

Gov. Christine Todd Whitman Interview (December 3, 2014)

Nancy Becker: Today is December 3rd, 2014. I am Nancy Becker with former New Jersey governor, Christine Todd Whitman for the third in a series of interviews for The Center on the American Governor at the Eagleton Institute of Politics. Christie Whitman is New Jersey's 50th governor and its first woman chief executive. She served from 1994 to 2001 when she resigned to take a position in the administration of George W. Bush.

During our second interview we ended as we were discussing your tremendous national popularity when you were rumored to be a vice presidential candidate. You told us it was important to ignore the gossip and just do the job you had without thinking about the next one. We've talked a great deal about your numerous policy initiatives. I'd like to now turn to the 1997 reelection campaign. With your very strong popularity you were expected to cruise to an easy victory, but your opponent, Jim McGreevey proved to be a formidable opponent. Please describe that campaign and what made him such a strong opponent.

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, there were a couple things. I mean, first of all, he had the issue of auto insurance, a problem we had not solved to the degree that I wanted to, and he played on that. But the other thing that was a part of that is a third candidate came into the race, so it was a three-way race. That occurred because of President Clinton's (at the time) veto of a partial birth abortion bill that he then sent to the states. The legislature decided that they wanted to take up that bill. I pleaded with them not to do it in an election year, 'cause I don't think that's the best time to make major policy, but they felt a lot of pressure from their constituents to do it. So they started to draft a bill that, as I looked at it, I told them I simply couldn't sign. It had nothing to do with my being pro-choice, although I am. It was that it was unconstitutional. The New Jersey Constitution requires that we protect the life and health of the mother, and that was not part of their bill, because that's not what the purists wanted on this. So they sent it to me that way. I conditionally vetoed it. I rewrote it in a way that actually would have put the first restrictions on third trimester abortion in New Jersey. We don't have any today, and that would have done it for the first time. I sent it back to them, and it was the only time I was overridden with a conditional veto. That brought in a third-party candidate who was a "Libertarian" but really an anti-choice person. I was being followed around by a person with a sign with a picture of dismembered babies saying how many I'd murdered since I vetoed the bill. But I conditionally vetoed it, which I guess they didn't want to understand. In any event, the long

story short, that made it much more difficult. If I had gotten even half of the votes that he took, I would have cruised for a Republican—not as much as Tom Kean or even Chris Christie recently—but I still would have had a very comfortable margin of victory at that point. If I had just gotten half, and I think I would have gotten more than half of those votes. So between the auto insurance issue and that, it gave Jim McGreevey some good ground to run on.

Nancy Becker: Murray Sabrin was the third-party candidate. How was he funded?

Governor Christine Whitman: I have no idea. I presume mostly out of state. It's my understanding he got a lot of outside conservative groups to contribute to him.

Nancy Becker: And what else made Jim McGreevey a formidable opponent from your perspective?

Governor Christine Whitman: I mean, he's articulate and he's a nice enough guy. He knows his issues. He cares about the state. All that came through.

Nancy Becker: One of the things that was happening when you talk about your veto of the partial birth abortion bill. It was a time where the Republican Party was beginning to shift perceptively. How did the changing philosophy of the Republican Party at that time affect your campaign?

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, I was clearly back in the old camp. I was the Eisenhower type of Republican. People like to say Rockefeller, that's fine, too. Not on everything, 'cause I'm a lot more conservative in spending and fiscal matters than Nelson Rockefeller. More like an Eisenhower, I like to think, but in my approach to issues, not on the same scale as a Dwight David Eisenhower. But they were moving more to the right. They were adopting things like signing pledges. For instance-- that's the other thing that I think cost me. Murray Sabrin happily signed a "no new taxes" pledge. By the time I ran for reelection, I think we had cut taxes over 40 times. But I said I'm absolutely not going to give up a tool I might need in order to make the tax system more equitable just because some people want that. That would be irresponsible of me as governor to do that kind of thing. I might need that tool, and so I refused to sign the pledge, and that meant that I never got the support of those groups that were pushing pledges, and they in fact supported Murray Sabrin. So that's where some of his money came from, too, the

Club for Growth and groups like that. To my mind, it's really comfortable to sign a pledge, 'cause then you never really have to think. You know exactly what you're going to do in any situation, 'cause you said you'll never do something or you'll always do something one way, and that's not what the role of a leader and decision making is.

