Joe Doria Interview (December 7, 2018)

Rick Sinding: Hello. I'm Rick Sinding. It's Friday, December 7th, 2018, here at the Eagleton Institute of Politics on the campus of Rutgers University. With us today for the Center on the American Governor is Joe Doria, who teaches a course here at Eagleton called Perspectives on American Government. And in fact, it's Joe's unique perspective that we're going to be calling on today, first as a member of the legislature and later as a member of the cabinet in the administration of New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine. Joe, thanks very much for joining us today.

Joe Doria: It's my pleasure as always, Rick.

Rick Sinding: So, for those very few people out there who haven't been following the Center on the American Governor really closely and didn't watch your interview on the archive of Governor Jim Florio, just for sake of redundancy, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself, where you grew up, your education, how you got into politics. Give us the short version of your rise from the Board of Education of your native Bayonne to the Speakership of the New Jersey General Assembly.

Joe Doria: Well, I grew up in Bayonne. I still live in the city Bayonne. My father was an immigrant from Italy with a third-grade education who loved to read and got me interested in history and government. And my mother was born in New York City from Italian immigrant parents and went to school in New York, and then married my father and moved to Bayonne. My education is basically Catholic School education: a Catholic elementary school, which is no longer there—like most of them—Our Lady of the Assumption in Bayonne. I went to Marist High School, which fortunately is still there, and then St. Peters University—it was "College" at that time. I went on with a fellowship to Boston College, another Jesuit school, and had a pretty checkered academic career. After that, I went for a while to NYU, almost finished a doctorate but then never wrote a dissertation. I went to Fordham Law, hated law—I've now determined that was a very smart decision on my part, to leave law school—and eventually got my Doctorate in Education from Teacher's College, Columbia University. So, I've been involved on and off with education. I've taught—at the high school level, college level, graduate level—and have been involved with government almost since I was in my 20s.

Rick Sinding: That was when you ran for the Board of Education?

Joe Doria: That's when I ran for the Board of Education. I lost the first time, in 1972. I won the second time, in 1975. I served on the board and was President of the Board of Education, got involved in a lot of controversies, got yelled at for the first time by a lot of people when I was Board of Education President balancing these schools in Bayonne. And then I got the opportunity to run for the Assembly,

and actually ran for the first time in 1979 and won and stayed in the Assembly for 24 years, through some easy elections and some difficult ones, especially primaries in Hudson County.

Rick Sinding: Well, there's never a general election problem in Hudson County, is there, for a Democrat?

Joe Doria: Well, the 1991 one was a little bit of a problem.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> Ahh. We'll get to that.

Joe Doria: I was Speaker of the General Assembly in 1990 and '91, and then I was the Democratic Leader—Minority Leader—for 10 years. I served in the top leadership position in the Democratic Party in the Assembly for 12 years. And went through many governors: Governor Byrne; Governor Kean; Governor Florio, where I was the Speaker; then Governor Whitman; and then went through, obviously, Senate President/Governor Donnie DiFrancesco; then Jim McGreevey; then Senate President/Governor Dick Codey; and then Jon Corzine, who we're going to talk about today, and then continued on. So, I was around for a lot of governors.

Rick Sinding: Now, there was a brief hiatus there, as I recall.

Joe Doria: There was, yes. It was a very short hiatus of something like three months. When I lost an Assembly election—

Rick Sinding: A primary, right?

Joe Doria: A Primary. I was mayor of Bayonne. I went on the wrong ticket and lost that, but then due to some unfortunate circumstances, the State Senate seat became open and I then was elected to the State Senate seat for three and a half years.

Rick Sinding: The unfortunate circumstances—

Joe Doria: Mayor Glenn Cunningham, who had been the Senate President, died suddenly, unfortunately.

Rick Sinding: Uh-huh. And you were appointed to that position and subsequently elected.

Joe Doria: I was appointed, then elected.

Rick Sinding: Okay. And so it's from that vantage point, where you are now a sitting Senator at the time that Jon Corzine comes into office.

Joe Doria: Right. It's about May of Jon Corzine's first term when I get appointed by the Hudson County Democratic Committee members in the 31st Legislative District, and I'm down in Trenton again, now as a freshman member of the Senate.

Rick Sinding: But well known for your years of experience in the Assembly.

Joe Doria: Definitely well known, and definitely not quiet. Pretty outspoken.

Rick Sinding: [Laughs] Well, there was plenty of opportunity to be outspoken in that first month or so of your going into the senate because right then and there, in the first several months of Corzine's administration, came the pitched battle among Democrats about the budget.

Joe Doria: Never unusual. Democrats like to fight with themselves and this was an opportunity to do that. The governor was new. He was coming not from the [New Jersey] legislature. He basically was coming from the [U.S.] Senate.

Rick Sinding: United States Senate.

Joe Doria: The United States Senate, not the New Jersey Senate. And he basically had come from Goldman Sachs as an outsider. And he was perceived by a lot of the members of the legislature as an outsider who had bought his way into the governorship.

Rick Sinding: So, the first budget, which brought mostly the Assembly and Assembly Speaker Joe Roberts into conflict with the front office and Governor Corzine: many people that we've talked to have talked about not only the differences philosophically about which taxes to raise or which parts of the budget to cut, but also kind of a north versus south split. You've mentioned the insider versus outsider split, but what about the north/south part of this? Was that a significant part of the equation?

