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DELAWARE DEBATES 2018

Candidates for U.S. House of Representatives

PRESENTED BY Delaware First Media and University of Delaware
Center for Political Communication and
supported by the American Cancer Society's
Cancer Action Network, and by the
University of Delaware

MODERATOR RALPH BEGLEITER

CANDIDATES

Lisa Blunt Rochester (D) Candidate for U.S. House

Scott Walker (R) Candidate for U.S. House

Transcript of Event

Date: October 17, 2018

Place: Mitchell Hall, University of Delaware,
Newark, DE

MR. BEGLEITER: On behalf of Delaware First Media and the University of Delaware Center for Political Communication welcome to Delaware Debates 2018. I'm Ralph Begleiter. Delaware Debates is also supported by the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network, and by the University of Delaware. This debate features candidates in the race for Delaware's single seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Democratic Party's nominee for Congress is Lisa Blunt Rochester. Running as the Republican candidate for Congress is Scott Walker. Welcome to both of you.

MR. WALKER: Thank you.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Thank you.

MR. BEGLEITER: We're conducting tonight's debate as a conversation and both candidates have agreed to rules for the occasion. There will be no formal opening statements. I'll begin with a question for both candidates, and they've agreed to hold themselves to 90 second responses. We'll also include in this debate questions recorded by students at Delaware State University and at the University of Delaware. Now, although we're not having opening statements we will welcome a formal closing statement from each candidate. The candidates on stage have also agreed to participate in this debate with some rules for our live audience here on the University of Delaware campus. Audience members have entered Mitchell Hall understanding that this is not a pep rally. There will be no cheering or applause. This debate is about the candidates, not about the audience. I'll keep my questions short and I'll ask the candidates to answer concisely so we can cover a lot of ground tonight. The candidates will answer in the order they determined with a, with a backstage pre-debate coin

toss. My first question goes to Lisa Blunt Rochester. Do you see the 2018 election, the midterm elections, as a referendum on President Trump, and if so or if not does that matter in your race?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Well, first I want to thank you, Ralph, and I want to thank the University of Delaware and Delaware Public Media for hosting this event. You know, I think that's a great question to start off with because my run in 2016, it was the first time I had run for anything. And it was interesting because at that time Emily's List which was an organization that helps women around the country had seen about 900 women express interest in running. This year its over 40,000. And I think that part of that is due in large part to the presidency and what we have seen over the past two years. And so, I think the enthusiasm, the fact that people are stepping up and getting engaged is really representative of the changes that we've seen in the past two years. And I do think that it is a referendum on the policies and the politics that we have seen over these past two years. So, I, I, I look forward to seeing what comes. We expect a record number of new candidates in Congress and I think people want to see change and they want to see people step up and serve. And so, I think that's what we're going to be seeing.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Scott Walker, is it a referendum on Donald Trump and his policies and if so does that make a difference in this race?

MR. WALKER: Well, I think any election is a referendum, of course. Um, however, I don't think that, that Main Street America is in particular interested in, um, Donald Trump. And so, they, they're interested in their standard of living and their income and, and paying their bills, and they are not

that concerned with Donald Trump. Now, some of your party, ah, organizations in the party, ah, stalwarts are probably interested in, in Mr. Trump and, and trying to, ah, ah, ah, sell this election as a referendum on Mr. Trump. But, his economic policies have worked so far. And so, I don't know whether that would be a wise thing for them to do because he has turned the economy around. And, in closing, um, like I said, people want change. I agree with the Congresswoman, people want change and they, ah, every election is a referendum. And this election is very important. I think America is at a crossroads and we're going to, ah, we're going to follow-through with the changes that have been made so far and, ah, we're going to turn this economy around permanently.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. As a follow-up to that, both of you are running for an office that involves going to Washington, D.C. and serving the state of Delaware from Washington, D.C. So, I want to ask you whether you think the constitutional checks and balances system, that has been in effect in Washington for hundreds of years now, is working effectively in Washington right now. Congressman? Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: If I could, I just want to also add to the last question. You know, um, as, as Scott has mentioned, some people are doing better but a lot of people aren't doing better in this economy. Wages have been stagnant, stagnant and the changes that we've seen in terms of the trajectory really started during the Obama Administration. And so, I just want to be clear, the reason why you're seeing this influx of excitement is because people are concerned. They're very concerned, and not just about the economics but also about our standing in

the world. On your question of checks and balances, that's probably one of the biggest reasons why people are concerned about this election and Mr. Trump because we feel like there isn't that check and balance that's happening, you know. So, so to me that's actually part of that referendum

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Mr. Walker? Checks and balances?

MR. WALKER: Well, yeah, I'm a little concerned about, um, Congress interfering with the President's initiatives and, um, in that regard, I mean, it's good to have a healthy competition between the three branches of government in terms of input. I don't like to see the Supreme Court, um, ah, changing laws that Congress has passed by judicial fiat. I don't like to see that. And, um, like I said, this obstruction, obstructionism from Congress, um, on, on the reforms that President Trump has proposed and the Supreme Court nominees and all that, um, it, it's a healthy sign but when it gets into the way of progress and it really does damage to the process I, I don't like that.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. We're going to go to our --

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Can I just add one thing?

MR. BEGLEITER: We're going to go to our first student question. I'm sorry, we're --

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Okay.

MR. BEGLEITER: -- we're, we're --

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I was just going to say the Republican's control --

MR. BEGLEITER: Yeah, we've got to keep moving.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: -- both houses, so.

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay. You'll have an opportunity.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Okay.

MR. BEGLEITER: Go to our first student question. This is from a junior who is a public pology (sic), a public policy and women and gender studies double major here at the University of Delaware. Let's listen to the question.

Q: Should Congress and the courts hold President Trump to the same standard regarding sexual misconduct and the treatment of women as the #Me Too movement has held other politicians, government leaders, and business leaders?