Nancy Becker: So going into your second term, would you talk a little bit about the staff changes that occurred within your office and maybe even in your cabinet as you went through that second term after the 1997 election.

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, people wear out and people want to move to different things. There wasn't a lot of change, as I remember. I mean, there was some significant change within the governor's office, particularly. But a lot of people stayed with the administration, just moved into different positions, and that I thought, was great. We had a very strong team. They all seemed to get along well together, and continued in their different roles. But it was more a question of moving roles rather than actually leaving the administration and leaving government.

Nancy Becker: How would you characterize your style of management and governing?

Governor Christine Whitman: I'm pretty much the 30,000 foot type. I like to set the major policy, identify the issues that I think are of importance, outline how I would like to get there, and then get the best people that I can and give them their head. Let them come back at me and say, "No, this is a crazy idea," or "Yes, it's a good idea and this is the best way to accomplish it," and at the end of the day I make the final decision and they either get along with it or they don't. But if they don't then they go somewhere else, and otherwise they implement. As I've always said, having grown up riding horses here in New Jersey, I'd rather have a horse that I have to reign in than one I have to kick all the time, and so I've also found you don't get good people if you micromanage them. For the role of governor, you have so many different responsibilities in so many different areas. You can't possibly know everything about everything, and what you want is really good people who will do their homework and know their job. They'll rely on the really good people who are career within their departments and agencies, figure out the ones that really do work hard, and respect them.

Nancy Becker: What is interesting in reflection about New Jersey governors, is your style is much more like that of Tom Kean than other governors who clearly

have micromanaged, and possibly not had teams as coherent and working together as your team certainly did during your years in office.

Governor Christine Whitman: We were cohesive. It was a cohesive group. I mean, it still is. In my business now, I have three partners who all were with me. We started out with four who were all with me when I was governor and down at EPA. We've stayed friends, stay in touch. It's a nice relationship that people have and I think that occurred because I respected them all. That's why they were in their positions, because they could do a good job, and they liked that. They liked the ability to be creative and to come up with their own way of dealing with issues and to come up with new things that certainly I hadn't thought of, which was great.

Nancy Becker: So let's turn again to issues. We spent a great deal of time talking about issues in our last interview with you. But your policy objectives were significant and far reaching in economics, education, human services, the environment, and many, many other areas that I haven't named. You claim that your signature achievement was "Promises made. Promises kept." Please tell us from your perspective, what you consider your most significant accomplishment in the policy area.

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, it's hard to pick one. There are so many that I think were important and have been important to the state. The promises made, promises kept was cutting the taxes, and it wasn't just cutting taxes to cut taxes. It was because it was going to stimulate the economy and it did. I mean, I have to say that probably from the perspective of what was the most important thing we did was to create an atmosphere where we'd lost 350,000 jobs in the previous three years to my becoming governor. By the time I left, businesses had created 450,000 jobs. So we were seeing people being put back to work, and we had shrunk the size of government. The government hadn't grown the way it had in the past, the size of state government. But we were more efficient and effective and the private sector was providing the jobs that really had the long-term impact, and that was good. Our economy was good. When we left, we had a surplus of over a billion dollars. We had done away with all the one shots. The pension funds were 108 and 112 percent funded. None of these had one shots. We'd eliminated all those. So we were in good shape fiscally which meant that municipalities were able to do better, because we did give them a holiday from paying into the pension funds, because the funds were over funded at that point. They used that money to keep their taxes low, their property taxes, which is what affects so many people. It's hard for people to understand that the state doesn't levy the property tax and doesn't collect it or spend it. That's the local responsibility, but, you know, it's easy

to blame the state. So to the extent the state can pick up things that the locals would otherwise have to do, it helps everybody.

