

He was told to mail everybody -- like everybody. Not just primary voters; not just republican primary voters; not just likely voters -- but everybody in the district. And this

is a race of a veteran who was very aligned with our values and that kind of stuff sort of really, I think, upsets me. You know, just local consultants taking advantage of people.

We had another veteran on the democratic side who didn't have staff in June -- and this is a race that With Honor actually invested 1/2 million dollars in. And so, I -- sort of hearing these stories and hearing this perspectives -- this cycle we actually through our non-profit started a campaigns department to work with candidates on sort of the nuts and bolts.

Again, veterans, you know, come with all calibers. Some of them know what they're doing, and they're perfectly fine; and they're good to go. Others really have no idea. A veteran asked us last week like, how do I actually file. It's like there's an organization called the FEC -- this is the stuff you do. And so, you know, we have because of sort of the gap we saw, have tried to fill it to the extent we can with some nuts and bolts and basics like you're a veteran; you're in line with our values which is based on our pledge to serve with integrity, civility and courage, let's help you on a basic level so you can run basically competent campaigns.

MR. STICKLES: So, if you're not comfortable talking about this, that's fine -- but I know that one of the things that got you a lot of recognition over the last six months was that you were Jeff Bezos' first political contribution -- was, I believe, was \$10 million -- to With Honor, which got a lot of attention; got a lot of conspiracy theories as they were building HQ2 right next to the Pentagon; that Jeff Bezos is taking over the world -- but if you could just talk in general about the type of person that donates to With Honor; and then how that donor interaction works?

MS. ZENG: Yeah; for sure. I mean we're, you know, obviously, Jeff Bezos gave us \$10 million who's everywhere in the news. You know, we have actually hundreds of donors across the country -- across, actually, the political spectrum. We've been really pleased. I think there is -- at least outside of D.C. -- and even in D.C. -- there's this hunger for something different for people who like want to solve problems. (Inaudible) like problem

solvers is appealing. And if you talk to most Americans, they would tell you, what you guys don't talk and you guys are a different party -- what's going on. And, I think, it's sort of -- it's shocking in some ways; and so, what we try to do as an organization is because of the common military background, they speak a similar -- veterans often speak a similar language -- and they're like -- and we've heard this from members. Just this year, there's a member we help elect in Maine. He's like look, you know, I don't know my counterpart who's a republican, but he was With Honor endorsed -- military veteran in this case is a Green Beret -- and that's an instant, you know, credibility; and I will work with him, and we will try to get something done.

And so, that's sort of what we try to do as an organization. 2018 was our first election cycle; so I was, actually, very pleased. We ended up raising about \$20 million - - getting about 19 veterans elected -- 10 democrats, 9 republicans. We try to go for about 50/50 in spending because we are cross partisan; we try to be fair to both sides.

MR. STICKLES: And I know that some of those 19 -- again, Mikie Sherrell, was a democratic woman veteran elected in a republican district in Jersey that had been republican for 30 years. And so, while a lot of the extremes of both parties get a lot of attention, I think those 19 veterans -- my impression is they're -- on both sides of the aisle -- they're fighting above their weight class and moving the needle in the right direction, do you agree with that?

MS. ZENG: Yeah; definitely. I mean our sort of process to access both candidates and members is pretty intense and it involves like background research; look at their DD-214. We do confidential reference checks with veterans that served with them just to see how they are --in, you know, crisis situation. And then when they're in office we look at their Lugar Index; their DW nominate score; how bipartisan are they; do they actually sponsor legislation across the aisle. And we've actually worked with the Lugar Center on research to look at sort of post-9/11 veterans and how they perform. And on average, I think, post-9/11 veterans tend to be more bipartisan than others, and that sort of been

validated. If you look at the current crop of freshmen, obviously, you know, there are some that are outliers, but I think on balance there is a desire because of that military service. It'll be like well, I'll give you a chance; let's find something we're going to work on. We might not agree on every issue, but let's find something we can work on that's common sense.