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay, Mr. Walker, you're up first on this one.

MR. WALKER: I think that's fair. I think it's all fair to, ah, if we're going to have a, we're going to have a standard we, we judge everybody by the same standard and I don't think; I don't have any problem with that.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I, I definitely feel that he should be held to the same standard. I, again, I think it's part of what you're seeing in terms of people standing up and saying, you know, enough is enough. And so, in terms of, you know, even this most recent hearing, even as recent as today, you know, calling someone a "horse face", that's inappropriate. Its, its not presidential and it is indicative of some of that behavior. And so, I, I, I definitely agree that he should be held to the same standard.

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay. Brief answer on the follow-up question here, is if you, you both said that it, he should be held accountable. Does Congress do that? Who does that? Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: Well, it, can you reframe your question a little bit?

[Indiscernible].

MR. BEGLEITER: You said that the president should be held to the same standards of, regarding sexual misconduct --

MR. WALKER: Yes.

MR. BEGLEITER: -- as politicians, government leaders and business --

MR. WALKER: Yes.

MR. BEGLEITER: -- leaders are being held in the past couple of, in past years since the #Me Too movement started. My question is who does that holding to account? Is that Congress that has to act?

MR. WALKER: It's Congress, it's the media, it's the people. That's what the people, you know, the power is with the people and so, the, the people I think, I don't think there would be much disagreement no matter what your party or ah political ah connection that the accountability, you know, has to be uniform, it has to be consistent.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman Rochester? To whom is the president accountable?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Well, I mean, one of the main, one of the main reasons why we have a Congress is to provide those checks and balances and also to, um, you know, really be there to say -- for example, in this situation myself and other members of the House actually reached out to our Republican colleagues and our leadership, Republican leadership to say we need to hold him accountable with, we signed a letter to all say that. It has not bore any fruit because that leadership did not want to investigate or move forward in it. So, we do have a responsibility. That's part of, part of our role.

MR. BEGLEITER: Another student has asked a question on this same general topic. This is a Delaware State University student who is a sophomore in political studies and law studies and DSU. Let's listen.

Q: Do you believe that there is a negative culture in regards to sexual assault in America, and if so, what would you do to change that culture in regards to how we respond to sexual assault accusations and how we treat victims of it?

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman, you're up first on this one.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Yeah. You know, I, I think part of even running during this campaign hearing some of the rhetoric, it does let you know that it's part of the culture and one of the things that I've been involved in is being on legislation and also, um, really stepping forward to say that, you know, we have to held accountable for these things. So, for example, whether its in our workplaces, do we have the appropriate training. Whether we have non-disclosure agreements in workplaces, those should be banned. And so, I'm one of the individuals who signed on to a bill, I'm actually one of the prime sponsors with Kamala Harris and others, called the Empower Act and it is focused on assuring that we, we don't have these kinds of things and create this environment.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, you're up on this one.

MR. WALKER: Yes, we've got a long ways to go in, in the terms of sexual harassment in, in the workplace, in education, everywhere. We've got a long ways to go. And so, this is a very healthy phenomenon we're seeing and I'm, I'm in agreement with, ah, ah, the Democrats on this. You know, there's just

not room for any dispute that we have a serious problem and that it was much worse, you know, when I was coming up but its still very, very bad and it's standing in the way of women making the same as men and getting paid for the work that they do, they're still underpaid. And, um, I, I really think that the, the sexual harassment thing, the #Me Too movement is a, is a great thing.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Switching to another aspect of our political scene nationally, do you support the use of social media, for example Twitter or Facebook, to announce national public policy? Should Congress take some action on the use of social media to make pubic policy announcements? Congresswoman, you're up first.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Well, I, you know, it's funny, I was thinking about social media earlier today because even in, in this campaign watching some of the use of social media, you know, social media has its positives and we know it has its negatives. The positive is people are engaged at levels that they've never been engaged before. The negative is a president should not be using Twitter to signal things or to make policy. That, that to me, it's more an issue not of whether social media should be regulated but whether people have the right judgment and know how to use social media. That to me is more of an issue. So, is it, is it Congress's role to tell someone to not use social media or not? I would not say that, but I would say it's inappropriate for candidates or for the president or others to use social media as a way to shame people or a way to, um, to even put out public policy that impacts all of us. It, it does make sense.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, the use of social media?

MR. WALKER: I think social media is a revolution in, in terms of the

people speaking, speaking out and the input of the people to government. And, uh, it, it's a tremendous boon to free speech and any regulation of the internet or social media is absolutely the worse we could ever think of because this is free speech, and this is America. We have the first amendment and no other, no other country has the first amendment. And it's the first amendment for a reason. It's the most important amendment.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Ralph?

MR. WALKER: And so, that's, I'm all for it.

MR. BEGLEITER: [Indiscernible].

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I, I just want to reiterate, just like we have free speech, we all know we can't go into a building and yell fire. There are appropriate times and uses for, for social media. You know, sharing things that are private to other people it's something that you kind of cross a line. And so, again, I think on the one area we really do agree that it is a, a, an incredible tool for democratization, for commerce, you can name all of the great things, but it also can be a place for bullying and intimidation and misinformation. And so, we do have to be careful.

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay. And do you want to make another comment on this?

MR. WALKER: Well, again, you know, I'm all for it and ah, any form of communication always has the potential to be abused and misused, but the key thing is we've got to have these tools available to people to, to express themselves with. And that's more important than worrying about if it comes out wrong, or if it offends somebody. Look, you, you got to speak. People want to

speak and its up for us, the leaders, to listen. And so, we got to have social media for that. I depend on it in my campaign.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. A, one more question about the President. Should the House of Representatives in which both of you are, are trying to get to become a member, begin impeachment proceedings against President Trump in the next session of Congress? If so why, if not, why not? Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: Well, I think if he's done something impeachable sure. He should be impeached. I don't see anything that he's done that would warrant impeachment right now. And, I, I thought that the whole thing with Bill Clinton was unjustified. So, no, I, I don't, I don't favor impeaching him right now. I, there's no evidence. There's nothing there right now.