Nancy Becker: And if you would just talk about other issues and other policy areas, because you certainly had a tremendous impact on things like the environment, land use, education--

Governor Christine Whitman: Oh, yeah, I mean that's why I say it's hard to pick out any one. Certainly, a lot of people talk about the million acres preservation, but I like to look at the fact that the Natural Resources Defense Fund said we had the best beach-monitoring program in the country. We instituted a new beach-monitoring program, because the shore is such an important part of our economy for tourism, and the waters were not clean when I took over. We put in pump out stations for small boats. Sounds like a little thing. We didn't have any when I became governor. I think we had one, and we had about seven when we left. That means that instead of dumping all their stuff overboard from all their heads, all their toilets, they went into a place that cleaned it. Actually, we brought shellfish beds back, numerous shellfish beds, and that was an important part of our economy for people living on the shore near the clams and the oysters and things. So that was all important.

Preserving open space, farmland preservation. Putting together a coherent plan, which is what that billion acre proposal did, the billion dollar bond issue, it wasn't just open space for open space. It was parks that were contiguous, expanding parks in urban centers. Farmland that was contiguous so that farmers didn't have to run into problems with new developments next to them when they took their tractor on the road. They didn't have to drive a long way to get to the next field and therefore tick off everybody that gets stuck behind them during the hay season or the harvest season. Things like that were very important, but I also look on setting.

We had curriculum standards for the first time in six major areas that we hadn't had before from an education point of view. We started the V-Free campaign which was violence, victimization and vandalism free that was taking off in many high schools. That was run by our secretary of state. Unfortunately, that went away, but it was done by kids for kids, and they pointed out what they needed, whether it was an after school program or whatever, and they helped devise and set them up and run them, and so that gave them ownership and it really was making a difference.

But then you look at something like the juvenile court system that we put in place, which I think is enormously important. I'm glad to see it's been built on since then to try to take juveniles out of the real criminal justice system for minor crimes, drug related crimes particularly. If they're caught with a joint or something, they shouldn't be put into the adult system, and we need to deal with them differently.

So deinstitutionalization, too, was a big thing that we did. Difficult, hard, but what made me feel good is the parents who had been the most concerned about what we were trying to do-- because we had big facilities at that point where we were just warehousing young people and young adults-- and we felt they could do better in a community setting. All the professionals were telling me that, and so we went ahead and did it. A lot of parents were really skeptical. They were afraid. They thought their children who had-- or their young adults who had developed a pattern and a habit would be so disconcerted by a move that they'd never be able to cope. I had parents coming up to me a year or so afterwards saying, my son or daughter is doing things I never thought they could do. Their independence is terrific, and that's really important.

Welfare reform, another big part of what we did. I was one of the team of governors, there were about four of us, who went down to Washington three times before we could get a bill that we could get the president to sign. Then we took maximum advantage of it to put requirements in that people had a certain period of time where they would get the help they needed. But then they had to either be looking for a job, taking training or in a job. But we also recognized that, particularly for single moms, and a lot of the population were single moms. That was it. They were moms, they had kids and they were going to get care. You can't just say, "Go out and get a job, and oh, by the way, it's tough if your child becomes a latchkey child." So we provided help for them to get daycare or get after school care. We also did a lot to get them healthcare, because that was something they cared about, and it was a backdoor way of getting them in to get preventive care. If they took their children to the dentist, they might actually see the dentist as well. So we gave them help with that which improves the health of everybody. Better for learning for the kids, and better for society as a whole.

Nancy Becker: So I'm going to go to a slightly different question, which is a legacy question, and it's somewhat different for me when I think about it than accomplishment. In the interviews we've conducted with your cabinet members and staff, we've asked them to reflect on your legacy. We'd like to know now what you consider your greatest legacy as governor.

