

So it's a lot of going out there and talking to people.

And I'm going to be honest with you.

It's exhausting, but I love talking to these people because showing up is the absolute best thing that you can do as a candidate.

And people appreciate it.

People appreciate you getting there in person and talking to them.

This is the Lawyers, Guns and Money Podcast.

Hello and welcome to the Lawyers, Guns and Money Podcast.

My name is Rob Farley and I am joined by fellow front-patriot Scott Lemieux.

Our guest this evening is Erin Petrie.

She has previously been a guest of the Lawyers, Guns and Money Podcast where we talked about

the bourbon industry and the travails and struggles of the bourbon industry.

She is also a longtime friend of the blog and full disclosure was once my student at the University of Kentucky's Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce.

How's everybody doing tonight?

I mean, I'm just glad that you know you high passed me all those years ago.

Mistakes were made.

What's the Broad City meme?

Am I okay?

I'm still lobbying for like a podcast where I just yell about Dan Wilson for three hours.

We can still make that happen.

If any leaders have demand for that, please let me know.

We can make that happen.

All right, but more to the point, Erin, you have decided to undertake a life change.

So you earlier this month and the followers of the blog will be aware of this earlier this month or perhaps last month, earlier this year, announced your candidacy for the Democratic nomination for Kentucky's sixth district of the United States House of Representatives.

So I guess just to start off, can you tell us how you came to this decision?

Because, and we're going to talk more about this, right?

Because it's not a hobby, right?

It's a momentous decision.

It takes a lot of time.

It takes a lot of money.

It takes a lot of effort even to run.

And so could you tell us a little bit about how you came to this decision that this is something you wanted to do with your life?

Yeah, absolutely.

So, you know, it's funny when we were chit chatting before the podcast, right?

I mentioned one of my laments of this whole process is when people come up to me and they, you know, they're trying to get to know me and they say, well, you know, what's your job when you're not running for Congress?

And I say, well, I'm running for Congress.

And they say, yeah, but what's your job?

And I'm like, I'm running for Congress.

It takes a lot of time, right?

And so I did, I quit my job at AWS.

I was, I essentially had a decision to make right when Donald Trump was reelected, which, you know, let's let's all be real.

We all knew the writing was on the wall there.

The apathy was there.

The fact that Biden was put up as the nominee and then there was that switch in the middle.

Harris never had a chance, right?

So really the best thing that we have to do is trying to rebuild.

And I realized that I was consistently disappointed in the types of candidates the Democratic party kept putting out and the type of sort of just, I just, you know, I mean, just limp responses that they are having to, to the administration.

And so I had a decision to make.

I could keep complaining about things, posting to social media.

I was up for a promotion in under a year at Amazon and I could make a bunch more money in the private sector, keep climbing that corporate ladder, or I could do something about it.

So I did something about it.

I'm never someone who has really shied away from risks.

And I realized that if I really do want there to be a change, I can't keep expecting others to do it.

And I have to be the one to do it.

And so that's why I started having lots of conversations with folks being like, is this even something I could do?

Is it something I could do?

And folks kept saying, well, honestly, this, this primary, this field is wide open.

And so I kept having these conversations and at every single time I had a conversation or a decision to make in my gut, it always kept leading me to I'm going to do this.

I need to do this.

And here I am.

And I am a candidate and I'm about a month and a half into the campaign trail and I have no regrets.

And I've loved getting to know people and hearing people's stories.

And I, this is certainly an education, but I did it because, you know, if you really want to change, you can't expect others to do it.

Yeah.

So I'm really, I'm looking forward to both getting to know what it's like to run for Congress and also, you know, party to what you stand for and what you hope to do. But just to set up for readers who are not Kentuckians, describe KY6 and where it is and what it's like and what kind of constituencies there are there.

Yeah.

So the Kentucky 6th district.

So we were actually redistricted back in 2020.

And so we used to be a little bluer because we had Franklin County, which is where Frankfurt is, which is the capital of Kentucky.

And so we used to be a little bluer, but that got gerrymandered out.

And the nice thing though is, is I will tell you, is back when I worked as an intern in Ben Chandler's office, back when I was a Patterson school student, it was about like an R plus 13 back then.

And now it is an R plus seven in the Cook voter index.

And so that's a huge shift.

It's still pretty solidly read.

However, we have a really interesting demographic here.

We have about 750,000 constituents.

There are more registered Democrats than there are registered Republicans.

There's more registered women than there are registered men.

And the average age is 37.2.

I just turned 38 last Friday.

So I'm also the youngest candidate in this race.

And the D trip has actually flagged this particular race to be one of the key potential seats to flip from red to blue in the midterms in November of 2026.

It's a decently well educated district because it does have the University of Kentucky.

The largest city is Lexington.

I mean, we've elected a gay mayor here.

You know, I mean, we have a big pride parade.

We have a very strong history with the LGBTQIA+ community.

And so, and I mean, even broadly, right, you know, I mean, there's Georgetown College, there's Midway College, we have Transylvania University, we have large community colleges.

We also have large companies here such as Toyota.

And so it's an interesting district, but it's one in which I do think is much more purple.

And I think it's been more purple than it has been in a long time.