Joe Doria: Well, that was part of it. There's that tension that exists between the southern part of the state and the northern part. The tension is based upon the fact that the south has always felt that they've been ignored, that they haven't gotten a fair share of the state's largesse over the years. Approximately 30 percent of the state's population and voters live in the southern part of the state and they have always felt that they've been put upon. So the north/south conflict—now, we don't have civil war, fortunately, but there is a conflict, a tension that has existed and continues to exist, and that had a lot to do with what occurred in June of 2006. And

again, the issue of taxes is another one, and this goes back even to the Florio Administration. We spoke about it. The Democrats usually feel that the sales tax is an unfair tax, that it burdens poor people more because it's based upon what you purchase rather than what you earn. And so they feel that the income tax is a fairer tax, and that it burns those who make more, the people in the higher income levels. Now, there are those who argue, "Well, the sales tax is not on clothes, not on food, so it isn't as burdensome on the poorer people within the state and those who earn less," but there is that conflict, that philosophical conflict. And added to that was a tension between the north and the south.

Rick Sinding: Well, there's also the assumption, and perhaps the actual fact, that wealthier people live in the northern part of the state and would be more burdened by an increase in the income tax than people in the south.

Joe Doria: Yes. Well, there is that. But at the same time, Democrats want that income tax because they—again, the party of those people who have greater needs and the concern for those people of lower income has always been a part of the Democratic Party platform. And in New Jersey, being much more progressive about a lot of issues, that's much more of a concern for Democrats within the legislature and elected Democrats throughout the state. Now, the north/south thing just adds to it because the people in the south are poorer, and so that conflict and the desire to try to deal with that conflict—Joe Roberts was the first Speaker from South Jersey in a very, very long time. I mean, he succeeded Albio Sires.

Rick Sinding: Of Hudson County.

Joe Doria: Hudson County. We had a Speaker from South Jersey, Jack Collins, but he was a Republican. A Democratic Speaker from South Jersey was not something that had happened in many, many long years, and Joe Roberts was reflective of the desires to deal with property taxes and felt that any money that was raised through any new tax should be going not to the state budget, not to programs that are funded through the state budget, but rather to direct property tax relief, which was a legitimate concern of his and something that should have been a concern of everyone.

Rick Sinding: Well, and in fact, the compromise that was ultimately reached after the government was shut down for five or six days was to go ahead and increase the sales tax but to use proceeds from it directly for property tax.

Joe Doria: And that's what exactly did happen. The property tax rebate, homestead rebate, whatever—they keep on changing the name. But the relief for property taxes then were—the increase in funding through the compromises that took place. The other part here is the natural conflict that exists between the

legislature and the governor. Any governor, no matter who that governor is, whether it was Governor Corzine or Governor Florio or Governor Whitman who had conflicts with the Republican leadership and the Republican legislature. It is a natural tension. You can call it a negative tension or a positive tension. I call it a positive tension because there's a need to not always go along, and I learned that very much when I was Speaker. Now, you need to follow the governor's lead and work with the governor, but at the same time, you need to exert the influence of the legislature and the ideas that the legislature has, and sometimes they're not exactly the same as the governor of your own party. So, that tension, also, led to the problem that occurred in June of 2006 and into July when the government was closed for a number of days.

Rick Sinding: There may have been one other source of tension, and that would have been in the house that you were then serving in, the Senate, which was headed by Dick Codey, the Senate President who had been serving for the previous two years—or, I guess last year of the McGreevey Administration—as the acting governor; the "slash-governor," because at the time New Jersey didn't have a lieutenant governor, and therefore the Senate President became the governor at the time the sitting governor either resigned or died or left office. And there was—not a groundswell, but a large group of people who expected that Dick Codey should have been the Democratic nominee for governor in 2005. And Jon Corzine came in, wrapped up all the county chairs to support him. Codey didn't run, but there were at least, certainly, rumors of a festering disappointment within the senate about the fact that Dick Codey didn't get the mantle that he deserved.

Joe Doria: Well, I think it was more than in the Senate. There were a lot of people, both elected and unelected, who felt that Dick Codey had done a very, very good job as governor during the period of time he succeeded Jim McGreevey (who resigned), and that he would have been the logical choice for governor except for the fact that Governor Corzine came in and was able to tie up the endorsements of a lot of the county chairmen and was very successful. And then Dick Codey, Governor Codey, realized that at that point that it was not smart for him to run. You don't run to lose; you run to win. And Dick is a very smart politician as well as a great government leader, and he determined that it was not to his benefit or to the benefit of the Democratic Party, so he stepped aside and did not run. But yet there was a lingering resentment, a lingering disappointment—I'd say both, resentment and disappointment—that he was not going to be the new governor. And so, yeah, that definitely had some impact here. Now, Dick would not be seen as a big partisan of South Jersey in this type of a fight.

Rick Sinding: Certainly not. [laughs] Well, it's just an added source of conflict.

Joe Doria: It just was an added factor in what was going on, yes. No question.

Rick Sinding: So, those first six months or so of the Corzine administration were obviously very, very difficult in terms of his relationship with the legislature, yet almost immediately after the budget impasse was broken, he proposed a special legislative session on property tax relief or reform, on creating a steady source of revenue, on substantially reducing the size of the government workforce, on appointing a comptroller to oversee state finances, all of which would seem to fit in fairly nicely with the progressive agenda of the Democratic legislature.

Joe Doria: And it did. It did. And the legislature worked with him on some of these. We did create the position of comptroller, which was a very good concept and has worked very well since then. That was one of the things that everybody seemed to have a great deal of support for, and that everybody thought was a very good idea with a number of amendments. But that always takes place, the amendment process. The legislation did go through to deal with that issue. And everybody tried to work together, but again, there was that tension in dealing with the special session. And one of the things that also we were dealing with during that period was the school funding formula, which we're always dealing with, and I was pretty intimately involved in that process.

Rick Sinding: Well, you had been involved, as I recall, in 1990, with the Quality Education Act.