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay.

MR. WALKER: Nothing.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Well, first --

MR. BEGLEITER: Impeachment?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: -- first of all, I support holding our leaders accountable. I think the, the question right now and the concern that we have right now is ensuring that the Mueller investigation is protected and not tampered with. I think the other issue is looking at whether Rod Rosenstein would be fired. You know, to me those are the questions and those are the things that we have to look at. It's, it's premature in my mind to talk impeachment but I definitely think we need to protect the investigation, we need to see where it ends up. And I, and I also believe that, you know, this president, the, the fact that this is so much

on his mind makes you believe where there's smoke maybe there's fire.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. A couple of questions on national policy matters. I'm going to ask both of you, one of you is in office, one of you is not, so how did you vote, or would you have voted on the federal tax overhaul of December 2017 and why did you vote that way or why would you vote that way? Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I, I voted no for the bill and it was really a, an opportunity, a missed opportunity I feel as a country. It was 30 years since we actually overhauled the tax system and so I was looking at things like is it simplifying the system as was, we were being told. Is it going to promote growth? What will it do to our debt and is it fair? Are more people going to, or are a small group of people going to benefit from it or are we all going to share in the benefits? It did not turn out that way. As a matter of fact, we had to tell a townhall meeting and it was 11,000 Delawareans called in on that call which was incredible to me. And, many people expressed their concerns about this tax bill. And, my biggest concern is really the long-term impact of it. The debt. And whether, what that means for social security, what does that mean for Medicare, what does that mean for everyday people and their pocketbooks? A lot of people told me they didn't see that boon that, that was promised. But, that, that to me was why I voted no. And, again, I saw it as a missed opportunity.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, how would you have voted had you been in Congress?

MR. WALKER: Oh, I would have voted in favor of the tax cut. Look, this country was founded on a tax problem so, you know, the more taxes we add

on the bigger government gets and the further the deficit goes up. So, there's two things that happen when you get a, a tax cut. Number one, you defund government. President Trump made a big mistake by borrowing a lot of money in addition to having the tax cut. So, there was a tradeoff and, you know, there was, nothing got done essentially. Also, the second thing is, you put money in people's pockets when you have a tax cut. All you out there, you know, you get money in your pockets. The rich get money in their pockets too. What do they do with it? They spend it. They invest it. That creates jobs and that creates more income to tax. And so, when you enact a tax cut you're essentially guaranteeing you're going to get more tax revenue and that's called the Laffer curve and, and it's, it's, you know, it's, its cause and effect. So, yes, more tax cuts. We need more.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. And you raised, both of you actually mentioned the issue, but you raised the issue of you get more revenue from taxes. Just this past few days, ah, the, the observers of the, of the revenue stream to the United States reported that tax revenue has actually declined to the federal government as a result of the, of the increase in December, as a result of the corporations not paying those taxes into the federal government. But my question to is, the law that you said you'd vote for and you voted against is almost universally predicted to increase the federal deficit by about a trillion dollars. You just complained about the federal deficit. So, how would that be addressed? How would you address that, Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: Well, I, ah, the President borrowed money and that, there's your one trillion dollars. He borrowed money. What good's a, a tax --

MR. BEGLEITER: But what would you do about it?

MR. WALKER: What would I do if I was him?

MR. BEGLEITER: Yeah.

MR. WALKER: I would --

MR. BEGLEITER: No, not if you were him. If you were in --

MR. WALKER: Oh, what would --

MR. BEGLEITER: -- Congress.

MR. WALKER: -- I do?

MR. BEGLEITER: You're running for Congress.

MR. WALKER: I would, I would, I would defund and close down a lot of agencies that are, that are doing no good, they're consuming our national treasury like HUD, like the CDC isn't doing too much for the health of Americans. And, the, there's agencies, education is not doing anything. You know, I would just, you know, just defund these, these agencies and take that money and use it to pay our deficit down with or, you know, or invest it in other agencies that are more productive.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Congresswoman Rochester? How about you? How would you deal with the deficit problem?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Well, first of all, even looking at our debt as a result of that tax bill, I mean, is it 2.5 trillion dollars? This is our future that we're talking about, you know, and, you know, Mr. Walker talked about different programs or whole agencies that could be cut but those agencies do provide benefit to our, our national economy and our security. And so, everything from education, you mentioned, to HUD, you know, these, these -- so for me, the issue is more how

do you really govern? How do you sit down and say let's really look at these agencies, not let's take one big slice because really where the money is being talked about where it's, where we're being told it would come from is social security and Medicare, not, not, not these agencies that you just mentioned? So, I think again, this was a missed opportunity. It was a bad bill and that's why I voted no.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. We're going to move on to another domestic issue area now raised by a student from Delaware State University, a senior political science major. Let's listen.

Q: Due to multiple mass shootings in the country, do you think gun restrictions are needed and how do you plan on addressing what seems to be an epidemic of mass shootings?

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman Rochester, you're up first on this one.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: This, ah, is probably one of the issues that I've heard about most, ah, up and down our state, in our schools. I've talked to teachers, I've talked to students, um, I've talked to parents and whether it's in school or in community this has caused a lot of fear and angst. You know, I, I've, and it's, it's the one issue too that I hear people, the majority of people say they want to see something done. To me there are common sense approaches that we can take; everything from banning assault weapons to making sure that we have research at places like the CDC. For over 20 years they were banned pretty much from doing any research to even see if social media or things like that have any impact on our schools. So, it's research. It's looking at, um, how

we, how we actually have public safety dollars. It's mental health resources. Resources are another big thing. We're seeing that a lot of the individuals, uh, needed that kind of help. And so, to me we have an opportunity. There are things that we agree on like banning bump stocks but why haven't we done it? And so, to me, I think for a, Congress has a real role to play and I think the American people want to see us play it and do it, and to me those are some of the areas. I'm actually a, a co, um, cosponsor of major pieces of legislation that actually deal with those, those things; resources, public safety, access to guns, and then lastly, research.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker? How would you deal with the student's question of whether gun restrictions are needed in the country?