And we also are seeing a resurgence here in the Democratic Party in Kentucky more broadly because of the national attention on Andy Beshear and the fact that he brought in new leadership for the Kentucky Democratic Party, the KDP with Morgan Eves, who worked on his campaign.

You know, so obviously, as someone who lives in Lexington, I'm sympathetic to everything that you said, you know, I will say, we often struggle at the blog.

And this sometimes plays out in terms of a distinction, a conflict between the readers of Laureage Gensland Money and the front pagers at Laureage Gensland Money, right?

But one of my frustrations is that many people just sort of look at Kentucky and they see this 6535 voted for Trump or whatever it was last time.

And you know, they essentially take a view of Kentucky.

It's like, oh, well, it's a red state.

It's hopeless.

There's nobody there who is useful or interesting at all.

Well, meanwhile, a state like Oregon, which is like 5248 blue, I think it's a little bit farther than that is sort of lauded as this wonderful place to live.

And so it's very refreshing to me, right, for to have somebody talk about, you know, it's a pretty blue city, right?

Lexington itself has voted for Democratic presidential candidates for a very long time.

I guess the question for you is, you know, when you are and I know there are different approaches to this from a point of view of a candidate, how do you divide your time between the Lexington metropolitan area, which is Fayette County, which is, you know, 350 400,000, something

like that, and not extremely blue, but pretty blue.

And then the surrounding counties, which are much more red.

So you know how do you as a candidate make decisions about where to focus your time and attention?

Yeah, I will answer that.

But first, I do want to say one thing, which is Kentucky hasn't always been this bastard of red, right?

I mean, we have had plenty of Democratic governors.

I mean, not just Andy Bashir.

Andy Bashir is not a random fluke here, right?

I mean, his dad was governor.

We've also had plenty of governors and senators who have also been blue, right?

We voted for Clinton twice.

You know, we also voted for Carter and Johnson and FDR.

And so, you know, there has been a day in clearly, obviously, the Democratic Party has changed and shifted.

But I mean, you know, Eastern Kentucky, for example, used to be decently blue for a long time.

And you know, it's been a more modern shift.

So I do think it's something that is going to it is a possibility to change.

But you know, I mean, Lexington is the biggest, you know, it's a Democratic bastion.

But I will tell you, I mean, I was in Fleming County last night and those folks didn't have a a really strong Democratic Party.

They said they hadn't been meeting for about two years before this year, really.

But you know, 20 folks showed up in Fleming County at this meeting.

And I've been to more blue county meetings that have been less attended.

And people in the surrounding counties are eager.

Frankly, they're pissed.

And they know that now we have a real chance.

And so I'll tell you, I mean, I am doing a lot of data.

My team is working on some data.

I was just texting one of my team members before this call about trying to kind of look and see at, you know, what the voter propensity is around the different counties.

But you know, I mean, I'm committed to going to each of the 16 counties.

I have 14 full counties and two partial counties.

The two partials are going to be Bath and Anderson County.

And which is a shame because I grew up in Anderson County.

But it's OK.

Lawrenceburg, where I actually grew up, is is is in my district.

But yeah, it's it's you know, you you you have to be strategic about it, right?

I could I could easily fill up all of my time just going to events in Lexington.

But it's important to be seen in all of these different counties.

So the number one thing I do make sure I do is I give all of the counties at least some exposure.

Right.

And, you know, I mean, I've been invited to Halloween in five different counties.

Right.

And to be honest, I'll probably just take my knees and nephew trick or treating.

But you have to look at the data, certainly.

But then you also have to look at the people.

And building relationships is really important because, you know, I mean, I could be going to Woodford County all the time and I will be in Woodford County tomorrow night.

And I was in Woodford County last week.

And, you know, it is a decently blue county and I will certainly be there.

Actually, this will be my third time tomorrow night.

You know, I could spend all my time there, too.

However, you know, folks in Fleming County, folks in Estill County, folks in Powell County are eager and they have very active Democratic parties.

And you need to make sure that you're talking to folks who, A, want to talk to you and B, want to vote because they want to try to reinvigorate these parties.

And I'm not just here to try to win an election.

I'm also here to try to jump and reinvigorate the Democratic Party here in the 6th District and across Kentucky.

Yeah, that's really great to hear.

And I think that, you know, and again, it's hard not to be frustrated in that, you know, in particular, you know, the Biden administration really did try to tilt a lot of its programs towards red areas and rural areas.

And obviously without a lot of short term success.

But I do think that even if there's obviously sort of a rural urban divide that's not going away, you know, we always have to like remember that like margins matter.

You know, if we could get back to losing in rural areas the way that Barack Obama did, you know, it's a very different country.

And you'll certainly I would think that between, you know, the cuts to Medicaid, the cuts to SNAP, the way that tariffs have affected agriculture areas, and of course, uniquely in Kentucky, you know, the effect that both, you know, tariffs and things like, you know, Trump's war on Canada have had on the spirits industry there, you know, that there is, you know, an opportunity to at least get a hearing from some people in rural areas.

And so, you know, I think it's it's I like to hear that, you know, you're not just trying to sort of run up margins in Lexington, but you know, you really, you know, sort of trying to sort of build up a party in other places, not because they're going to be majority democratic anytime soon, but it still matters.