MR. STICKLES: Jess, could you -- just as a lawyer and a former JAG -- did I misspeak about anything with regards to political interaction of active duty military. Can you just talk a little bit about those requirements?

MS. MCANDREWS: Yeah; no, no; that's correct. And I will add, as you said, you know, the biggest questions if you're going to something or thinking about getting involved in something and you're on active duty is, you know, is it a partisan event, and am I going to wear my uniform. Those are always two big things. Now, you'll see a lot of times that candidates will be in uniform and after they've gotten out -- that's usually not a problem. A lot of times, you'll see a disclaimer, which is always good to use, I'm sure. I'm sure you work with that a lot. But it's not a problem to use that photo. You know, the big thing now is social media; and that's a big change. That's something if you're on active duty, you do have to be careful about is -- you know, I believe the JER says you can like something, follow something, but you should not be reposting things; or commenting on any candidates; or on any articles against a candidate; or a, you know, sitting president. So, there're a lot of social media requirements that, you know, are not as trafficked as much but can get you into trouble. So, it's just something to be aware of as well.

MR. STICKLES: In the 2020 election -- With Honor is going to have no association with the president campaign, is that correct on, or you --

MS. ZENG: With Honor is only folks in the House; that's correct.

MR. STICKLES: On the House; okay. So, I think there's going to be an interesting dynamic when Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who is currently a naval reservist and deployed seven months in Afghanistan, is going to find himself in a situation where it would, obviously, benefit him to have pictures of him in uniform; but at the same time, he's going to

fall into an unique subset we probably haven't seen in an election before.

MS. MCANDREWS: No; I would not want to be his JAG. That's a lot. And, you know, he's got to be careful about who he's getting money from too. You know, you can't solicit from any military members, which is, you know, I'm sure a lot of his friends and supporters as well.

MR. STICKLES: So, right now, he hasn't technically announced that he's running for President. He's still in the exploratory committee which, I think, his JAG probably got to him and told him what to say.

For Sean and Adam, what is your -- as an active duty service member, it sometimes makes my skin crawl when I see people running. I want more veterans to run; I want members of both parties to be well represented with veterans -- it makes my skin crawl a little bit when somebody stands up and says as a former Navy top gun pilot, like I know what's right for the people of New Jersey.

What is -- especially with the SEAL community -- Adam, if you can speak a little bit about your thoughts and some of the pitfalls of relying on your skill set, relying on your background; but at the same time not, necessarily, profiteering from it?

MR. LA REAU: Yeah. It's interesting when you -- from my own personal opinion -- you know, you transition and, you know, I loved what I did -- like I wanted to be a Navy SEAL since I was a little kid. I wanted to be an officer in the military since I was a little kid; and, you know, the values attracted me to that organization -- the integrity, the honor; the team work; you know, the cohesion. To do something, that and creating a business -- my other business, O2X, -- and just like I'm sure that some of the candidates are -- that, I think, that you miss like whether it's a Top Gun pilot, or a SEAL, or anything like that -- that's all well and good; but there is, in my opinion, an expiration date on your skill sets, right; and you have to take those values that you have and, you know, your credibility; and the things that you've done; and, you know, who you are as a person; and you're charting your next pathway.

And that was big for me. I don't think there's a right or wrong way; and there's a lot of things in the media, obviously, about every -- like every service, every branch in the military; but, you know, for me, you know, building two different companies -- One Summit and O2X -- and it was meant on a big thing as values -- when you align values and goals like it's a pretty powerful combination.

MR. STICKLES: What I did find like very interesting in this last cycle is that -- and Molly Reynolds brought this up when we talked about -- from Governance Studies -- when we talked about With Honor and some of the candidates -- is that woman candidates that are in a precarious position, some of the woman candidates -- specifically, Amy McGrath -- ran as a veteran. Like that was her primary -- like she did her first commercial wearing a jacket -- wearing her fighter jacket -- said hey, as a U.S. Marine Corps Hornet Pilot, like I know what it would take to serve.

