



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### ELECTIONS AND HOPE IN 2020

When I am discouraged, I often find myself listening to the U2 channel. The depth of their lyrics often encourages me. I seek inspiration from many sources, and in a world that searches for hope, U2 rarely fails to deliver the possibility of a better day. Too many people have grown numb to the hatred in the world.

When I write, often I want to touch emotions and stir your soul. It only happens when I have a passion for an issue. That is why I write so much about education. It is where I find my passion. My concerns about election results tend to revolve around education and how we can connect and collaborate to improve the education system for all students and educators. Education drives our long-term economic well-being as a state and nation. Elections repeatedly determine which issues will be priorities. My hope is education is near the very top of that list.

The election of 2020 was not just about the presidential election and congressional races. The stakes are high across the nation: 11 gubernatorial races and elections in 86 of the 99 state legislative chambers across the country. The significance cannot be understated. However, we will awake on November 4, 2020, to discover that life will continue.

If the election of 2020 teaches us anything, we all need to see the world around us. We all have challenges in this world. We carry scars, some deep in our hearts. Do we let our demons win in our life? Or do we rise and overcome those dark moments?

My life experience has taught me to keep on fighting, especially after a traumatic event. Let's face it. COVID-19 is a traumatic event. Struggling for survival is engrained in every fiber of my being. I don't give up. I can't. If your political side wins, congratulations. You now have some promises to keep. If your side loses ---you must persevere. After dark nights, the sun comes and brings the light. Hope comes if we look for it, wait for it, and really seek it.

No politician has all the answers to the problems in this world. They never have. They never will. Extreme political partisanship has occurred in part because political parties are no longer grassroots organizations. That is why so many state parties bear little resemblance to their national affiliates. Polarization has consequences on politics, and ultimately policy as it makes it difficult to work toward common objectives that benefit all. The polarization makes the work at the state and local level even more critical as they try to keep the grassroots involved while addressing critical issues faced by citizens.

#### **SUMMARY**

*My concerns about election results tend to revolve around education, how we can connect and collaborate to improve the education system for all students and educators. Education drives our long-term economic well-being as a state and nation. Elections repeatedly determine which issues will be priorities. My hope is education is near the very top of that list.*

As we move forward, we must strive for an accountable political system. We must hold both the government and those we elect to the highest standards possible by making sure that they follow the law and keep the promises they have made. Sometimes it means that we must challenge a political process that serves moneyed interests more than the will of the people. Civic engagement is never easy. However, it requires commitment and effort.

We have to search our souls regularly on how to better serve our family, our community, our nation, and our God. For some of us, it will mean serving those who serve. Robert Kennedy reminded us, "We are a great country, an unselfish country, and a compassionate country." In the end, we live and we die. That theme was mirrored in the song "[Kite](#)" by U2: "I'm not afraid to die. I'm not afraid to live." It is what you do between those events that matter in this world.

The question we all must ask is, what have we done enough to make the world a better place? Are we on the side that brings hope to others? Are we adding to the hatred? What legacy are you leaving in this world? Teachers, nurses, police, fire, first responders, military, and many other occupations recognize that they are leaving a legacy. We build a legacy when we invest in others. These public servants understand they do not have to sell their soul or mortgage their future for personal gain. They can share their gift and leave a legacy.

Yes, election results have real world consequences. They are important barometers of the pulse of a community, state, and nation. We should heed their lessons. However, election outcomes are rarely mandates for sweeping changes in the lives of citizens or continual upheaval in how services are provided. In the end, most people simply want what Ronald Reagan described, "Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, leave the rest to God."

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