And you know, we see proof of concept of that with Andy Bashir being able to win statewide

office.

So, so I assume that that's obviously sort of part of what motivated you to run is to sort of thinking about the future of the party and how to assemble a coalition that can win the Senate and be more competitive.

Yeah, absolutely.

And you know, I mean, and I'm showing up in these these more rural counties and you know, Rocky Atkins, who's the, you know, senior adviser and one time a primary competitor, he lost to Andy Bashir in the last gubernatorial primary.

And Jacqueline Coleman, who's lieutenant governor, both of those two are likely vying for the governorship in the next governor's race once Bashir steps down because he's now termed out.

And so they're showing up in a lot of these rural counties too.

Right.

And so, you know, we are trying to keep that democratic stronghold, but we're also really trying to make sure that we that we grab onto this momentum, right?

And invigorate people to do that.

But yeah, I mean, the other thing is too, is that, you know, exactly what you're saying with Medicaid and SNAP, like 32,000 households in Kentucky's six district are on SNAP, right?

Over 32,000 are on SNAP.

And a lot of those are going to be in a lot of those rural counties.

And so those are the people who are going to be hurt the worst.

And I also think that that's also where you can find a lot of those voters who are primed to flip and primed to vote because I mean, they're literally taking food out of their

kids' mouths.

Yeah.

And I mean, for listeners who are interested, right, I mean, you can especially follow you on or it is possible to follow you on threads.

Under Bourbon air and there's lots of places where you're talking about visiting a lot of these counties.

And so you can actually follow the follow this journey around Kentucky.

I'm on I'm on I'm on threads.

Blue Sky X, Facebook, LinkedIn, TikTok, Instagram, you name it.

If you go to my website, Aaron Petrie dot com, E R I N P E T R E Y dot com.

You can find links to all my socials.

And we'll break them all when the podcast goes up.

Definitely.

So so and I just because of the way the algorithm work, I'm going to frame my question carefully.

Right.

I recently saw rather than you recently posted something I believe was on threads.

It was about your thoughts about sort of that you had sort of started this as thinking of yourself as a moderate and you are now sort of more thinking of yourself as a progressive.

Now, obviously, that's something that the lawyers, guns and money community, which is very progressive, would love to hear.

But could you tell us maybe a little bit more about your evolution in terms of how you are

thinking about your candidacy sort of across the democratic coalition?

Yeah.

So I mean, listen, at my heart, I'm a progressive, right?

I mean, I went to world pride earlier this year.

You know, I mean, I am someone who believes that none of us are free until all of us are free.

Right.

And I think, you know, I have very strong beliefs that are rooted in progressive politics.

However, you know, in talking to some people, I was like, well, you know, moderate Dems winning Kentucky and you can look at Andy Bashir and I was having a conversation with the state rep the other day and I said, you know, Andy Bashir, listen, let's let's not get it twisted.

Right.

I want to be very clear.

I love Andy Bashir.

He's doing a great job for this state.

He helped the entire country, frankly, through Covid.

And of course, he's going to be running for president.

Right.

I think that he could be that sort of temporary bridge that we need to start to build and rebuild this party.

But I liken him to Wonder Bread.

Right.

He is offensive.

He is.

He's that's not a dig at all.

I mean, you know, he is inoffensive.

He is something that we all can find.

You know, we can all kind of identify with.

It goes with a lot of things.

You know, he's a Paul McCartney song.

Right.

He's a Paul McCartney song.

Yeah, it's a bop, but, you know, it's not experimental.

It's not edgy.

It's not pushing any boundaries.

You know, I mean, he leans into his kind of dad humor.

He's awkward.

And I'm 64, not held to Skeletor's version.

Yeah.

But, you know, there's nothing wrong with that.

He's you know, I don't mean that as a criticism.

He's I want to hold your hand.

You know, it's like not it's not, you know, it's not pushing any boundaries.

It's cute.

It's sweet.

Nobody's mad about it.

You know, and he can build that bridge and we really do need to build that bridge.

And he's clearly shown a lot of success there.

But I do think that, you know, in looking at the other candidates to, you know, I kind of came into this being like, well, I think I need to because that's just kind of what Kentucky was.

And as I get out there and talk to voters, as I get out there and hear the other candidates I'm running against talk, I feel myself just kind of like this, just deep inside of me say, we are not saying anything new.

We are not saying anything that is inspiring voters to get to the polls.

We are not inspiring anyone to think that we can flip this seat.

We need to first off get over the concept of voter apathy.

We need people to get to the primary booths.

We of course need to get people to the the general, but we really need to make sure that people show up to the primaries.

When I was in Fleming County last night, they actually asked me this.

They said, Aaron, what can we do to encourage people to get out and vote in a primary?

Right.

Because it's like 10 percent is the is the is the you know, the the show up for that right as the is the voter rate there.

And I said, listen, the number one thing you need to do is tell people that they need to show up for primaries because that shows to the other party that we care.

Because if people are really strong in showing up to primaries, that makes the other party say, oh, this is a real race.

And they're like, well, do we really want to do that?

Do we really want to let them know?

And I'm like, yes, because right now they think the Democrats are weak because the Democrats oh, news flash.