Jess, what do you think -- like how is America transitioning its perception. I know like people are surprised when they find out that you're a veteran; and are more inclined to think of you as a Navy spouse. How do you think America's perception is transitioning with acceptance of that?

MS. MCANDREWS: Definitely; and I think these women are setting an amazing example; and, you know, I think whether you're a woman or a man, it does give you credibility. I mean it's just a fine line. Like you said, it kind of makes your skin crawl -- and it does too; and I think it's so interesting to see how they use it in their platforms because one part of you as a veteran says oh, that's just great. I want more veterans, and I love to see some of these ads of some of these women -- and Congresswoman Sherrell now -- I mean just amazing stories and amazing women and men doing this, but at the same time, it gets -- you know, you've got to be careful not to cross line to the cheesy, you know. It's tough, and as a veteran you kind of -- half of time you see the ad and go uh, uh, that's a little cheesy. You know, you're getting the top gun, Tom Cruise look going on versus the credibility, and the integrity that you're promoting which, I think, really does lend so much more credibility;

and I think, you know, once people do realize I am a veteran, I do think there is more credibility. As far as the USO, I can speak to a lot of experiences that people have gone through; and I think people see that in candidates too.

MR. HUGHES: I think that there's an interesting dynamic though with service if you think about -- I took the Eisenhower approach where I didn't lean, I served, right; nobody would really know what my political leanings were -- and the reality of it was that I didn't even follow politics; and so, it wasn't very difficult for me to hide opinions that I, frankly, didn't have. But the shadow of the military -- the veterans coming into service -- is that they all have very similar experiences to that if they're being honest. They don't have the foundational understanding of a lot of the stuff that they're going to be charged with dealing with; and as much as the common background and the common thread that we come from gives them an elevated standing, you know, in the opinions of other vets or myself -- one of the interesting things when I started first writing about -- I wrote about it purposely from I have no idea what I'm talking about; I'm going to try to figure it all out; and it was amazing how little I understood; how --

MR. STICKLES: Are you talking about veterans in the political realm?

MR. HUGHES: -- yeah, veterans in the political realm, in general; and you have to ask yourself beyond the accountability or the character, or the common purpose of service, how effective can somebody who has weeks, to months of experience in politics be in the domain.

MR. STICKLES: Adam can you talk a little bit about your experiences as an entrepreneur. So, you mentioned O2X, which is a for-profit company found with other Navy SEALs, that's a human performance consultant primarily with credited with saving \$6-1/2 million to the Boston fire department. Can you talk about the challenges of entrepreneurial spirit with regards to veterans? Is that an easy transition -- hey, I'm good at finding problems and making this happen -- or what were some of the pitfalls of that for you and your organization?

MR. LA REAU: Well, I think there's, for one, that having two other veterans standing beside me, starting the company -- like I had somebody that I knew would be there and have my back through everything. And there is immense amount of reliability because it might be different than combat; but I tell you entrepreneurship there is plenty of combat in there and it takes an incredible amount of grit and scrappiness, and teamwork, and collaboration. So, there is a lot of challenges there in that world.

You know, I think that what the military has seen is that they're uncovering (inaudible) deployed are there with limited resources, limited time, limited money; and you're under cover; you kick over stones; and you're uncovering problems and there's no solutions besides your team and then what you have; and to me that is something that was able to kind of foster -- I think, culture -- to be able to pull some of those things about culture, and building good teams, and fundamental leadership. Those are really things that help build the core on a good foundation for a strong company that has a long future.

MR. STICKLES: So, before we go to the audience for questions, is there any specific issue that any of the panelist think the veteran community can move the needle on that's a national problem?

Sean, I know you've written about gun control as sort of a hot button issue that maybe veterans could find some middle ground on.