MR. WALKER: Well, I would tell that student that the founders of America wrote the second amendment because it was the second most important amendment next to the first. And so, gun ownership is a key to our freedom. Gun ownership by the citizen is a key. And, I'm not in favor of any more regulations. We've got plenty of regulations on the books now and judges are not, and, and judges are not locking up people who commit crimes with guns. They're, they're letting them go. And it's funny, I go down and visit some of the roughest neighborhoods in Wilmington to get, listen to the people and I posed a hypothetical question to them. I say, look, how would you like it if all the police had guns, but you didn't have a, you weren't allowed to own guns. How would you like that? Every single person said no, I want a gun. Even the most, the poorest neighborhoods in Wilmington that the answer is always the same. And so, in Sussex County where I'm from everybody says don't touch my gun. And

so, that's what I say, don't touch it.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. You --

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Ralph, I have a follow-up to that question.

MR. BEGLEITER: Well, I, I have a follow-up question that, that Mr. Walker just raised.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Okay.

MR. BEGLEITER: You can respond to this as well.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: [Indiscernible.] Thank you.

MR. BEGLEITER: Ah, I was going to ask you both, should the second amendment be repealed? You can answer that if, again, if you want to but you just answered it I think.

MR. WALKER: I think I did.

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay, all right.

MR. WALKER: [Laughter.]

MR. BEGLEITER: Ms. -- Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I, I guess I just wanted to clarify, confirm or clarify where you were on guns when you ran against me last time as a Democrat and where you are today and if that's changed. I know the majority of Americans, we're not saying that you have to get rid of the second amendment. We're saying that we have to have common sense laws. That's, that's what people are asking for. They're asking for common sense laws. So, it's not about law abiding citizens. People who, who, people who are gun owners have said, I'll take a background check because I know I'm doing the right thing. It's the people who aren't doing the right think. Or, it's the people who maybe need some, some,

some help that we need to have these things in place. So, I don't think it's a matter of the second amendment or not right now, it's a matter of what makes common sense.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, do you want to comment on your, on whether your views have changed on this subject [indiscernible]?

MR. WALKER: Well, yeah, I was, I was against guns two years ago and uh, I, I did some factual meditation and I realized, yeah, we, we've got to have the second amendment. It's; that's from living in an area where gun ownership is, is a sacred right. And, just like abortion, I've changed on that issue also to prolife. And look, common sense solutions means the end of the second amendment. Okay? The second amendment was written exactly the way it was written for a reason and that's for the people to own guns.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Another big national issue that's on everyone's mind is, ah, healthcare. So, I want to ask you both whether you would support a national healthcare for all plan of some kind. National healthcare for all. Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: Well, I, I'll support national healthcare for all as long it is in the form of education, teaching people how to take care of themselves the right, how to eat right, how to exercise, how to rest. You do those three things and you don't need to go to the doctor. So, this whole healthcare thing is one of the biggest scams of, of, of American history. We are the most unhealthy nation on earth I think. And, or, or darn close to it. So why is this? Why, if we've got all of this medical – we're spending a trillion dollars a year on healthcare, trillions – why are we so unhealthy? There's something wrong here.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman? Support a national healthcare for all?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I think our ultimate goal is universal healthcare. I, I think it shouldn't be a, a, a privilege. I think it should be a right and one of the things that to me a lot of people, um, we've talked about – it, its like the number one issue that I've heard throughout, whether it's a small business person, whether it is my dental hygienist who was telling me her premiums are \$440 a month. Everybody, this is an important issue and so when I look at it I look at it from the lens of access, affordability, and quality. The Affordable Care Act was landmark. It was not a perfect bill but one of the reasons why I wanted to go to Washington was to protect it because it helped people who had preexisting conditions. It protected people based on if you could have your child on the plan even up to age 26. It dealt with our essential benefits. Its, it, it is important. And so, to me we need to be looking at ways to fix it and to protect it. And not to take it away from the 23 million people who never had access to healthcare before.

MR. BEGLEITER: Both of you may be interested to know that the Center for Political Communication here at UD has just released a new public opinion poll in Delaware which shows that 64 percent of Delawareans support a national healthcare for all plan. But let me follow-up on Congresswoman Rochester's last remark which is to ask whether you think, whether both of you think Congress should take some actions to stop the administrative cuts to the Affordable Care law that are now being conducted by the Trump administration. Should Congress do something to stop those administrative cuts? Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: No, because this is our problem. Free healthcare is

not free first of all. We all know that we have to pay for it. And what you're doing, just think about this for a second, when you're telling a person that look we're going to take care of you for free, you're going to get free healthcare. What you're doing is incentivizing that person to not take care of themselves and to end up being a ward of the state because I don't have to worry about eating too much; I don't have to worry about not exercise; I don't have to worry about taking drugs or drinking too much because the state is going to take care of me. That's crazy. That's just crazy.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman, what about congressional steps on administrative cuts to the ACA?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: You know, as I've watched throughout this past two years, what we've seen is like constant sabotage of the Affordable Care Act, everything from cutting the budget for being able to get the word out to people, for cutting the, from cutting the timeline of how much the open enrollment period is, to discourage people from actually signing up. And, I, I do believe that Congress has a role to play. We've actually been playing it but, you know, I, I guess I just want to go back to this issue of, you know, people aren't getting it for free and we're not saying it's free. What we're saying is that everybody should have access, it should be quality, and it should be affordable. That's what we're saying.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Let's tackle some civil rights questions now. I want to ask both of you if you would support laws or regulations that protect LGBT students in school. Do you support regulations protecting LGBT students in schools? Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: It; this was probably one of the first areas that I had an opportunity to work on with the rest of the congressional delegation which was signing on to an amicus brief to protect students from, from areas that the Trump administration was moving in and, and I, I guess in my, um, in my core I just believe that we are all equal and that we shouldn't be judged for, you know, who we love, or you know, how we were born, what our race is and that I believe that that's a role that Congress can play, that we can step in when the administration is doing things whether its through leadership and letters and legislation. We have that role and we, and we, and we have that responsibility.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, what about LGBT students in schools?