We are weak.

The Democratic Party is incredibly weak right now and getting people actually activated and out to the polls for a primary, which is not sexy.

It's not it's a primary for a midterm.

We need to make sure that we post good numbers there so that they know that we are going to show up even more in the general.

And beyond that, I said, listen, this is one of the most important elections that people in Kentucky State's district will vote in in probably their lifetimes, because this is one of the times that we actually have the opportunity to flip a key seat blue at a time when every seat in the U.S. Congress matters.

And you need to choose your champion.

You know, it's kind of like in in a street fighter, right?

It's like choose your champion.

Choose your champion who you think can actually beat a MAGA candidate because on the Republican

side, no matter how moderate those folks have been in the past, they are all trying to out MAGA each other.

And we're going to have to fight against a MAGA candidate.

And we don't need somebody up there being like, well, you know, this and this.

No, we need someone who can actually get, you know, get loud and invigorate people.

So I'm going to step on Scott here for just a second, right?

Just to sort of restate what you were saying there.

Right.

So one of the reasons why KY6 is so interesting is because it is an open seat because the incumbent Andy Barr is running for Mitch McConnell's seat in the Kentucky Senate in the 2026 Senate

race.

And yes, if you watch local television in Kentucky, it is just Andy Barr and Nate Morris screeching at each other about how the other one isn't sufficiently MAGA, how the other one hates Trump, how the other one loves Mitch McConnell, which again, right, is so fascinating.

And I wish people could just kind of understand, like, just watch these ads because they're crazy.

But that's that's the context.

Right.

So Andy Barr has graduated to running for Senate.

And that's what makes one of the things that makes KY6 really attractive.

So I'm sorry, Scott, I stepped on a question.

Yeah. And thinking about this kind of, you know, moderate progressive divide and maybe how's that entirely useful?

When I hear your description of KY6, I can't help but think of Washington's third, you know, which obviously has been one either is a twice or three times by Mary Goosinkam Perez.

And it's like a predominantly rural district, but with, you know, Vancouver and the other cities in, you know, bedroom communities of Portland, you know, and I think that, you know, she definitely is, you know, a moderate compared to, you know, your typical Democrat from Seattle or New York, whatever.

But it's not, you know, a kind of, you know, conservative Democrat of the 80s and 90s.

You know, I think that she's somebody who seems sort of very tuned to her district in a way that doesn't seem terribly concerned with whether I'm progressive or moderate, but more, you know, I think, you know, staking out a claim that's sort of, you know, very particularized.

And I wonder if you've paid any attention, whether to Goosinkam Perez or some of the other Democrats who have succeeded in winning in Republican leaning, but not hopeless districts.

And if you can, you know, if you think that there's any lessons from there that might be applicable in your race in Kentucky.

Yeah.

I mean, here, when it comes down to it, it comes down to people and their lives and their ability to actually live their lives with dignity.

And you know, yes, there are rural areas with with blue, big, big blue.

I don't want to even call them dots.

They're big kind of shining blue suns, right?

These are blue giants.

And you have to weigh the folks who are obviously SNAP and Medicaid and all of these things are important programs.

You know, we all know that here in Lexington, right?

We're like, obviously these are important.

But looking to the rural counties, right?

We say that these are the people who actually survive on these programs.

And so I think that that's kind of that applicability.

But you know, you know, I'm not going to say that, you know, I'm a I'm a grand platener, right?

I'm not an AOC, right?

Because this is not this ain't a long island, yo.

This isn't Maine.

This is Kentucky, right?

You know, so there there still are things that I know, you know, we can't get through.

But you know, my job as a candidate and you know, my job, if I am elected, is not to push through my personal agenda, right?

I'm not going because listen, you know, my personal agenda was was, you know, was was what I was running on.

You know, I mean, God, I mean, I would not be running this race.

But I recognize the importance of representative politics.

And the thing is, is that I'm not afraid to be loud about the things that people are mad about.

I'm not going to be loud selectively just because I'm worried about, you know, this donor, that donor, or because, you know, maybe one of the advisors to the governor was, you know, not thrilled that I came out as not the biggest friend of coal and was texting a member of my team about it.

And I was like, well, I'm not the biggest friend of coal, because we still have we have coal miners who are are protesting outside the Department of Labor in Washington, D.C., because the administration continues to refuse to push through safety standards and requirements for tenting and ventilation and basic safety requirements while these coal miners, which by the way, there's no coal in my district, which, you know, come on, and also coal supports less than 10,000 jobs.

But also these miners are still struggling to get their black lung payouts.

So, you know, I mean, we can hold on to the concept of coal all we want.

But the state is one in which is being put behind.

Our energy rates are consistently climbing upwards.

One of our biggest advantages economically is that we have relatively low energy rates, but that's going to continue to erode unless we put supports in there for alternative energy.

And that is everything from renewable natural gas, traditional natural gas, through your usual renewables, such as solar, wind, geothermal battery, but then into the nuclear space.

But somehow we've become allergic to it because we're obsessed with this concept that coal

kept the lights on before.

It does still make up 68 percent of our grid, but that's going to continue to erode.

And we can't continue to hold on to these concepts that, you know, well, you know, so and so loves the farmers.