Joe Doria: The Quality Education Act, which created a great deal of controversy. Yes, we needed to come up with a formula that was going to meet the approval of the State Supreme Court. The formula had not been fully funded, which has always been a problem. It did not necessarily meet all the requirements of the various Abbott decisions, and as you know, there were so many, one following the other, by the courts, trying a number of different things to create a better quality school system for the students in the 30 Abbott Districts that existed. And so, there was a great deal of time spent on trying to determine what was the best way to fund education, and that started almost immediately during that period of time we were dealing with the property taxes and passing the comptroller legislation and looking for funding. And we had a number of hearings of joint committee dealing with what other states were doing, how do we go about it. And after a great deal of time—and one of the last things I did in the legislature was work on that formula, the formula that's presently in effect, which really changed the way school funding was going to be allocated in New Jersey. Rather than allocating on geographic areas, which have been what was being done traditionally from the original Botter Decision, and going through Abbott v. Burke.

Rick Sinding: Well, first Robinson v. Cahill.

Joe Doria: Robinson v. Cahill, the Botter Decision, right. Robinson v. Cahill, through Abbott v. Burke, and all those decisions, everything had been funded by geographic area based on the school districts. We determined through the various hearings that were held that the best way to do it is to have the funding follow the student, which is the right way, because the student is the one that's in need. It's the inequality of education that the student's getting, not the inequality of education that the school district or the town is getting, but the students are the ones that are losing. So, the determination was made that the funding should follow the student, and a new formula was put together to do that.

Rick Sinding: Yet the underlying principle in both Robinson v. Cahill and Abbott v. Burke was that school districts in poorer areas did not have the tax base necessary to support the students. So, it was the equalization of the school aid that I had understood was the way in which this was resolved.

Joe Doria: But the school aid is tied to the amount of money spent on the student. Now, the question of equalization is important, but more important is, how much money is there behind the student? How much money is available to provide the services to the student? So, the basic concept of the poverty of the town or the school district is there, but the more important issue is, how's the money getting to the students?

Rick Sinding: So, there's a floor, then, of how much each student should be eligible to receive?

Joe Doria: Based upon their unique needs, based upon questions such as special education. Do they have disabilities? Do they speak a foreign language? Those types of things that are uniquely the needs of the students. How low are they scoring on the tests? Free and reduced lunch are very important, because if a child is receiving free and reduced lunch and breakfast, then they're poor. Then they need more attention, they need more money to develop the programs that improve their education.

Rick Sinding: So, the formula now factors in all of those different components within a school district?

Joe Doria: Yes.

Rick Sinding: So, the number of students who qualify in each of those categories?

Joe Doria: Right. The primary one is free and reduced lunch, and the other categories then enter into it so that the money goes behind the student. And one of the last things I did before I left the legislature—and then even after I had left the

legislature—was to work to get it passed. And we did succeed in getting it passed with Democratic votes. It's one of the few formulas that passed bipartisanly. There were Democrats who voted for it both in the Assembly and the Senate because their districts received additional funding because of the number of students within the district. They weren't the old Abbott Districts. It was a place like Hamilton Township, has a lot of poorer students. It's perceived to be a wealthier town.

Rick Sinding: Yes, a Trenton suburb.

Joe Doria: Right, a Trenton suburb, with a lot of the people who move out of Trenton moving to Hamilton. But in the end, that whole delegation, Republicans at that time, voted for the new formula. So, that was one of the big agenda items that the Corzine Administration had that was very successful, that actually there was accomplishment occurring. And the formula, once it was created, following the students, it's gone before the Court a number of times, and the Supreme Court has never said it is unconstitutional. It supports it. There are people who are unhappy with it because they're going to be unhappy with any formula, but what's happened is a lot of the urban districts are unhappy. Now, we had a "hold harmless" in there to protect them for a while, but now that's changing, too. So, that issue was one of the success stories of the Corzine Administration.

Rick Sinding: One other issue that the governor tackled which was not quite as successful was municipal consolidation. That was part of that special session as well, and in fact, every governor that I can think of has talked about the need to reduce the number of municipalities, reduce the number of school districts. Yet every initiative that comes along to do so runs into: Is it home rule? Is it local control? I live in the town, the last town, the only town in the last 60 years to consolidate, the Princeton Borough and Princeton Township. But aside from that, there have been movements in Hunterdon County to regionalize the entire school district and so forth, but none of this ever seems to take place.

Joe Doria: Again, this is something I got intimately involved in when I became the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs in 2007.

Rick Sinding: All right. We'll get there in a moment <laughs>.

Joe Doria: If you want to talk about it, I can, because I've spent a lot of time—

Rick Sinding: Yes, let's talk about that issue.

Joe Doria: —dealing with this. You have to get a primer on why New Jersey is the way it is and why we have over 560 municipalities. The primer is Alan Karcher's book, "Multiple Municipal Madness." If you read that, you realize that over time, in

the late-19th and early-20th century, the state continued to divide itself up into smaller and smaller units of governance while places like New York were doing annexation movements and annexing Brooklyn, Boston was annexing, Charleston—the bigger cities were getting much bigger. In Jersey, the bigger townships were getting much smaller because of conflicts over the location of where the railroad stations were going to be; school aid, who's going to pay for the students—as public education became more and more common in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, there were all these conflicts over who was going to pay for education, and why should we pay for those children when we don't have them? Nothing different than today, except it wasn't on social media and people could go crazy without anybody knowing they were going crazy. Now, it's all public.