MR. WALKER: Well, as you may or may not know, I have an extensive background in, um, ah, filing and prosecuting civil rights cases. I am not a lawyer, but I taught myself discrimination law. So, I'm very familiar with this. And of course, we're going to, we're going to protect those students. Of course, they deserve to be protected. And discrimination, we still have a terrible problem with de facto discrimination and de facto segregation in our schools, in our workplace, everywhere. So, you know, we've really got to attack that. And one of the things, (clear throat) excuse me, that I'm going to do when I get to Congress I'm going to write an amendment to the Fair Housing Act, for example, and all these other civil rights acts that protect equality and to take the, the effective or de facto segregation and discrimination out of, out of the picture and, and make it easier for judges to find the perpetrators guilty and that way we have more equality.

MR. BEGLEITER: And you're talking about extending those to LGBT

students' --

MR. WALKER: Absolutely, sure.

MR. BEGLEITER: -- rights.

MR. WALKER: Of course.

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay. You'll be interested to know, both of you, that the Center for Political Communication poll showed that 75 percent of Delawareans support such laws.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: That good.

MR. BEGLEITER: Turning to another student question, also on the civil rights arena, a student, who is a junior physics major at Delaware State University, has this question about the dreamers, the immigrant dreamers.

Q: Currently DACA recipients in the US do not have a clear path to citizenship. How would you give them a clear path to citizenship and or assure them that they will not be deported if theirs is taken away?

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman Rochester? You're up first on this one.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: You know, the whole issue of comprehensive immigration reform is one that, um, really cuts to the core of who we are as a country. Initially, you know, I would hear conversations where, you know, senate, like Senator John McCain, that this was not a partisan issue. And, in this past year, past two years I've met with dreamers even as recent as, as the incoming 50 dreamers that are going to Delaware State University. There is such fear and angst for them to, to be in limbo right now. And so, as, as part of our role in Congress is to pass legislation. We had before us the Dream Act. We

also had the USA Act which I'm a, a cosponsor of both. They're bipartisan bills but the leadership, Representative Ryan, would not let them get to the floor. Had those bills gotten to the floor they would have been voted on. And so, my, my pledge is to go back and continue to fight for the dreamers because they are in a limbo that they should not be in at all. And right now, we have the legislation that I'm already cosponsor on.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, your view of legislation on, on the dreamers?

MR. WALKER: On the dreamers, um, we need to do more than we're doing now. We, we've got to reach across the aisle to, and, and, and the Republicans have to reach across the, the aisle to the Democrats and we have to get this done and we have to get it done quick, much quicker. And so, you, you know, on the partisanship in Congress is just, it's a tragedy and, um, its on both sides. I'm not saying it's only the Democrats. In my party we have, we have obstructionists also. And this is an issue that everybody should be on board with because this is America. We're, we're all immigrants. We're, we're founded by immigrants. And, the wall is a different matter. Perhaps that will be a different question. But as far as the people who are already here, there's so many good people we have here who are contributing to our economy and contributing to our schools and our society and we've, we've got to bring them in quick. Quicker.

MR. BEGLEITER: If you were in Congress would you vote to support funding for the, the wall along the Mexico border that President Trump has proposed?

MR. WALKER: The answer is, is yes but I don't know if we need

that kind of wall. Maybe a virtual wall would, would, would work better. I mean --

MR. BEGLEITER: A virtual wall?

MR. WALKER: A virtual, yes. Something, you know, a hybrid because that's an awful lot of money to spend. As you know, I'm very, very tight with my money and so, yeah, yeah, we got to do something. That, that's the first thing we have to do before we address the dreamers unfortunately we've got to stop – if we do have a problem with, with illegal immigration, if we do. I don't know. I'm not sure. But if we do we got to stop it right now. Okay, then let's, let's bring the dreamers in quickly.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Congresswoman, what about the wall?
Would you vote to support it?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Uh, I --

MR. BEGLEITER: Have you voted to support it?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I, I, I have not, would not vote to support the wall. Um, even in talking to my Republican colleagues who live on the border that the vision for it was not realistic. There are other ways of using technology and making sure that we have the proper supports. I think the bottom line is that having security and also living up to our ideals and principles as a country who is welcoming are not mutually exclusive. And I think the wall is a waste of money.

MR. BEGLEITER: Now, a, another student here at the University of Delaware, a senior political science major wants to come back to the topic of social media but with a slightly different angle. Let's listen to her question.

Q: Should social media companies like Google, Twitter, Facebook and others be held accountable for the affects on society and politics

of the content of their users?

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, should the social media moguls be held accountable for the affect of their products on our society and our culture?