And it's like, no, they don't love the farmers because they continue to vote for Trump policies, which are causing our soybeans to rot the fields.

And by the way, can we confirm you have no Nazi tattoos?

I just just to make news on LGM here, I want to confirm and absolutely know.

Where in the hell did that come from?

No, my great grandfather and my grandfather fought in World War Two.

My grandfather was in the Pacific and my great grandfather was an officer who won a silver star fighting against the Nazis in World War Two.

My cousin Donnie, who passed away at 95, was a prisoner of war in a Nazi war camp.

I absolutely have no Nazi tattoos, no ties to Naziism.

And honestly, the fact that this country is falling into essentially the fascist playbook that the Nazis took in 1920 in the late 1920s and the 30s and the 40s is vile and disgusting.

I'm very pleased that we will not end up like Pods Save America.

So

thank you for clarifying, God's implied.

And to add on to

maybe I missed that part of the zeitgeist while I was in a bowling out.

Oh, you were for you are fortunate to have missed it.

But if you go on, I know that you weren't aware I buy ball.

I've been driving all over God's creation, you know, and apparently I have not been listening to enough Pods Save America.

It is a good thing that you don't know because it's all too stupid.

It's all too stupid to be believed.

Yes.

Just let me confirm that I did not.

I am I'm referring to another candidate.

I do not think that there was

Oh, I was like, I missed this note, but I will tell you this.

I do have a tattoo.

I have one tattoo that I got on May 1st when my whiskey brand launch.

Well, it's a whiskey brand that I'm helping with.

It's dedicated to Hunter S. Thompson.

And on my side, I have the Ralph Steadman bats from fear and loathing in Las Vegas because

I love bats and I just I resonated with that.

And bats are great, sometimes misunderstood.

Yeah, that's not what I like.

So now I know the point for degree over planner.

I was done.

So so so so now that we've clarified the Nazi tattoo aspect of this interview, which needs to be part of basically every podcast moving forward.

So and I don't want to pin you down on this, but I know Scott is interested in this too.

And I know a lot of our listeners will be like one of the biggest changes in how people live in Kentucky and how people live in Lexington really over the past three or four years has been the has been frankly, and there's a word they term it the end of reproductive freedom in in Kentucky and in Lexington.

Right.

And so you talked about the things that people are mad about.

Right.

People are angry about and in in in in Lexington, this is particularly troubling, right, because it's not as if you could just hop and skip over the border.

Right.

Because Ohio has gone that way too and Tennessee has gone that way.

And so you have gone from being a place where people did have access to reproductive health servers to one where you literally have to go to Virginia, right, or to Illinois in order to to actually access those services.

So is this one of the things that people have talked to you about is that something that's dear to you or what are your thoughts on that?

I will say not a lot of people have talked to me about it right now.

People are more worried about the looming tower of B.S. that's about to fall between the government shutdown, you know, folks not getting paid a lot of federal workers being furloughed or rift or snap.

But yes, this is an incredibly dear issue to me as someone with ovaries and a uterus.

It is something that is very important to me.

You know, I have been a stalwart advocate for reproductive freedom my entire life.

But I never thought that Roe versus Wade would ever be overturned.

And I remember it very vividly.

And I remember when that happened.

And I just I felt like I was like, I don't want to get up today.

I was like, this country doesn't represent me anymore.

You know, I do find it unconscionable that this country puts they love the concept of and when I say this country, I mean the the party in power, you know, the powers that be right now thinks that what is holier in regards to Supreme Court and judicial precedent is Citizens United, not Roe versus Wade.

So they love to cite judicial precedent when it serves them and only tear it down when it does not serve them.

And so the fact that something was decided decades and decades and decades ago, far before I was even born or even, you know, a thought is no longer law of the land is is heartbreaking and disgusting.

I've been a donor of Planned Parenthood for nearly a decade now.

You know, I mean, I volunteered for women's reproductive freedom.

It is something that we need to put into law, not just judicial precedent.

This needs to be actual codification.

You know, but I think that this this is one of the things that they like to obfuscate in regards to like things like the trans issues, right?

They're like, well, well, trans this, like, let's be really specific about this and this.

And I'm like, no, honestly, the legislature should never be meddling in in doctor patient matters.

What they should be meddling in is how much people are paying for those services and not enriching CEOs and not enriching insurance companies at the at the at the loss of patients and at the loss of things like preventative health care, because apparently, you know, nothing else matters unless they feel good about themselves and fighting for, you know, the unborn.

But as soon as they are born, then, you know, screw you, you're on your own.

Yeah, as Barney Frank always used to say that to the actual existing American pro-life movement,

life begins at conception and ends at birth.

Yeah.

Yeah, it's disgusting.

It's disgusting.

And, you know, I mean, I've personally never been in a position where I have needed to seek an abortion and I consider myself lucky.

However, I've been on birth control since I was 16.

And the reason why actually was because I was on Accutane and I needed birth control, you know, in order to get Accutane.

Right.

And and so but then I've, you know, been on it ever since.

And the concept that I could one day not be able to get my IUD replaced or that my niece,

who is currently seven and a half, you know, at some point she will not be able to get birth control because we have legislated against it because we care more about the concept of life than the actual reality of it.