So, New Jersey kept on splitting, and then there were family feuds in towns. So we created our own problem by dividing up rather than bulking up. And the difficulty is that there are historical reasons, historical conflicts that come up when you try to bring municipalities together. And then there are employment issues, taxation issues. All of this comes into play. We created a commission under the Corzine Administration that I was very intimately involved in creating, and we brought people together—the municipal officials—and we talked about how we can do this. But in the end it's all talk, because unless there is a desire on the people within the municipalities to come together because they see there is going to be a positive impact on their taxes or they believe there will be. The bigger problem is it *may* result in decreased taxes, municipal property taxes—

Rick Sinding: Princeton should be evidence number one.

Joe Doria: —but people don't believe it, and they don't want it. "Why should we? We have our police. They do a great job. The town next door, they're all idiots there. They don't know what they're doing. And besides that, they have more crime than we do, and we don't want to be part of them." And I can think of a thousand reasons for why the municipalities don't get together. I can think of one or two why they should get together, most of all money.

Rick Sinding: Absolutely.

Joe Doria: But in the end, they vote against their self-interest. They don't see it that way.

Rick Sinding: So, they vote for higher property taxes.

Joe Doria: They vote for higher property taxes because they don't want to break tradition. They don't want to be tied. They look at the town next door; they don't want to be bigger. They don't want to have the problems the bigger towns have.

And so, not only do they not want to merge, in some instances—look around Paterson—they changed their name. It's Woodland Park, not West Paterson right now.

Rick Sinding: It's Elmwood Park, not East Paterson <laughs>.

Joe Doria: That's right. Now we'll have a lot of parks around Paterson. But they don't want to be part of Paterson, even though it's mostly the people who came out of Paterson who live there. But they moved out of Paterson. They don't want to be part of Paterson, and that's true of Newark, that's true of Jersey City, that's true of Elizabeth, that's true of Camden.

Rick Sinding: But certainly not so of Jersey City anymore <laughs>.

Joe Doria: Not Jersey City anymore. The world has changed.

Rick Sinding: It sure is.

Joe Doria: But no, Jersey City is a unique situation.

Rick Sinding: And you're seeing that pretty up close.

Joe Doria: Yes, living in Bayonne. Back in the 1930s, Frank Hague wanted to merge Bayonne into Jersey City, but the people of Bayonne fought it. There was actually an election in Bayonne for mayor, and the slogan of the man who won at that time was "Bayonne rule, not Hague rule."

Rick Sinding: Oh. I didn't know that story. That's very interesting.

Joe Doria: And he won, and then once he won, he eventually got indicted for promoting prostitution in Bayonne. And his family and he had to spend a lot of money to prove he was innocent.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> My goodness.

Joe Doria: So, the point being, there is history. There's history all over the place. And you can go to every town and talk, and the people—you could talk about consolidation, and how it works. As you said, Princeton Township, Princeton Borough. But these little towns want to maintain their identity and their integrity, they believe. Identity is related to integrity, and it's related to things like "Who is going to run our police department? What schools?" Same problems with school districts. It's the same thing with the school districts.

Rick Sinding: The schools are particularly interesting because there are more school districts in New Jersey than there are towns, because if you have two towns that are neighboring towns, each of which has a K through 8 school district, and then they have a regional high school district, that's three separate districts for two towns. And there are a ton of them all around the state.

Joe Doria: And the fight there is the cost of regionalization, that a lot of the regional districts want to separate because they fear the manner in which the money is required—that the allocation of the expenses is unfair and they're paying too much. So, you've got big fights going on there to un-regionalize. When you have some school districts where you have one elementary school K to 4, not K to 8, K to 4 with maybe 300 students, and they don't want to merge with the next-door district that only has 1500 students.

Rick Sinding: Even though they're paying a superintendent of schools, which they wouldn't need if they were regionalized.

Joe Doria: Absolutely, and a business administrator. Yes. It is a psychological issue. It's an historical issue; there's a history to it. There's a psychology to it. It goes well beyond government, and it's a problem that is very difficult to solve because of people's beliefs, and today it's going to be even more difficult. When you didn't have social media, you could at least have a chance. Today, with social media, there's no chance because anybody could say anything on social media about anything that's going on, that immediately people believe.

Rick Sinding: Whether it's true or not.

Joe Doria: Whether it's true or not, of course. And people believe it. Somebody could say, "Well, the reason why they want the two towns to merge is the mayor wants to be more important, so he could run for X." Whether it's true or not, it's dead.

Rick Sinding: Let's talk about one other major initiative of the Corzine Governorship, which was asset monetization <laughs>. For those who are viewing this, the eye roll is just about everybody's reaction when they hear that phrase. And yet, as Brad Abelow, with whom I had a previous conversation, described it, it seems to be a fairly straightforward idea of taking the assets that are government's—which would, for example, include future toll revenues from a toll road—and dedicate them for some specific purpose in order to reduce taxes or to reduce expenditures coming from another part of the budget. What happened? We know how it was received in the legislature. It was dead on arrival. But why?

Joe Doria: I think the concept was a good concept. I actually thought it was a good one. It was worth considering. Again, it bridged a time I was in the legislature and then when I became Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs. I think the problem was that it was too complicated. It was too difficult to explain to the legislators, never mind the citizens of the state. The problem is a lack of trust, a lack of trust in government. Whether it's municipal consolidation or whether it's monetization, people do not trust and do not believe that in the end by doing something like this, they will save money. They'd rather believe that this is just another gimmick to take more money out of my pocket. And the problem here was that it was dealing with tolls, and tolls had been increasing. The Port Authority increases tolls. I remember when it cost two bucks to cross the Bayonne Bridge. Now it costs fifteen bucks.

Rick Sinding: That's because they had to raise it <laughs>.