Governor Christine Whitman: Hard to know. I mean, other people are going to define it. I know what was important to me, and frankly it was all those things we've talked about. Making a difference, a positive difference for the people of the State of New Jersey. I used to tell the cabinet that I'd give them 25 cents every time they worked in making New Jersey in which to live, work, and raise a family. They remembered that line. That was what our goal was, and they'd get 25 cents for saying that. But that's really what it was about, and so that encompasses a lot of things. There's no one thing that makes this state more attractive. We had the whole initiative on Many Faces, One Family to celebrate our cultural differences. We are a state of immigrants, and it's got 150 different languages spoken in Jersey City alone, and that's great. That's our strength. That's what makes us interesting and good, and we need to celebrate that, and we had Girl Scout troops that developed patches for that sort of thing. So it's hard to say. I mean, hopefully the legacy is one that people understand you can do good and do good policy and still have a good time, and we didn't have any corruption. We didn't have anybody being investigated or anybody go to jail or anything like that. So hopefully, people will understand that you do have good people in public office all through. I mean, the entire cabinet and everybody who worked there in state government. You have really good people who want to do what's right, and they're not just in it to skim the system or game the system. There can be good policy done well and done honestly to better the lives of others.

Nancy Becker: So some of your staff, just to add to what you've said. Some of your staff and cabinet members have cited your ethics, your style of management that empowered them to do the best job they could, and the fact that you were the first woman governor, and so clearly you were a role model, and a role model for girls and women who had never seen a governor certainly in New Jersey that was a woman. So those were three of the things that they named in terms of working with you during your seven years in office.

Governor Christine Whitman: But what I think of as a legacy is something that's going to last, and I'm not sure those things have necessarily lasted. They were endemic of how I approached government, and the people with me, and the standards that we set and the respect we had for one another, and it doesn't always last. I mean, if you talk about legacy it probably is the million acres, the bringing jobs back, that sort of thing.

Nancy Becker: But it was very, very clear that those were the kinds of things that they talked about that were beyond and different from the policy issues which certainly were significantly important. But that was a theme that came through.

Governor Christine Whitman: I think I was accused at times of being a little too harsh as far as the ethics go. There were a couple of times where people didn't do anything illegal, but they were standing too close to the edge for me to be comfortable, and I asked them to step aside, that they made some poor decisions. The most important thing for me was that people have to have trust in their government. They have to believe that they really are focused on them and that you're honest, that they can trust them.

Nancy Becker: If you had the opportunity to redo anything, what would you have done differently?

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, probably the major thing is the pension bond issue. I would have presented it in a different way. I wouldn't have done it differently, 'cause we had a certain timeframe where the market was doing really well. What we wanted to do was, as we described it, but too late, as to redoing a mortgage, taking advantage of lower rates, and that's what we did. We took the bonds, the outstanding bonds we had, and we went back into the market and were able to get a much lower rate. I think we saved, over the life of the bond, the taxpayers some 61 billion dollars long term. But we didn't present it well. By doing that, it also helped improve the pension, the amount of money we had in the pension. So we were able to give municipalities a holiday. And we said very clearly to them, look, we're telling you, you don't have to pay in now, because you shouldn't have to. Today's taxpayers shouldn't have to overpay a system that wasn't going to need it and wasn't going to benefit them particularly. But it was--only a holiday. It was going to end, and we were very careful about how we anticipated how much money we would be getting from our investments. We were very conservative on that, and unfortunately, some of those that came after changed the assumptions that we'd made and locked in much higher ones. Also they put added obligations onto the pension system. They increased the pension obligations by about 10 percent without allowing for that in the funding. But we just didn't do a very good job at all. We sprang it. It was too fast. It looked like we needed it to balance the budget. We really didn't. It helped, of course, but we didn't need it. We were prepared to balance the budget without that. It was more a question of taking advantage of very high market rates in order to renegotiate those obligations, those pension obligations.

Nancy Becker: Is there anything else that you would have redone?