And also, you know, I think uniting your two answers is that, you know, not only is I think reproductive freedom an issue that sort of transcends blue and red states.

And we've seen that again and again.

Healthcare is also an affordability issue.

And I think it's pretty clear that a lot of people, you know, who voted for Trump, you know, don't necessarily have the strong partisan allegiances were generally upset about the price increases of the early 2000s.

And of course, health care is already an issue.

And with the coming expiration of Affordable Care Act subsidies cuts to Medicaid is about to get much worse.

And you know, you also mentioned energy prices, you know, another area where the Trump administration's

cancellation of green energy projects disproportionately in red states.

I don't know how much that's affecting Kentucky, that's increasing energy bills.

So I'm wondering if your affordability is kind of either a theme of your campaign and something that you're hearing about from people as you go from county to county, if that's kind of I'm assuming that's a paramount issue on the minds of a lot of voters right now.

Oh, I mean, absolutely.

Indisputably.

I mean, so because of the big bullshit bill, I mean, we're slated to have some of the largest utility rate hikes in the country of up to 48 percent.

That is staggering.

Currently KU, Kentucky utilities, which covers central Kentucky or part of central Kentucky, and then LG and E Louisville Gas and Electric, which covers the Louisville metropolitan area, we are slated to see utility rate hikes of 11.5 percent.

Other parts of the states are also going to see rate hikes.

We haven't seen any improvement in services.

We haven't seen any kind of increase in uptime or other kind of investments in the infrastructure.

No, it's just straight up increases.

But it's not even just energy prices, it's energy prices.

It's remember how Trump said, oh, we're going to reduce your grocery store bill.

Well, I don't know the last time he's ever been to a grocery store, I think probably never.

So I don't know how he can say that he's reducing them.

He can he can't he probably can't even tell you how much a Big Mac is.

He probably doesn't even know what the Big Mac index is in the first place.

But like, you know, I mean, he's you know, I know for a fact that grocery prices are increasing.

A lot of that's because of terrorists.

A lot of that is also we're going to see more and more of that because of this crackdown on illegal immigration, because like it or not, our food system relies on illegal immigrants

to harvest our food.

Should we pay them?

Should we give them a clear path to citizenship?

Yeah, absolutely.

Should our system rely on that?

No, but it does.

And that's how it is.

And unless we actually try to fix it and fix the underlying issues there, we're not going to see any changes.

But you know, I mean, even in places like Powell County, you know, they are dealing with things like nickel taxes, right?

And they are literally feeling nickels and dimes because they don't even have a place for you know, they don't have like working sports fields, but they are being asked to do nickel taxes because they don't have enough money for their school systems.

And so they feel like they are constantly being asked to pay more and more and more, but get less and less and less.

Here in Fayette County, I'm a graduate of Fayette County Public Schools and Rob's kids are in Fayette County Public Schools.

We have a deficit of over \$26 million.

Woodford County is experiencing similar deficits.

And that's because of overruns.

And do you want to know how they're proposing to fix this?

And I know this is not on a federal level, but this also has to do with the fact that we know for a fact that the Department of Education, who is currently being run by the former CEO of WWE of a professional wrestling organization, they're not going to come in and help and they're not going to fix this underlying system either.

But the thing is, is that their solution to fixing these deficits is increasing classroom size, putting a freeze on hiring teachers, and then making cuts to different programs like special programs.

I'm sorry.

So we are now going to continue to pay more and continue to get less.

So how does this make sense?

At some point, like something's got to change.

We can't keep paying more.

People are feeling squeezed.

The housing market is out of control.

People cannot find affordable housing.

Market equity is buying up way too much housing, shoving people out, putting too much into the rental market.

And when I say rental, I mostly mean short term rental via Airbnb, Verbo, et cetera.

So there are so many systemic issues that have to be challenged and changed for us to be able to get on a better path to fixing these issues and making them sustainable.

But currently this administration has no desire to do any of that.

I think paying more and getting less, I think is a pretty good summary of what's more American

than that, I guess.

I don't know.

I'm told that AI is going to resolve most of these problems.

So I don't have a lot of concern.

So we're approaching...

Go ahead.

You said...

I was going to say something about AI.

I want to talk about something about AI.

So the concept is...

Tell us all your thoughts on AI.

Yeah.

So here's the thing about AI, right?

You know, I worked at Amazon Web Services and I've talked to a lot of people who are experts in this.

And companies are investing a lot more and I don't think AI is going to go anywhere.

But I do think that we are kind of seeing...

We're going to see this wave of AI and Gen AI utilization sort of crest and then it's going to normalize, right?

I mean, people are so...

It's the new hotness right now.

They're like, "Oh my gosh, this is great."

I mean, AI is more useful than an NFT, but it's kind of like that.

It's like people are like, "Whoa, this, whoa, that, whoa, this, whoa, that."

AI is great in certain applications.

It cannot fix everything.

I saw this stupid ad yesterday on Instagram for motion, which is supposed to be an AI assistant, which I think is great concept, right?

Like shove a bunch of stuff in there and it makes your calendar.

But this had this guy being like saying that, "Oh, I have eight fake AI employees and I just got a raise."