Joe Doria: And you now have to take a roller coaster ride to get across. It's a case of the lack of trust and the complicated manner in which you have to explain it. Now, for somebody who is into finance like Brad Abelow or Jon Corzine, it's simple. But for John Q. Public? Jane Q. Public? It's very complicated. The concept works, but they're worried that, "Okay, so, we're going to take the tolls, but that means we're going to raise the tolls now, and then we'll raise them again when we need more money," and people feel that they've been taken—like just now with the gasoline tax. There was an inflationary clause so that if the cost of gasoline goes down the tax goes up because you have to raise a certain amount of money. Well, people don't trust that, and then they see something like that and they say, "See! We told you. They're going to keep on raising that tax. They're going to keep on raising that toll." So, the governor went out, and he did a good job of going out and meeting with the people, holding town meetings, trying to explain it. The result was not a positive one because people just did not trust, did not believe, and most of all did not understand what he was trying to do. Now, we've done it recently in a number of things, like the lottery being dedicated to the pensions.

Rick Sinding: The lottery was dedicated by constitution to education, right?

Joe Doria: Constitutional amendment. But the people voted for it. But it's different. The lottery is something you do voluntarily. You're not told, "You have to pay into this lottery in order for you to cross that road or that bridge." Or to buy that gasoline. If you put the gasoline tax on, it would have gone down gloriously. It's not something that people have to do, so the gambling thing, something like that, the lottery? People will support.

Rick Sinding: Because it's the ultimate regressive tax.

Joe Doria: But again, it's a voluntary regressive tax.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> Right.

Joe Doria: I never bought a lottery ticket in the last, maybe, 15-20 years. I know I'm not going to win. You voluntarily buy a ticket. Do you buy tickets?

Rick Sinding: I do not <laughs>.

Joe Doria: Okay. You don't either, see? But there are some people who buy 10 or 20 a week. They shouldn't. As you say, a lot of people who don't have the resources do it. But again, just like they're voluntarily buying cigarettes or they're voluntarily buying liquor.

Rick Sinding: So, excise taxes, for example, are easier to swallow.

Joe Doria: Because yes, it's voluntary.

Rick Sinding: No pun intended.

Joe Doria: They're not happy about it. The smokers are unhappy, but the majority of people aren't smoking. The drinkers aren't happy, but again, they're doing it if they want to do it. But paying the toll? Going on the roads? You have to, at some point, go on the roads.

Rick Sinding: Even though the majority of people who are paying tolls coming through New Jersey are out-of-staters?

Joe Doria: Yes. That's the real kicker, but again—

Rick Sinding: The gas tax as well.

Joe Doria: But again, people don't believe it. A lack of trust. A lack of trust in government. That's why we have a president right now that none of us believe should be there. They don't trust the government, and they resent the government because they don't trust it and believe it. And so, they're willing to go and vote, sometimes against their own best interests, or go against something in their own best interests, because they don't trust.

Rick Sinding: Don't politicians have a responsibility to educate the public about what their taxes pay for, about why taxes are a necessary part of government, what the relationship is between taxation and the services that they receive?

Joe Doria: They do, and we try, but given all the other noise that's out there—students in schools, high schools and colleges, don't understand it, and they're supposed to be taught this. Nobody's taught civics anymore. Don't get me going on that. Nobody knows about government because we don't teach it. We spend a lot of time on a lot of useless stuff, and everybody's looking at their phone all day long. I have a 19-year-old. I can attest to that fact. They don't know, and they don't take the time because they don't have the interest, and they're too busy earning a living and paying attention to what the Kardashians are doing next week and what they're wearing, and what's going on with the Bachelors, and all that other useless knowledge. But they don't pay attention. How many people read the newspapers? Well, reading it has gone down. They may see something on a social media site, but they probably click off the story. They see a headline, and the headline usually is totally misleading. They don't read the story. So, yes, we have an obligation to educate. We try to educate, but again, you can't force people to learn. You can only lead the horse to water. You can't make them drink it, and that's the problem. You're absolutely right. Corzine tried to educate. He had all those public meetings. But every one of them turned into shouting matches because there are people who pay attention, but those are usually the naysayers, the people who have no trust, who don't believe. They're the loudest, and so everybody else listens. And so, you find yourself in the situation that he found himself over the monetization of the toll roads.

Rick Sinding: Now I'll use your metaphor of leading the horse to water, and in this case making him drink it. Jon Corzine led you to water in the form of a cabinet post as the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, and after spending—what, 26? 27? years on the legislative side of government.

Joe Doria: It's 27, yes, 27 years.

Rick Sinding: All of a sudden, you say, "Yes," and move over to the administrative, the executive branch. Why did you do it?

Joe Doria: Well, I felt I had been in the legislature a long time, and I did believe that I had accomplished a great deal, and I felt this was a new challenge and I had an opportunity. He actually gave me a choice. He gave me a choice to either be the commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs of the Commissioner of Education.

Rick Sinding: I would have thought you'd take education <laughs>.

Joe Doria: I would have thought that, too, and sometimes I regret that I didn't. The reason I didn't do education—number one, I had been so involved in education and I felt that this was a new challenge. I felt there were a lot of things I could do

in DCA. Education, I had been involved putting the formula together. I felt we had gotten a good formula, and I helped to get the votes that were necessary, the Republican votes. My job was to get the Republican votes on the school formula, and I did, both in the Assembly and the Senate, because of my relationships with the Republicans. I had a good relationship with both Republicans and Democrats. But no, a lot of the Republicans I was able to talk to, that some of the other Democrats were not. And I just felt there was a[n education] commissioner there sitting, and I didn't feel like I should try and put myself in that position, and I thought I had done a lot in education. I wanted to see if I could meet the challenges, and I thought there were a lot of new challenges, including municipal consolidation which I thought I might be able to do something about, but I was a fool.