Governor Christine Whitman: Oh, I guess I probably would have spent more time with the legislature, but I'm not sure that would have made a difference. It

still wasn't going to make me one of the boys. I didn't come up through the legislature the way so many governors have. I wasn't in the legislature before, and of course, in my previous run for the senate I hadn't gotten a whole lot of support from many of the Republican establishment, as it were. So I didn't owe them anything, and they knew that, and so I think it made them a little bit concerned. We did make outreach. We invited people for donuts and coffee in the morning to see who wanted to discuss issues and a couple of them came, but not many. One thing I feel really badly about that I would redo, when we renamed the Byrne Arena, I did not call Brendan Byrne, and that was really inexcusable of me not to have called him ahead of time. I know he would have understood if I had said to him, for fiscal reasons, it doesn't make sense. I'm sorry, but it doesn't, and I'm sure he would have been gracious about it, 'cause he is, but-- I wasn't gracious. That was a real failing on my part. I did not do that well.

Nancy Becker: Have you talked to him since about it?

Governor Christine Whitman: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. No, we're fine now. I mean, I won't say we're buddies, but we get along very well.

Nancy Becker: With a year left in your term you decided to leave New Jersey and accept a position as EPA administrator in the administration of George W. Bush. Why did you choose to leave, and did you ever regret your decision.

Governor Christine Whitman: Oh, yeah. We all make mistakes in life, and I certainly regretted that. No, that's not fair to say. It was an extraordinary honor to serve at the federal level. I was there at unbelievable times, 9/11 and the Columbia and anthrax and all those things in an agency that makes a big difference. I had not wanted to go to that agency. When I was asked by the Vice President elect, at that point, to consider joining the administration and EPA, I said I think I'd do much better for you in Commerce or at the United Nations. But because I'm prochoice, I wouldn't have gotten the United Nations, because they make decisions on birth control, but go figure, Commerce had already been promised, so I agonized over it. I really wasn't that excited about going to the Agency. I didn't want to be focused in on only one issue on the environment, but it's pretty hard to turn down a president-elect who asks you to serve on the national stage. That is an honor, a high honor. The only thing is that when you're in your last year in New Jersey, because the governor is so powerful in New Jersey, you have about three months. And even then, it's marginal whether you can do anything really new. You're just locking in your legacy, which is important and fine. I wish I had actually stayed around to do more of that, because a lot of it got undone, unfortunately in an

interim year, in that gap year that people often forget. But it was one of those things that I like being able to do new stuff and bring on new programs. You knew everybody was focused on the next election. You were kind of holding place and locking things in. When you have the opportunity to serve at the federal level like that, it's pretty tough to say no, even though I did push back a bit. I'd say it was a mistake simply because I would have liked to have locked in my legacy. I would have liked to have been here in the state to have helped New Jersey get through 9/11. It was important to do what I did at the federal level. In spite of all the grief that's gone on, the second-guessing about what we said at the time on air quality, although it was all based on scientific analysis, so I stick by it. But a lot of those people were personal friends. A lot of the Port Authority police, particularly the head who died was someone that I had helped his career along. I also had very good friends, obviously, who were killed in that as well. But I would like to have been here for the state. But then, I was doing something at the federal level that was very important as well. Then we had the anthrax attack that happened right after it, and EPA was responsible for all the clean-up and setting the standard for what was safe on anthrax, because the Center for Disease Control didn't have a standard. We asked them what it was, figuring they were the right ones to set it, and they said, "We don't know. You set it." So we said, "Okay, zip. Zero," and we had to do all that clean up in a scope that had never been done before, particularly in the Hart office building, Senate office building, 'cause that was very, very complicated.

And then the Columbia, when that went down we were called in to help NASA with the cleanup and I sent our special response teams. Then I tried to get them back, and NASA didn't want to give them up, because they were so helpful. So those were pretty extraordinary times. The people at the Environmental Protection Agency I found to be pretty extraordinary people on the whole. I mean, you always have your outliers. You have your difficult people. You have your people who have a political agenda behind it. But for the most part, they wanted to do what's right and were able to make some good changes.