Adam, I think that you and your private company -- both, and your non-profit -- you work with mental health. What you call it, check up from the neck up -- especially with O2X in making sure people have access to that; and then, Jess, also with -- Jess and Ellen-- with the civil military divide and finding veterans for common issues. Are there any other issues that you think that we can rely on and look in the next decade to hopefully have the veteran community move the needle on -- Sean?

MR. HUGHES: I think health care, frankly. My experience with health care in the Navy was extremely positive. It was a single-parent system; and that's not a recommendation, but it's simply an understanding that the current market system that we

have right now is not functioning particularly well; and it feels like a problem to solve that is kind of mired in the political mess right now that veterans could probably break that out based on their experience.

MR. STICKLES: Anybody else?

MR. LA REAU: I'd like to talk about -- like for Brendan you mentioned quickly the first responder like health and wellness. A lot of people don't recognize -- we'll take the fire service for example which we do a lot of work in. A Boston fire fighter gets diagnosed with cancer every three weeks. Everything that we had -- the carcinogens that are there in the air -- it's significant. Cancer and cardiac disease are the two leading causes of death in fire fighters. Law enforcement, suicide, you know. So, between mental health, cancer, cardiac disease, injury rates, sleep apnea, behavioral health -- all those things -- it's like a very challenging environment; and we look at it because we do a performance training. We'll dip our toe and kind of do work with the Chicago Black Hawks. But when we do professional sport teams, it's only about, you know, their average duration career is 3-1/2 years. You're looking at first responders that are doing this for 30 years. It's a different way to train; it's a different mentality; and the things that we see that their battling -- now, we're looking at some national -- we were in New York not too long ago talking about the Boston bombing; and we're talking about significant impacts to their first responders. A lot of them are veterans -- by the way -- that are going in because that's a natural field that people tend to go into. So, there're a lot of challenges there; but to do that day-in and day-out for 30 years is a lot of family side; there's a lot of lessons that we learned through the military where we wish things were better. We wish we had more education upfront and that's where O2X comes in, and we've been doing a lot of work in that realm.

MR. STICKLES: So Adam and I had that experience. We went and met with the NYPD and we talked a lot about debriefing and after-action reports, specifically with regard to body cameras -- all these things that were new to the police, but were not new at all to me in the aviation world or Adam in special forces. And so, I think there're a lot of non-

traditional gaps that we can bridge as a veteran community with the civilian workforce.

MS. ZENG: I would just add on. With Honor, as a part of our pledge, we ask all candidates and members to be part of a cross-partisan veterans' caucus. This is a member-led caucus and currently the 19 members recently launched -- it's called For Our Country. Actually, Betsy Hawkings, in the back, is our SVP who is sort of supports this caucus -- glad she can join us. And really it's, like I said, member-led -- so the members are going to pick things to work on. But we have found that there is a critical mass of excitement around national service, national security of veterans affairs; so, I think, those are things that they are probably going to work on. But we're like excited to see how this group does; and With Honor will be there to support.

MR. STICKLES: Brookings, Michael O'Hanlon and General Stanley McCristal just wrote an op-ed in the last couple of weeks in *The Hill* about a culture of national service, both on active duty in military service, but also using that to breakdown some of our divides.

Great. Okay, let's go to the audience for a couple of questions. If anybody has a question, if you could just introduce yourself with any organizational affiliation and try to have your question end with a question mark; and we'll go from there. Let's start with -- we'll do a couple at a time. So, we can do right here and then also, sir, right there on the aisle -- next.

SPEAKER: Thank you all so much. My name's Andrew (inaudible). Just to give you a little background. I'm at an organization called the National Commission on Military National and Public Service. It came out of the repeal of 2015 common exclusion rule, and then the subsequent finding Congress rule -- it was called The Draft Our Daughters' Bill. So, Congress kicked it to us to figure out two things -- one, what to do with selective service -- whether to expand it to women, whether to get rid of it at all; and then the other thing is expanding volunteer participation in military national -- which is like AmeriCorps, Peace Corp, and then public service -- so, working in the federal bureaucracy.