Rick Sinding: But mostly affordable housing, but we'll get to that <laughs>.

Joe Doria: We'll get to the affordable housing thing, also, which I was very supportive of and felt we should do. So, there were a number of challenges there that I felt that I could meet, and so I selected Department of Community Affairs.

Rick Sinding: I've heard two descriptions of the Department of Community Affairs. One was, it's the one-stop shop for mayors.

Joe Doria: Absolutely.

Rick Sinding: The other, which I'll attribute because he's no longer with us, to the late, great Dick Leone, who referred to it after maybe the—oh, I don't know, the second or third year of its existence—as a "spendthrift patronage den."

Joe Doria: I don't agree with Dick Leone. I respected Dick Leone. Didn't agree with him a lot of times. He, again, comes from the more elitist school of politics. I come from the very practical, down-to-earth—the general public's point of view. DCA, number one, deals with a lot of issues that are important to people, whether it be inspecting the rides at amusement parks for safety reasons, whether it be code enforcement and fire regulation enforcement—which is again important to people's health and wellbeing, where they live, how they live—the abatement of lead and the issues of lead poisoning, especially for children. There are a lot of different elements to the department that some people might see as patronage, but if you look at it from the point of view of people who have needs, it deals with a lot of needs. It helps support the old poverty programs.

Rick Sinding: Well, that was its origin.

Joe Doria: Right. That's where it begins, and so, it's still out there helping people get food stamps, providing services, energy assistance, funneling the money from the feds and getting it to the local people who need energy assistance. So, these are all things that are important. And it also deals with the municipalities, making sure that they're running properly, that their budgets are done in a proper manner, that money is not being wasted. It's an oversight function—local finance board. So, there are so many elements. The problem with it is it is so diverse. It's the dumping ground for what everybody else didn't want or didn't figure out where it goes. So, lead might be in health, but health said, "Well, that's more of an inspection issue. We don't want to deal with it." So, everything that nobody else might want but yet is necessary and should be done, DCA has to deal with, including giving out municipal aid, which is another important part of the job.

Rick Sinding: But which also could be done by Treasury, for example <laughs>.

Joe Doria: Treasury is much more of a green shade operation. It's more about watching the money and seeing where the money goes and how much money should be going whereas DCA is more about seeing where we get the money and what needs there are, and how should those needs be met. It's a different function. Totally different function.

Rick Sinding: I think—and maybe in defense of Dick Leone's point—the origin of the Department of Community Affairs was in Paul Ylvisaker's brain, the brains behind putting it together, was that this would be the way in which Lyndon Johnson's great society programs would be paid for at the state level and funnel through DCA.

Joe Doria: That's the initial purpose. I agree wholeheartedly.

Rick Sinding: And then as the antipoverty programs and other parts of the Great Society began to subside and dissipate, that the need for a separate department of state government to function in that capacity was limited.

Joe Doria: But what ended up happening is a number of other programs were created that necessarily had to be housed, like energy assistance. Now, we don't have a Department of Energy anymore, so energy went to the various components. Housing assistance, dealing with the issue of affordable housing, dealing with Section 8, all of those things had to be put someplace, so the Department of Community Affairs took over different functions, and it's continuously—it is the most adaptable of the state departments. And as new functions, new needs of society occur, for example, amusement park inspections of rides, which became a big issue, it had to go someplace so it went to DCA. So, DCA became a catchall for

programs that were necessary for the benefit of the public, the general citizens of the state of New Jersey.

Rick Sinding: And certainly, the activity in which the department was engaged while you were there that was front burner was affordable housing. The infamous COAH, Council on Affordable Housing, was "in but not of" the department.

Joe Doria: It was "in but not of." There are a lot of things, like HMFA, Housing Mortgage Finance Agency, is "in but not of." One of the things that DCA had a lot of—again, because it was a catchall—was agencies that were in but not of. As Commissioner, I sat as chair of about 10 to 12—I forget how many—various outside agencies that were in but not of the Department of Community Affairs.

Rick Sinding: Now, carrying out the policy of affordable housing, which has its origins in the Mount Laurel ruling, then Mount Laurel II and Mount Laurel III, and so forth.

Joe Doria: Right, and then the legislation—the COAH legislation—that was created in the 1980s to try to deal with Mount Laurel and was created, actually, to protect the municipalities who were screaming about the obligations that were put upon them. That council was there mostly to try to come up with a fair means, and something that would meet the Court's approval. So, I was again dealing with an issue that the courts had said the state wasn't meeting in a proper manner, and the purpose was to try to come up with a new plan. And we did develop a new plan that almost was going to solve the problem, but again, we got caught up in the politics and the lack of understanding, and everything gets caught up in that. We did do a new bill. Joe Roberts worked very diligently with Bonnie Watson-Coleman and with the department, with myself and the people in the affordable housing department at that time, to deal with the problem.

Rick Sinding: Was this primarily the bill to eliminate regional contribution agreements?

Joe Doria: Yes, we got rid of the regional contributions.

Rick Sinding: Which we should explain was a means by which—

Joe Doria: Which you could buy your way out of—

Rick Sinding: Your affordable housing obligation.

Joe Doria: —having an affordable housing obligation. Basically, what had been created through COAH was that if you built a project, and you should have affordable housing units in that project—

Rick Sinding: There was a set percentage that, depending on—

Joe Doria: A set percentage that you should have, so if you couldn't do it in that project for whatever reason, and some of them were not really legitimate—

Rick Sinding: Mostly it was they didn't want to.

Joe Doria: They didn't want to, right. That's why I say, "mostly not legitimate." You could pay 25, then it became $30,000 per unit, into a regional contribution, which then the receiver of that regional contribution, which was a community that needed to do affordable housing, would receive that money and could use that money for either new construction or renovation of affordable housing. It was a way to get around everybody's affordable housing obligation, and so that piece of legislation was created. It did a lot of other things.