It was just very difficult, because you had Republicans on the Hill who hated to talk about the environment, hated any kind of regulation and just weren't interested and made life unpleasant. The Democrats, when they came in and controlled the Senate, were extraordinarily partisan. They had the House, and they were very partisan and tough to deal with, and Nancy Pelosi is not fun to testify before. Well, neither was Jim Inhofe, at that point. So I expected the 180 infighting. The Democrats and sort of the environmentalists. I wasn't expecting the 360 at the White House, too. While the president and I got on fine, the vice president's agenda wasn't exactly in the same place.

Nancy Becker: So when you left EPA before the end of the Bush administration, why did you choose to leave then?

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, first of all I had never taken more than a month-to-month lease on my apartment in Washington even though I was there for two-and-a-half years. I was never sure how long I'd last, and John and I really did hate the bifurcated marriage type thing. I hated getting back on that train on Sunday nights. But the timing was such that we were coming up to the year before the reelection and it was kind of one of those times where you either get out then or you stay through the reelect. I knew I wasn't going to be able to make another two years. There was a regulation coming down on the Clean Air Act, part of the Clean Air Act, where the administration was just going in a direction with which I wasn't comfortable. I had been working on it and working on it and had several long conversations with the Vice President about it, trying to convince him of a better way of doing things. It didn't work and they were the ones who were elected. They had a right to set the standard wherever they wanted it. But I figured they also had the right to have an administrator who could sign the regulation in good conscience and enforce it, and I couldn't and wouldn't do that. So I left.

Nancy Becker: So you have continued to play a role in the Republican Party since your term as governor. Please tell us about that.

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, I'm not sure how much of a role I've played. I try. I wrote a book, *It's My Party, Too*, wrote it after we got out, and it did make the *New York Times* best seller list in the top 10 for one week, but it made it there, and we got a leather bound copy of the book. That was it. No more royalties. No royalties, but a leather bound copy of the book, and I set up the-- Well, I took over and reconstituted the Republican Leadership Council as something to support those candidates who didn't feel it was against the rules of governance to actually work with people from the other side, and to be willing to listen to other people's opinions and to try to work their way through to find solutions to issues rather than just looking at everything through the partisan prism. I ended up being pretty much-- I had a good board, but they were doing so many things, and I was the one who did all the fundraising for it, and I hate fundraising, and I had enough. After a couple of years, people didn't want to hear from me because they were pretty sure what it was going to be about. But I stay involved in policy now and not so much direct work on campaigns and things, although I have helped certain campaigns here in the state and other places. But for the most part, it's policy that I care about anyway the most.

Nancy Becker: Do you anticipate playing a role in 2016 presidential election?

Governor Christine Whitman: It would depend on who the nominee is. I mean, I am a poster child for who the far right loves to hate. Even when I was governor, when George Bush and I were co-chairing the convention, whenever that was, when Bob Dole was going to be the nominee, I had a huge fight with people over at one of those three minute throw away speeches that they do to fill in when anyone else has anything to do, and I wanted to have a line saying, "Even though we may not agree on all issues, we all agree that Bob Dole should be the next president." They kept taking it out and saying I couldn't say it, even though we might not agree on all issues, so I took it out on the teleprompter and put it in when I spoke. But when I got up to speak, the entire Mississippi delegation got up and turned their back. Already back then I was considered to be way out of step. But it's one of those things that I am where I am, I believe and I respect other people's right to believe otherwise, but I think there are plenty of places where we can find common ground and we might actually move something forward in a productive way if we try.

Nancy Becker: So will you share your views with us on Republican politics today?