So, we're looking at how to create a culture, an expectation of service and addressing the signal divide that we love to talk about so much.

So, to that point, the military keeps going back to sort of the same fertile grounds to recruit which, especially for the Army are sort of running out. From your perspective, how can we look at expanding the pool of people who are interested in service - - a lifetime of service -- across those different components?

MR. STICKLES: Let's get one more question, and then we'll have the panelist attack them.

MR. COBB: Thank you. Charles Cobb, formerly with the Committee For Economic Development. I think each of you more or less used similar words -- service, sacrifice -- let me throw in the third "s" word -- self-centeredness. A lot of what you've been talking about relates to adults. How do you take the values of service and sacrifice and transfer those to a younger generation? And I don't mean to be negative here -- can be characterized as a tattoo-wearing, body-piercing selfie generation. And, again, I don't mean to be negative; but how do you take what you all have experienced and sacrificed and inject that into our young people?

MR. STICKLES: So, let's handle those two questions because I think they're both related. I will tell you that in the Navy, we meet the criteria that the southern states are over-represented with regard to population. Our home state of New Jersey is under-represented, as is the City of New York. So, my hometown of Glen Rock, New Jersey lost 11 people on September 11th in the September 11th attacks. We didn't lose anybody in the war since. Where comparable-sized cities in places like Oklahoma and Nebraska didn't lose anybody on September 11th, but then in the 17 years since have borne significant losses. And so, I do think what -- your question is great from a recruiting standpoint. I would say at Brookings that the number one indicator of joining the U.S. military is being a military brat. And so, that -- if you spin that over several generations -- it's a significant problem. On active duty, we are very much plugged into that.

The Army has specifically started targeting cities. They've an organization challenge. They've made some incredible strides in some specific demographics. There's actually more African American women on active duty in the U.S. Army than there are white women. So, there're some startling success stories; but it's a problem that we've recognized. I'll let somebody else handle the tattooed-pierced millennial, self-centered generation. I'll let somebody else punch (inaudible).

MR. HUGHES: Yeah, that sounds like the --

MR. STICKLES: That sounds like the California guy.

MR. HUGHES: -- most of the service members I work with anyway. But I think people follow the paths that are in front of them and just like the indication being that you're military brat dictates whether or not you're going to service more than anything else, as does whether or not your parents went to college; as does whether or not your parents were first responders. So, what it says to me is that there's a lack of paths from those different backgrounds in. So, naturally, if left to its own device, it's going to keep being somewhat self-selected.

But I, actually -- I have had a great experience with the younger generation in service. They've carried a pretty heavy load; they're digital natives; they know technology; they're different just like every generation is; but man, we could sure use what they bring to the table.

MR. STICKLES: Also, not to be morbid -- we've been fighting the same war for 17 years, so maybe we could use a little bit of different thinking and a different perspective.

The diversity in the military is also -- we're starting to bear the benefits of that. When I went to Annapolis, where Sean and I graduated with, I believe, 8 percent women; and this graduating class this year will be about 25. So while it looks a lot different; and I tend to sometimes have that cynical attitude as well -- I have absolutely no doubt that small number of people that are currently joining the all-volunteer force, their heart is in the

right place; they're smarter; more ambitious; and more talented than I was in a pre-9/11 service academy. So, I share your misgivings, but I'm just as confident that the good guys are going to win in the end.

MS. MCANDREWS: And I'll just say, you know, we've got Fleet Week coming up in New York in May; and Fleet Week used to be the ship would pull into Manhattan and everybody would stay in Manhattan. New York is making a huge effort to get the Navy to all the boroughs. So, you know, you get one ship in Manhattan now -- there's three over in Staten Island, Brooklyn -- they're flying, you know, everywhere -- really trying to make an effort because that is a real issue, especially in the New York area, you know. There's so much recruiting that goes into Fleet Week; so, things like that they're trying to do everything they can to really reach these areas, you know. The Bronx doesn't see a recruiter very often. So they're trying to get recruiters over there at some of these Fleet Week events, and to really showcase the military and not make it the -- just what you see on TV -- but that there's many jobs that you can do; and that you can be a lawyer in the military; and they can put you through law school. There's a lot more options.