Rick Sinding: Critics would say it was a means of--

Joe Doria: Preventing.

Rick Sinding: Preventing desegregation.

Joe Doria: Well, the question has—it's more poor people, and see, it's not just minorities by definition, but it's also poor people because most of the people who need affordable housing are not necessarily minorities. A lot of them are covered by things like Section 8. But there are a lot of people—and when you talk about affordable housing, we're not talking about people making $25,000 - $30,000. This is another lack of education and lack of understanding. In a place like Bergen County, it covers people up to almost $70,000 for a family of four. That's not being poor, that's being just house poor, because the federal government says—and New Jersey believes—that you should not have to spend more than 30 percent of your gross income—not of your net income—30 percent of your gross income on housing. So, the people making $70,000 for a family of four up in Bergen County, just about there, are considered to need affordable housing because they're spending more than 30 percent of their gross income. So, affordable housing isn't for the very poor. It isn't for all those minorities that everybody thinks. It's for people who are just working normal jobs and they don't necessarily have two incomes, and even if they do, they're working two incomes just to barely make it to feed their family and pay for their rents. And as the rents keep on going up, which they do, it becomes impossible to be able to pay that 30 percent. That 30 percent

goes up to 40 percent. Some people are paying 45 - 50 percent just to live, never mind to take care of other needs you have.

Rick Sinding: So, besides the regional contribution agreement, what other reforms were included in the package that was put together?

Joe Doria: Well, the reforms were to try to begin to set up the methodologies so that every town would have an obligation based upon their growth and their area. The anti-affordable-housing people were basically saying that New Jersey is already overbuilt, that there is no place to build anymore. They were busy saying, "Well, we need more parks. We need more open space." And so this was trying to come up with a means by which we could determine where the needs were and how the needs should be met.

Rick Sinding: Now that's the connection between affordable housing and the state plan.

Joe Doria: And the state plan was also under DCA. And the state plan was another very controversial, very difficult issue, because there were people who believed in the state plan. To be honest, before I became DCA Commissioner, I wasn't a big fan of the state plan because I believed—and you'll excuse me—that most consultants don't know their ass from their elbow, which by the way they don't. And they all had their own view of what should or shouldn't be done. I always tell this story. It's not directly related, but it's just proof positive they don't know what they're talking about. When we were going to build the light rail in Hudson County and the original plan was created, Bayonne was not included because the consultants said nobody from Bayonne would ever ride the light rail. And that's some big consultants, like Parsons and a few others. Okay? And I kept on saying, "No, you'll get a significant amount." Well, I had to fight, get the governor involved, threaten not to even get the light rail moving. And Jim Florio did that, and we got Bayonne included. For the first few years of the light rail in Hudson County, the highest percentage, actually, for a while, the majority of the riders, came out of Bayonne. So, that tells you how useful consultants are.

Rick Sinding: It's the only way out of Bayonne unless you want to go to Staten Island <laughs>.

Joe Doria: Right. But that tells you how good the consultants are. So, that's my opinion of consultants, generally. Now, I've been a consultant in my time, and I have to say, I know what I'm doing but you don't know everything, and so you have to listen. But the problem there was with the state plan—and I worked very hard, and Mayor [Edward] McKenna was the head and he was exceptionally good at it, did a great job. The difficulty was trying to get the towns to cross-accept, and a

number of towns had started to cross-accept, and we were working with them, and then everything got blown up afterwards. But the concept is a good concept. I've come to believe that.

Rick Sinding: I should point out that the origin of the state plan was the Mount Laurel Decision, with the Court saying that towns in growth areas needed to accept their fair share of affordable housing, and somebody had to define, "What are the growth areas?" And that was the origin of the state plan commission.

Joe Doria: That was the purpose of the state plan. But unfortunately it got waylaid in the process. It got misunderstood, even by the legislators.

Rick Sinding: Well, I guess in the same way that you describe what happened to the tolls or to the asset monetization—because everybody focused in on the tolls. With the state plan, everybody focused in on the big map, the map that indicated where growth would or would not occur, and that was the end of that.

Joe Doria: That was where they got lost, exactly. They got lost in the big map. And again, it was a lack of understanding, a lack of education, a lack of trust. I keep on coming back to trust. That really doomed the state plan. And we tried to get it moving, and we actually had some cross-acceptances. We were getting towns to come and say, "Yeah, we agree and are willing to," but then it all died after the end of the Corzine Administration.

Rick Sinding: Well, I think except to the extent that there are a number of municipalities that have recognized the benefits of having some kind of a planning mechanism that says we need open space, we need to direct growth to particular parts of the town, so that even if the state plan itself is dead that some of the policies of it have been adopted.

Joe Doria: The concepts and policies that were good, yeah. And as I say, some of the towns were already getting involved in the cross-acceptance process.

Rick Sinding: Well, and certainly the move to have state assistance for development around train stations, the transit hub.

Joe Doria: The transit hub was a great concept, the use of transit hubs. And that's great because that decreases the number of cars necessary in the community.

Rick Sinding: Is that also something that was administered at DCA? I imagine it was administrated at DCA.

Joe Doria: Well, we had a whole thing, yes. We had a Downtown City Program that was tied to—

Rick Sinding: Oh, that's right. Yes.

Joe Doria: —that was tied to transit hubs, and we worked with the Department of Transportation in dealing with that. Yes. But the Downtown City Program, which was a big program to rebuild downtowns, which are usually tied directly into transportation. And so, that was another. The areas DCA covers is amazing and confusing. I have been in the legislature what, 27 and a half years? And I didn't know everything that was going on in DCA until I walked in.