Governor Christine Whitman: I'm worried. I'm worried about the future of the party. I think the country needs a viable two parties. I am not one who believes third parties necessarily make things better. I've spent too much time. I've lived overseas and I've watched and been involved with international organizations and watched other forms of government. Ours is messy, but I still think it's the best. A multi-party system I don't think would work here, because of the diversity in the country, and at the state levels and the local level in the federal government. I just don't see having a parliamentary type approach to government being the right one for us. So I really want to see our party strong. But if the Republican Party continues to be a party that just puts up roadblocks to things and just says, "If you're a Democrat, I hate you," we're not going to get anywhere. Now, that's not to say the Democrats don't do the same thing, and they're starting to do that more and more. Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi are certainly among the most partisan people that I can think of, and they're not doing much to improve the atmosphere. But if we don't start to stand up as citizens and demand a change, we're going to end up with a very dysfunctional government, and if you read any of the books about our forefathers and the founding of the country, you'll know that compromise is not a dirty word. It's finding consensus, because those gentlemen did not agree with one another. There's a wonderful book out now called, *The Return of George Washington* taking him from the time he resigned as commander in chief to when he became president, and while he was chairing the Constitutional Convention and

to do away with the Articles of the Confederation which clearly weren't working, and they were people with very strong opinions and Thomas Jefferson did not agree with Washington. There were a lot of differences of opinion, but they were able to work their way through, because they understood they had to do that for the good of the whole.

Nancy Becker: Tell us what you've done since leaving the governor's office.

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, I wrote the book. I started a business. We do energy and environmental consulting, and as I mentioned before-- I didn't mention it was all women. It is all women, not because we set out to do that, but that's what it is. But they're all people with whom I've worked now for numbers of years, both as governor and at EPA. They all came to EPA with me, went down to EPA with me. I like it, because we are in that nice position of being able to say no to clients who we don't think are doing the right thing. We work with-- We don't lobby on the Hill. We will introduce people to the executive branch in government, because if they have a problem there, tell them where they need to go. Or, if they have a new product that we think is viable and scalable, we will help introduce them to the right people. We were very involved with building a city in South Korea that was the first LEED neighborhood development green city. I'm not sure it ever got the official title, but that's what we were working toward, and all the buildings where we got them to make all the buildings LEED certified, and one's platinum, gold, and a couple of silvers and the rest are LEED. It was great fun to watch that go from just a hole in the ground to actual buildings and a city, an entire city in South Korea. We've been able to do a lot of fun things like that. Then I stay involved with a lot of other things. I run a couple of publicly traded boards, a private company board and then a lot of nonprofits that keep me involved in policy issues. Right now I chair the board of the American Security Project and chair the Executive Committee of the Eisenhower Fellowship program and am on the board of the Council of Foreign Relations and a number of others-- The Institute of Politics at the Kennedy School up at Harvard. Things working with young people, things working with people who are interested in government and obviously do a lot of work on the environment. Clean Safe Energy Coalition on Nuclear Energy. So there are a lot of different things.

Nancy Becker: So you clearly are very busy and not ready to retire.

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, no. But I do like the fact that now I can spend some time with my six grandsons.

Nancy Becker: Which is great.

Governor Christine Whitman: Not enough, but I can spend time with them.

Nancy Becker: Is there anything that we've left out about your administration that you'd like to add or anything we've left out that you would like to be on the record talking about?

Governor Christine Whitman: I can't really think of anything. It was just an extraordinary opportunity. I was very lucky, and I still maintain there's no better job, because of the power of the governor of New Jersey. You can really do things, things that a president can't do. I mean, you have much more control and influence than a president, and yet you have the three branches of government, but the constitution gives you power, and that I think is good for everybody involved. The public knows who to blame when things go wrong, because you're kind of it, and it's your team. It's not a series of elected officials, some of whom might be wanting to take your job and undermine you as happens so often in other states. So it's a really nice -- It's a great job to have, and it's a real honor to be able to have it.

Nancy Becker: I thank you very much, former Governor Christie Todd Whitman, and on behalf of the Center on the American Governor, thank you again.

Governor Christine Whitman: Well, thank you, and I really appreciate that Rutgers and Eagleton is doing this, because there are so many things that governors undertake, and I hope that they do get to expand it to every state in the nation. A lot to learn.