And then I think with continued service after the military. You know, I think it's a problem, and, I think, we've made a lot of strides -- you know, hiring veterans is sexy; it's the thing to do right now. Companies all have -- you know, the ERGs where they're hiring veterans -- it's the thing to do. But, I think, there're a lot of improvements we can make with it, you know. It think it's certain companies and certain jobs; and you go to hiring fairs and you don't see a lot of non-profits there that are looking to hire a lot of times, you know, and they're great jobs; and people feel good about doing them; and these are people that have been in service and are looking to do this sort of work to really, you know, or hire, you know, veterans that are interested in doing, you know, congressional office or working on campaigns, that sort of thing. These are jobs that when you're in the service, you just don't think of; and that's part of the problem. It's just education of what's out there and what you can do as a veteran. You feel very stuck in one path, I think, is a big issue. So, I think

that's something we can work on.

MR. STICKLES: Sure; okay. Any other questions? Sir? We'll take two more. So, we'll take you right here, and then in the blue suit; and then -- yes, ma'am after you.

MR. CHAVITZ: All right; Bruce Chavitz. I'm the military person for the College Board. On the civil military divide issue -- I look at it from our perspective that most of the elite schools with high graduation rates have less than 1 percent GI Bill veterans there; and 7 of the top 10 GI Bill schools are for-profit on line, for which those people aren't getting exposed to other folks. So, how do we break that down and get people exposed in college to people with different experiences?

MR. STICKLES: That's a great question. We'll do two more. This gentleman right there in the blue suit, and then the woman behind him.

MR. RAMUS: Hi, Hosea Ramus, Wounded Warrior Project. It's kind of line with that question. I was interested to hear a little bit about the gap between networking, right; so as I think one of you guys indicated in the panel, typically when you're in the military, you're focused on what your job is and based on your MOS, you're really focused, or you're either down-range training or kind of supporting, right; but we don't have the opportunity to really network out in the communities because we're constantly moving from location to location. So, part of -- not necessarily with the higher education piece, but the candidates that are coming into With Honor, for example, how much of a significant gap is there between those candidates trying to actually run successfully when they're competing against individuals who have had their whole lifetime, or a good portion of it networking within their communities?

MR. STICKLES: And then if you give the microphone behind, we'll go with one more question.

MS. CRISTA: Hi; thank you for taking my question. My name is Rosa Crista and I'm a former military spouse and Ph.D. candidate in public policy and public

administration at Virginia Tech. So, I'm very glad to be able to ask some of these questions. But one of the things that I've looked at is we talk a lot about connecting veterans -- there are a lot of federal programs to hire them and connect them to the federal workforce -- but we don't see a lot of connecting them to local and state positions in government; and I find that many of them actually have the skills that it would take to be a city manager, or comptroller, and things like that. So, I'm wondering what other gaps we could address in that area? Thank you.

MR. LA REAU: I think the state one is we tend not to stay in a whole lot of places, and we exist very much outside of a lot of the local and state governments just by the function of how we work; where we work; what rules in laws we go to. And, I think, to the other question of how do we get groups into elite universities for higher education at all. I think you could try one approach is to force it; or another approach would eliminate the resistance to it. And I would question that it's not obvious to me that the paths that there are a lot of veterans thinking about getting into elite institutions because, frankly -- I can tell from my experience, I was limited by geography and the fact that I had three kids when I transitioned out. There wasn't -- aside from, you know, programs that they have with the Kennedy School for active duty folks, it's just not a reality where I'm going to matriculate into a university where it's going to put me in debt and be a full-time student. That was my experience, at least.