MR. WALKER: Well, I, I, I think they are accountable. You have to understand that these, like, for example, Facebook, now they've shut, I can't count the number of times they've shut me down. So, ah –

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MR. WALKER: -- [laughter] [indiscernible] but I'm not in favor of regulating Facebook. I'm not in favor of hauling Jeffrey Zuckerberg (sic) into court because, again, this is free speech. You know, it's free, let's not get in the way of free speech. That's the only thing we've got that, that holds us together is free speech. So, we can speak our minds and, um, Facebook, they do a pretty good job of, of regulating. You know, they, they dealt with me pretty harshly. I guess that's a good sign that they're doing a good job. But when you start to talk about censorship you start to talk about siccing the government on Facebook and Twitter, on, on, on, on the owners of, of those social media, that is dictatorship. Okay. That is the opposite of free speech. That is censorship. We can't have that.

MR. BEGLEITER: You, you raised the question of, of Facebook trying to shut you down, or shutting you down, but you didn't seem surprised that they had done it.

MR. WALKER: Well, I had never been on Facebook until just right before the primary election. So, I haven't been on Face, using Facebook for more than two months. I think something like that. So, I was unsure, I don't

know, I didn't know how to get on Facebook, I didn't know how to do a post, do a video and I certainly didn't know what was wrong with my, with my Facebook when it went blank. And I just, I, I had to go to my guru and he told me well, you're in jail.

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay. Congresswoman, what about the question of whether the social media companies ought to be held accountable for the affects of their products on our society?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: So, I don't think there's anybody in this room who doesn't believe in free speech. I, I don't. But I do think there is a level of accountability that, and, and responsibility that has to be taken not just for, um, the users but I mean even this, this past election cycle where we talked about Russian bots and, and, and, and the potential, you know, intrusion into our elections. That's, that's important stuff. That's pretty serious and I think that what we're seeing is that we're in a, in a area that hasn't been dealt with or addressed before. It's almost as if things are progressing faster than we as society are making the laws and the, and, and discussing the ethics of these things. And so, to me there is an accountability piece. Facebook's, Sheryl Sandberg actually came in and met with the congressional black caucus because there were ads, there were things that were misrepresentations and targets that were impacting the vote. That's important. So, they do have to take responsibility. They're, they're, there part of the American family as well. So, yeah, there, there is a level of responsibility that's needed.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. So, continuing on this topic, and you've just raised it, but I want both of you to have a chance to talk about it. Should the

federal government do anything to assure the cybersecurity of the US election campaign and voting systems, not just at the federal level but elections and election systems, voting systems, are managed at the state and even the county level, so, should the federal government have a role to deal with that?

Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Most definitely and, and as a matter of fact, you know, one of the roles of Congress is the power of the purse. What's interesting is that we put forward funding requests for the protection of these systems and the administration has not been supportive of some of those efforts. And so, again, it's, it's, it, it, we have to be consistent. If we say that that's important and that's a priority, then it shows up in our budget.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: Of course. That's the role the federal government is to protect our national security and our elections are, are, are our most sacred institution. And so, we, we have to. I mean, there's just no other way around it.

MR. BEGLEITER: So, are both of you saying that the federal government ought to in some way take control of in terms of security the local, the currently locally managed election systems? Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: Well, I wouldn't use that word control. Let me say protect the integrity of. That's that what the federal government's role is. It is to protect it so it's free and open and not subject to manipulation. That's what I was talking about.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman? Can you comment on that?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I, I, similarly I, I, I would agree in terms of, of

protection. But I think, again, there are many roles that we can play even in how we train people and whether we've -- I'm on the education and work force committee and one of the things that I attended was a graduation right here in Delaware for people who were becoming cybersecurity experts. What kind of supports do we put in to ensure the safety and security of, of, of our elections and of our nation? I think the federal government has a role to play in that.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Another student, a junior political science major here at the University of Delaware wants to turn, ah, our attention to climate change. Let's listen to her question.

Q: Should the United States adhere to the global climate change treaty that it signed?

MR. BEGLEITER: Should the US adhere to the international climate change agreement? Mr. Walker first.

MR. WALKER: I don't think so. I, I, I think the whole agreement is a, a, a amalgam of politicized speech and there's no scientific ah, ah, standing behind it. And this whole climate change thing, you know, we don't have a workable equation that we can use today to predict climate change. Until you really, you know, people can pull statistics out of the air, you know, forever and ever, and that's what we did at the University Delaware in a statistics course. But that's the first thing they taught you. So, we, we don't, we don't know what climate change is and no I would never vote for something like that. That's -- no.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman, what about the climate change treaty?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Well, I think this is an area that there's a clear

difference that we have. Um, first of all, you know, it points out the one of the big problems we have is that there are some people who don't believe the science. And, and so first you have to acknowledge that there is an issue. Secondly, we had a role to play as a global leader in the Paris Climate Accord and for us to pull out I think sent a wrong message. Third, it's really about not just our health because it is our health -- clean water, clean air, we live in one of the lowest lying states in the country and so we're feeling the effects -- but it's also economic. I mean, our farmers have said to me it's having an impact on them doing their work. It, it is having an impact in terms of jobs that we could be providing. We could be being more innovative and looking at new technologies to do things instead of saying, shutting down and saying we don't believe and therefore we're not addressing it. There's a recent report that just came out that creates that sense of urgency and it's saying that we're doing things now that by 2030 may be irreversible if we don't stop and do something now --

MR. BEGLEITER: Would you vote --

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: -- to protect our climate.

MR. BEGLEITER: -- to impose taxes to reduce carbon emissions?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: I, I, I'm open to whatever it's going take for us to really move ourselves forward in saving our planet. That, I, I, I am open.

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker? Raising taxes to reduce carbon emissions?

MR. WALKER: Um, absolutely not. Um, the, the reason why the, the, the global, um, agreement was so bad was because nobody, it was unenforceable, number one. China is, is dumping tons of, of pollutants into the

air every second and so, you know, it, it's just a, an idea that's crazy. And, um, a workable idea would be good, but we don't, that's not what we have here. And, um, did I answer your question right?