And it's like, "Well, first off, you're putting confidential company information into open source software and that is really terrible and you're going to get your butt sued off."

But two, it's like, "Well, then if that's the fact, then your job doesn't need to exist."

So that's not the flex that you think it is.

But there are great applications for AI, right?

Like to summarize things and like expense reports, right?

I can dump a bunch of receipts and be like, "Please make a spreadsheet because I don't need to spend all that time."

But we are going to see that come.

We are going to see that start to normalize and that comes also from a lot of AI experts too.

My favorite AI is the Salesforce one where Matthew McConaughey is like, "Without AI, there's no option but me like to eat outside dinner in the rain."

It's like, "Oh, you invented the Mater D then."

Yeah, the overselling and definitely we're getting this in academia.

I don't know how much this is true, but both people promising AI on the other hand and instructors like us having to figure out how to mitigate the...

It's a tool.

It can be used well.

It can be used poorly.

It can be overused.

It can be underused.

You just got to figure it out.

Exactly.

Well, and it's also consequential to a lot of the other stuff you said, like just in terms of talking about both sort of rural Kentucky, but also an energy use, right?

Because it feels like computers have no environmental impact, but it turns out they need juice, right?

And so in lots of places in Kentucky and other places.

Yeah.

And the talk for hours about the...

That was literally my job was to improve sustainability of data centers for the world's largest hyperscaler

for a year and a half.

So I can talk to you about that for a long time.

Well, so we are approaching about 15 minutes in now for this.

And so Scott, do you have any more subject questions?

Because my next question is going to be like, "Aaron, run us through a day in the life of a candidate."

But Scott, do you have any like issue-based questions you wanted to ask before we get to that?

Yeah, I was thinking about it was about time to move on to that too.

But let me ask you, I guess, Aaron, is there any issue that we haven't talked about yet that you think is sort of particularly resonant or something that you think is particularly important to people in Kentucky's six that you're really hearing about and would like to campaign on if the voters have the wisdom to make you the candidate for the general?

Well, I think that's two different questions.

I think that the first one that I have now heard people concerned about in three different counties in three different, actually four different counties in three different days is people ask me, they say, "Aaron, do you think that we're even going to have an election?"

They are worried that things are going to get so bad.

And they've brought up the issue of the fact that one of Trump's buddies has bought dominion voting, which should be illegal.

I'm also a very big fan of online voting, moving to online.

People are like, "That scares me."

And I was like, "Where's your money?"

Where's your healthcare records?

Where do you pay your taxes?

Where do you manage your car insurance?"

I mean, listen, I'm sorry, but if the NSA and the CIA and the FBI all use things online,

I'm sorry, we can vote online.

It's not that hard.

Also, I think that we need to really work on voter suppression laws, ID laws.

We need to expand voting, early voting, mail-in voting, absentee voting.

And then having voting on a stupid Tuesday in November is so silly.

It's ridiculous, especially for shift workers.

It hurts disabled people, rural folks, the elderly, people who work shift jobs or multiple jobs.

It's terrible.

And then, so people are actually worried about that.

And I told them straight up.

I said, "Listen, we're either going to have an election or a revolution.

There is no other option."

And I'm not being a...

This isn't being dramatic.

That's what's going to happen.

There's no other choice.

There's no other choice.

But as far as the general, again, I'm going to go back to what I was talking about as to why I'm running.

We need a candidate who can beat somebody who is MAGA.

We need somebody who can fire up a frigging room.

We need someone who is not afraid to make a statement, who isn't just going to tow party lines and isn't just going to sound like every other damn Democrat who's run through the state before.

We need somebody who's going to be a real voice for people and someone who is actually going to stand up to MAGA.

So I mean, and I...

Rob has known me for a long time.

I don't take shit from anybody.

And I give me a microphone.

This is like a safe space, kind of, right?

In the sense that like, I'm talking to fellow progressives essentially here.

And if you're not a progressive listening to this, you know, call me, we can hash it out.

But give me a microphone and put me on stage.

I can mold and change to that crowd, but I will fire up a crowd.

And I do not speak lightly about any issues.

Well, then, I guess then getting back to my final question, right?

We've all seen Scott alluded or in the beginning conversation, Scott alluded to the scenes from The Wire where Tommy Carcetti is running.

We've all seen probably the candidate with Robert Redford.

Take us through, you know, efficiently, take us through a day in the life of a United States House of Representatives candidate.

You know, if anyone thinks that politics and running for elected office is sexy, you have been watching too much fiction.

It is not fun.

You know, if anything, Veep is more like it, except that's way sexier.

You know, it's more of the, you know, Richard Splitt, you know, dealing with like, you know, the dog mayor and like, you know, trying to shuttle the candidate from ice cream shop to this weird fish fry to this other thing.

You know, I'm doing a lot of getting out there and talking to people.

But really what happens is I get up in the morning and I check my email, I check my socials.

I see how many MAGA people have posted on my TikTok nasty things and I laugh about that.

And then most of the time I have to do what's called call time, which is my own personal nightmare, which is calling people both from my network and cold calling people and shaking them down for cash, which is also why I believe in significant campaign finance reform and election reform, I think that we need to shorten election cycles.