MR. STICKLES: Yeah; it's hard to -- it is hard when you're working so much to kind of get exposure; you kind of get your head down to different jobs and occupations; and, obviously, you have your friends and teammates that have gone out before you; and you have conversations; but I do think there's something that -- it's like career days -- and it's things that they give you more exposure to different sectors and fields and people have different networks. I think it is a challenge to kind of -- what drew me to -- because when I got out I went to Harvard Kennedy School -- and what drew me -- everyone's like oh, you're going into national policy -- they immediately thought I was going there for a reason other

than like national security, national policy. But I said no, I'm going there for social entrepreneurship -- like social impact -- that's where I want to spend my time at the Harvard Innovation Lab, which I just, you know, was doing research and finding out about like okay, you can start as entrepreneurship. It's a cross; it was not the business school, but it's, you know, continue to serve -- motivated by President Kennedy. So, that type of exposure, I think, you can come up on career days and, you know, I think there's a big thing -- and now whether it's non-profits or for-profits, storytelling is a big arm of education. That's how people are learning; that's how veterans are getting exposed. So, the more stories that you can hear in different jobs -- doesn't have to be necessarily veterans, but exposure of different stories and what people do; and what their life is like -- I think that gives people a lot of opportunity. Because when I went to the TAP -- it was called the Transition Assistance Program -- it went from three days to five days, and they added a couple of more days on things, but I can tell that in there it was just a lack of exposure. Everyone had a limited amount of experience -- some people had their Gelds; some people got out after three years; some people there 15 years; and some people had their Masters. It's such a wide range of experiences; and people from all over the world -- or over the country -- and it's hard to kind of, you know -- it's got to be customized. We have to find a way to better customize and kind of hear people, what their likes and interests are, and pull out the thread of what motivates somebody. It might be service; it might be, you know, it might be retail; there might be, you know, the restaurants; it might be going back to school -- there's a wide range -- but I think we have to find a way to better customize like add the transition program to give more exposure; do a little bit more of storytelling where people truly going to learn about the different sectors and what the life is like outside doing an internship.

MR. LA REAU: Were you married with kids when you transitioned out? I bring that up because that is so much of what you guys just brought up right smack in the middle of that is what happens when you transition out of one life into another with a family.

MR. STICKLES: Sure.

MR. LA REAU: It's a giant, giant force that you have to deal with.

MR. STICKLES: Sure; definitely. I think to the GI Bill question -- we have made specific actions taking some of those for-profit institutions and kicking them off base and not allowing them to advertise through the U.S. military. The number in 2014 was about \$14 billion that we shelved out for the GI Bill; and of that a huge chunk went to for-profit colleges with no accountability. So, there's also accountability now. We're trying to tie the GI Bill not just to the 36 months, or 30 months of funded education, but to a specific goal and a degree program.

So, on the active duty side, we've failed. Any time you start a public policy program, the first people to come out of the woodwork are the leeches who are going to try to figure out ways to get that money. And we learned that lesson the hard way with the GI Bill. I think we've transitioned and done it in a really positive way.

To the local government question -- I think it's a great one; and hopefully part of the reason that we're having this discussion publicly is so that people recognize that woman like Amy McGrath who goes home to Kentucky to run for Congress, she got accused of being a carpetbagger -- that like, hey, you're not really from Kentucky. She's not from Kentucky because she's lived all across the country because she was an active duty Marine. That's why she didn't live in Kentucky.

So, the same thing on a scale can happen with a school board. My kids have been to five different elementary schools. I think that would make me a good member of a school board. It makes me very way less likely to actually get elected because I just moved into the town.

So, the more as a country we have these conversations -- and you hit the nail on the head -- the whole goal of this was to find specific skill sets that veterans have to solve those national problems and find creative solutions. So, while there'll never be another John McCain or a George H.W. Bush, I know there are plenty of people that they would definitely be proud of; so please join me in thanking the panel today. (Applause)

And Adam's going to see some self-care books in the back if anybody's s
anybody has any of the following questions. Thanks for coming to Brookings.

* * * * *

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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