MR. BEGLEITER: You answered it the way you wanted to answer it which is fine. Ah, I'm going to move to another question now, um, about the news media. One of the big issues that President Trump has raised is to repeatedly refer to the news media as enemies of the people and both of you have spoken about free speech here tonight. I'd like to ask you both whether you think Mr. Trump is correct to label news media as enemies of the people? Congresswoman?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Ah, no, I don't think that he's correct to that. Um, you know, it's funny, I actually met with a group of high school students in, in Sussex County, and I even asked them where did they get their news, and each of them had different ways, whether it was social media or actually the, the formal media but nobody said we hate the media. And, and I guess on my mind right now is the journalists, Mr. Khashoggi, Khashoggi just, that was just conceivably murdered, it appears to be, and I think this rhetoric doesn't help in terms of how we approach the, the press. I mean, one of things I do is I actually in the morning listen to MSNBC, CNN, FOX and CNBC --

MR. BEGLEITER: Good.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: -- because I want to hear all of the different perspectives. And what I really encourage is people to get outside of their boxes but his attacks on the media I think really diminish that great, the great institution that we have that, that, that, whether it's the free press or whether it's the -- that,

that to me is one of the hallmarks of our country. So --

MR. BEGLEITER: Mr. Walker, what about the question of enemies of the people? Are the news media the enemies of the people?

MR. WALKER: Well, its unfortunate that our president uses so much hyperbole in his statements because there, there are some news media sources that are, um, so biased that they, they really, it's akin to what Congresswoman was saying, yelling fire in a theater. Ah, it, it's really irresponsible and, um, it, it hurts discussion, and it hurts open discourse because you inject fear into the mix. And then when people get fear they get, they, they start to do things that are irrational, and they get angry. And then there we go again. We're spinning off into not getting things done, not accomplishing anything. So, President Trump's statement was unfortunate, but I can understand where it's coming from. I mean, he, I am subjected to a lot of attacks from the media. I know exactly the way he feels. And, ah, but I, I'm, I'm kind of honored that I, they even give me any attention because, you know, I'm basically, you know, just kind of like a one-man band here. So, ah, yeah, I mean, it's fair. It's free speech. It's fair but um, um, it, that's America. That's, that's, that's the way we are. We're, we're that way and so I don't want to change it. I like it.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. We're going to turn to another student question now. A political science major student. Let's listen to her question.

Q: In an increasingly politically polarized nation, how would you promote bipartisanship?

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay, what would you do about bipartisanship?

Mr. Walker first.

MR. WALKER: Well, I would, ah, I hate to put it so simple but I, I, I, I'm a good listener. I, I like to, I like to listen. I like to listen to the Congresswoman talk. I like to listen to you talk. And so, that's the first step. You have to listen and sit down and listen. And that's what I'm going to do. I'm going to listen. And I can listen to Maxine Waters all day long. I can hear every -- Elijah Cummings, I can listen to Elijah Cummings all day long and, ah, John Lewis. I would love to listen to John Lewis because he's one of my heroes. So that's the first step. We've got to listen then we get to the truth. Go back and forth. Yes.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman, what about bipartisanship in Washington?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: When, when I ran the first time I really focused on two things, one was jobs and the economy, and the other was bringing people together. And, in this first term I can say that from day one our freshman class actually had a, a, our, our, um, our not retreat but our orientation and we asked all the staff to leave the room, no media, and we just tried to figure out where do we have common ground. They said raise your hand if you have a port in your state. Raise your hand if you served in the military. Part of it was to see if we could find areas to work together on. And since then we have actually done bills together, we signed a pledge of civility, all of us. I actually spoke on the House floor about civility and the fact that we're not going to always agree on everything, but we can at least respect each other, listen to each other, and try to find common ground. And so, I can give you many examples of everything where we've shut down the holocaust museum and myself and a Democrat and

two Republican's hosted a night at that museum and then came together to talk about immigration afterwards. I did a March Madness basketball party. I don't even care about basketball like that. No offense, dad. I don't even care about that anymore. But, it was a way to say we're humans. Let's try to talk together and see each other as humans again. It's part of my mission for being there is that the only way we're going to solve the big problems we have is if we start coming together and talking to each other out of respect.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right. Before we get to closing statements, Mr. Walker, I have a couple of questions for you but of course both candidates will get an opportunity to speak on it. Um, but I think we'd be remiss if we didn't ask these questions. You are the Republican nominee for Congress in this election. But Delaware's Republican Party has publicly disavowed your candidacy. You; recently, there were public reports, very public reports in the Wilmington News Journal about your public record, no secret sources, all public matters of unpaid taxes, lost court cases, business violations, and so on. What I want to ask you is talk to the voters about how they should make sense out of those facts about your candidacy in this election.

MR. WALKER: Well, thank you for that question. Um, I, I think they should look at the Republican Party's disavow of me as a, a sign that I'm a true centrist. Don't forget I ran as a Democrat two years ago. So, you know, there's a lot of issues that I like that are, um, the Democratic Party stands on; there's a lot of issues that the Republican Party stands that I like. So, I'm right there in the middle. And, their disavow of me was an insult to all the nearly 20,000 people who voted for me and for them to do that was, you know, very misguided and I

don't want to spend anymore time talking about it because, like I told the news media, I've left them behind a long time ago. And I don't need them. I, you know, I don't accept campaign donations. I don't need the money. And I don't need their help. I run my own campaign. So, the, the, the, um, the code violations, okay, if you look back at the court cases that I filed you will find that most of the code violations started from selective enforcement of a building maintenance laws and I was a big advocate or and litigant against selective enforcement of certain laws. And that's called discrimination and that's because I house blacks and whites living together in all white neighborhoods. And the neighbors didn't like it and they complained. And so, yeah, we had problems with the maintenance of the house but out of over 1,000 people who lived in my houses nobody ever got hurt because of a condition in one of the houses. And so, again, I, I don't think that the voters are that interested in that. They want to know what I can do for them today, right now. They want to know what am I going to do to put money in their pocket. What am I going to do to help them get the job they want, to go to the school that they want, how, how am I going to help them to get healthy again? They want to know that now. They don't care about what happened ten years ago.