I think that we need caps on campaign spending.

You know, if we have those two things, we don't need term limits.

We do need term limits for appointed offices, though, like the Supreme Court.

But I do a lot of call time.

I ask people for money.

I create social posts.

I go through and try to figure out what counties are doing, events.

And then I will usually go to two or three events.

Usually every day, sometimes I'll have coffee with people.

Sometimes I'll have drinks with people.

But a lot of it is me in my car by myself going to the print shop, picking up my assets, going to the Powell County parking lot parade and then going to, you know, a restaurant to meet with people.

And then the next day I go to the Democratic Party in Estill County.

And then the next day I go to the Democratic Party in Fleming County in the bowling alley.

And then I go to Woodford County to a distillery for a Democratic fundraiser.

So it's a lot of going out there and talking to people.

And I'm going to be honest with you.

It's exhausting, but I love talking to these people because showing up is the absolute best thing that you can do as a candidate.

And people appreciate it.

People appreciate you getting there in person and talking to them.

And one thing I always make a point to do and other candidates do not do this, I go to these meetings, I give my speech, I take questions and I sit down and I listen to the rest of the meeting and I stay afterwards and take all of those questions until they're done.

Other people come in, drop in and peace out.

I think that's something that voters will like to know about you that you seem to like

really like to sort of, you know, the retail campaigning, just to meet people.

And I think it's really interesting in a district that is, you know, various that has sort of rural and urban and you meet so many different people, that seems to be something that you really relish and enjoy, which I think would speak well for you as a, you know, so you seem like somebody who really wants to be a representative, I think as you said earlier, not just somebody with sort of policies that you want to pursue, but somebody who will really be there to sort of help the constituents that you represent.

You clearly have sort of a lot of roots and a lot of passion for Kentucky and it really seems to be coming out in your decision to run and the way you're running.

Yeah.

And, you know, I mean, listen, I could be making 200 grand at Amazon and I left, you know, over a hundred thousand dollars of stock on the table to do this.

I'm not doing this because I'm like, oh, I'm going to think this is going to make me rich.

No, I'm doing this because I'm pissed off.

I'm doing this because I'm pissed off.

And I do not think that the Democratic Party has the right people in place to win this election.

And I think that we need to reinvigorate the Democratic Party to be one that people are excited about, one people can trust in, that they will do the right thing for people and that they can actually win elections again.

So all I'm going to say is that for our listeners, don't make Aaron have to call you, right?

You know, go ahead, go ahead and send that money now because she's going to call you.

It's going to be a lot of yelling and like it's just just take care of it right now without and avoid that unpleasantness.

It's not yelling.

It's just, um, and passionate.

It's impassioned.

Yeah.

Smash that donate button.

Yes.

And once you have donated, yes, once you've donated to Aaron's campaign and, um, and, uh, tell the friend, I can also confirm I have the, uh, Hunter S. Thompson fear and loathing

Dr. Gonzo, a weeded whiskey.

Uh, excellent.

Beautifully.

Thank you.

It's nice straight up.

Nice on the raw.

Nice.

Uh, makes an excellent Manhattan.

Excellent old fashioned.

So, uh, strongly recommended and they do mail order.

I was able to, uh, order it.

So I did not, I don't know if we have it in stores here yet, but I was able to, I believe

it's from Colorado.

Is that, uh, we're in retail in Kentucky and in Colorado.

So it's a, it's really limited on prem right now.

Um, I will say the one thing about the weeded, it's 103 proof.

So it does pack a punch.

Um, but if you're a rye person, the rye is delightful.

It's a pumpnickel rye grain and it is, um, God, I hate saying this, but I think I like it a little bit better than the bourbon.

Okay.

Well, I will have to, I will have to try that next.

They're both great.

They're both great.

And I love them both.

I just sometimes like, I find myself reaching for the green rice on times being like, Oh, yeah, this is it.

Yes.

You do have to be careful with the, but the thing is you would never know that proof because it's so sweet.

You know, it's, it's, it's not drink like a hundred, a hundred and three proofs.

So, uh, but anyway, so there are many ways to support Aaron, but, uh, yeah, thank you so much for coming on.

This is really, uh, uh, I'm, I'm really interested to, to, to follow your campaign.

And, uh, um, you know, I think it's, it's really great that, that people are, are still getting out there and deciding to run and not giving up on, on, um, you know, constituencies which I think really could be in play.

Um, you know, given, uh, you know, what's happening and, and, and how unpopular a ballsy the current administration is that, uh, I don't think we can afford to, uh, to write off any area.

And, and, and so I'm pleased that, uh, uh, that you're willing to sort of give up what you gave up to, to put in a good fight.

There's nothing I'd rather be dealing with my life right now.

All right, Aaron.

Well, thank you so much for joining us, Scott.

Thank you for joining us as well.

Uh, all of our lawyers, guns and miss lawyers, guns and money listeners.

Thank you as well.

And we will be back soon with another podcast.

Thank you again for listening to the lawyers, guns and money podcast.

We would like to thank Elizabeth Nelson of the paranoid style for supplying as our intro and outro music.

I'd bet my lands and titles, a track on the album for executive meeting.

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Thank you.

[inaudible]