MR. BEGLEITER: So, just a few minutes ago you referred to yourself a moment ago as true centrist and a couple of more minutes earlier you referred to my party, the Republican Party. Which is it that the voters should think of you as in this election?

MR. WALKER: The voters should think of me as a centrist. Okay? I, I'm, I'm pretty close to a Democrat now, okay? They've, they've turned their

backs on me so, I'm, I'm, you know --

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay.

MR. WALKER: -- it, it's, it's, it's --

MR. BEGLEITER: Okay.

MR. WALKER: -- it's center.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman, do you want to comment on this subject?

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: You know, my, my dad would always say to me you don't run against somebody, you're running for something. And, that has been the mantra for me as I look at the many issues that we have to deal with. And I think this election has been challenging because even that most recent news story, it's a big story and it's something that people do have to weigh when they're trying to make a decision about who are they going to vote for, you know. I understand code violations but I also know that when you take an oath to become a congressperson you are taking an oath to follow the laws and the Constitution and, you know, it, it, it is painful to watch some of the, the stories that, that are coming out because people's lives are at stake. If they live in substandard housing that's somebody's life, that's somebody's child, you know. If they, and, and, and so for me this, this, this has been a challenge because I want people to know what I believe and what I'm standing up and fighting for them for. But people also have to make a decision and I, I, I don't negate the, the folks that, that voted for you. I, I, that, that's their right. But I hope that people will take a good look at our records, at our, our, our life's work, and what we're proposing to do for the future.

MR. BEGLEITER: All right, well, I'm afraid that concludes our time for questions and answers so I want to give both of you the opportunity to give voters some closing remarks. So, we'll start with Congressman, Congresswoman Rochester. In a closing statement remember the selection of who speaks first was made in a coin toss before the beginning of the debate. Congresswoman, your closing remarks.

MS. BLUNT ROCHESTER: Thank you. First, thank you, Ralph, and thank you to Delaware Public Media and the University of Delaware for hosting this debate. I also want to thank those who are in the audience. I want to thank my opponent and also those who are tuning in for being engaged in this election. Representing Delaware has been the honor of my life. It has been a privilege to serve. Two years ago, I started out with the premise that we could together tackle the tough problems of healthcare, jobs, the economy, immigration but that we had to do it together. And we had a mantra that when Lisa goes to Washington we all go to Washington. I've taken that very seriously in trying to represent the entire state. I've taken your stories with me and turned them into action whether it was that small business owner who needed help, or that student who had concerns about being bullied, or that farmer who was in a trade war. I've taken those actions and turned them into real action. But there's still a lot more that needs to be accomplished. I've also heard a lot of people talking about feeling anxious and hopeless and feeling that we as a country are in a partisan rhetoric world wind, or that our diplomatic presence is being diminished, or that some of our rights are being trampled on. And I've said this year that I'm not frustrated, I'm motivated. And that's really what I want all of you to be. I want

you through these challenging times to know that we have been through hard times before and we have overcome and that we will overcome them again. But, this time I need your support. On November 6th I hope that you will come out and vote for me and send me back because there's still so much more work to, to be done and, um, in the words of the Carpenter's, we've only just begun.

MR. BEGLEITER: Congresswoman Rochester, thank you very much. And, Mr. Walker, your closing statement also a time limit running of two minutes.

MR. WALKER: Thank you. Yesterday my chief campaign strategist and best friend and manager came here and told the organizers of this debate that I was not coming, that I had laryngitis and that I was dropping out of the debate. So, I'm here and, and I came here for, for this reason because I'm at a job interview right now. I'm at a job interview and, and most of the people out there are, are Democrats. And so, and so you need to get to know me. You, you, you need to know that I don't accept campaign donations, so money is not a factor in my candidacy. I don't have anybody really working for me. I have one or two volunteers. And yet, I got 20, almost 20,000 votes in my primary and I beat the party's, uh, favorite. Now there's a reason for that. The reason is, people see me out working. They see me out on the streets with them, out putting up signs, out driving around, out hustling in the 95-degree heat, 67-year-old man. People like that. And you know why they like it? Because I'm one of you. I'm not above you. I'm one of you. And so, that's why you should vote for me on November 6th because I know what you're going through. I'm sure most of the people in this audience, I'm sure almost all of you make more than I do. I, my income is 1,000 dollars a month. I drive a 1,000-dollar car. But yet here I am

running for Congress. And, what does that mean for America? What does that mean for, for, for the children growing up that yes, you can run for Congress. You can maybe even run for president with no money. You don't have to go around begging for money and prostituting yourself. You don't have to do that. If you're strong, if you have stamina, if, if you believe in God you can make it. So, that's my message that I want to give to you tonight that there is hope and I represent an end to the hopelessness that has come over this state. One party in the same, one party rule for 20 years. Ladies and gentlemen, that's dictatorship. Okay? Don't fool yourself. You know, you, we need change. We need somebody to come in from the outside. You just heard I'm, I'm not really affiliated with the Republican Party. I'm certainly not affiliated with the Democratic Party. I'm the people's choice. That's why you should vote for me on November 6th. And bring your friends.

MR. BEGLEITER: Thank you very much Scott Walker and Lisa Blunt Rochester. Thank you both for participating in Delaware Debates 2018. On behalf of Delaware Public Media and the University of Delaware's Center for Political Communication, I'm Ralph Begleiter thanking you all for joining us for Delaware Debates 2018. And encouraging you to cast your vote on Tuesday, November 6th.

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