Rick Sinding: What's your general recollection or reflection on the year and a half or so that you spent as a commissioner in the cabinet of a governor rather than as a legislator observing those activities?

Joe Doria: Well, one of the things I saw was that there was a lot of work going on at the executive level that you don't appreciate at the legislative level. Governor Corzine had some very good ideas, though, on issues. They put in the whole transit hub program, which is a little different than the transit village program. And he was working to get a lot of those things done. I think the problem was just trying to get his and the members of the administration's hands around it, and he had some very good people in the departments, but it got lost sometimes, and he got lost—like with monetization—to the point of everything else getting not as focused upon. And that's what happens when you suddenly get a major issue you're trying to push and there are so many other things happening at the same time. So, the Cabinet meetings that he was in were good, but a lot of times he was just at the beginning of the Cabinet meetings and then he had to leave because he had other commitments. And they were beneficial to a degree, but the one-on-ones were better.

Rick Sinding: Well, Cabinet meetings aren't where policy is established, are they?

Joe Doria: Definitely not. Definitely not.

Rick Sinding: I don't think in any administration.

Joe Doria: No, but I think there should be more to them. As a mayor, when I was mayor of Bayonne, I would have all my directors coming in, and I'd spend time just going over what was going on and saying, "This has got to get done." It's easier, in a town with 65,000—much easier than a state of 8 million, 9 million, now. But the point being, you need to actually get everybody moving in the same direction.

Rick Sinding: Within the department itself, as the chief executive officer of a department of state government, how much time are you spending thinking about and working on the development of policy? And how much time are you spending simply putting out the fire of the day?

Joe Doria: Seventy-five/twenty-five. Seventy-five percent putting out fires, dealing with immediate issues. Twenty-five percent—we were able, because I was spending time on COAH, I was spending time on HMFA, I was spending time on the whole issue with the state plan. So, we spent time on those issues because those were planning issues. Meadowlands Commission, too.

Rick Sinding: I think that's a higher percentage than most of the cabinet officers whom I've interviewed over the years <laughs>.

Joe Doria: Yeah. No, I was able to do—I had things that had to be done that way. And I was more interested in that. Now, by putting out the fires, you can get done, and I used my chief of staff to do that, and I had my directors doing that. So, when I met with the directors of the department, I was able to get things done. And when you meet with different constituencies and all, I'd be trying to do both deal with the problems but also deal with planning. So, if I was meeting about a problem that COAH was having, I'd be then talking about, "Well, how are we getting going on this? What are we doing? How are we tying HMFA in to use the federal money to build more affordable housing units?"

The biggest problem is to understand that everything's interrelated, that all the issues actually relate to each other and that your job is to try to expedite people through the process while at the same time making sure you develop policy that not only expedites the problems but also helps to move everything forward. So, it's the integration process that I consider part of the planning, the ability to integrate all of the different, separate parts of some place like DCA which seems so disparate that you can get it together, and we did that. We were doing that. Now, HMFA is very important for affordable housing. It's a housing-mortgage finance agency and it deals with a lot of housing, general housing, but the money there, you can work with the developers who want the money to make sure you can get some affordable housing and use the federal money that's coming in to do that.

Rick Sinding: You briefly started to touch on the Hackensack Meadowlands. Perhaps the one positive example in New Jersey of—well, no, I guess the Pinelands are as well.

Joe Doria: Well, it was. Pinelands, yes. But the Meadowlands was much more developed in the sense that it had existed longer, the plan had been developed at a greater amount of intricacy.

Rick Sinding: Well, you had tax sharing among 13 municipalities.

Joe Doria: The tax sharing, which is disappearing. The Christie administration has basically now stripped all of that, because towns didn't want to do it anymore. I was trying to figure a way to do it because the people that paid in weren't happy. The people that got the money were very happy, but the people paying in weren't, and then the whole zoning part. Remember, they also controlled zoning. So, today, it's a blending of the Sports and Exposition Authority, and the old Meadowlands Commission. When I was there, the Meadowlands Commission was independent from the Sports and Exposition Authority. Some of the merger has, I think, been an improvement. Other parts, I think it has gotten—the old process at the Meadowlands Commission got a short shrift, so we've dealt with a lot of the concerns that the municipalities had, and some of those were legitimate, some of them maybe not as legitimate. But it was a good example. I agree with you. Then again, it was of but not in the department, and so I could chair the Meadowlands Commission.

Rick Sinding: Now your experience at DCA, which brought you into the Cabinet, brought you into a different relationship with Jon Corzine than you had with Brendan Byrne, Tom Kean, Jim Florio, all the way up to and including Corzine, all the governors that you dealt with. But do you have a sense, based upon your experience both on the legislative side and the executive side, of the differences in either temperament or management style between and among all those governors? Starting with Corzine, how would you describe his management style and how would you compare it, to the extent that you were involved with other governors, in how they functioned and operated?

Joe Doria: Corzine was much more of an executive approach. Having been an executive, he was not as hands-on, not as intimately involved, which most governors aren't. So, it wasn't unusual, but he was much more the business executive approach to, "Okay, you're a commissioner. You run your department. If there's any major issues come to me. But it's your responsibility." And Florio, with whom I had the most intimate relationship, was much more about knowing everything. He had to know everything. He had to be part of everything. He was much more intimately involved, much more knowledgeable about the various issues. Not saying that Corzine wasn't, but he was at a really much higher level in the sense. Not higher necessarily meaning better, just that it took a while for the issues to gravitate up to him whereas Jim Florio was on top of everything. Christie Whitman was somewhere in between, and I had a lot of time working with her.

Rick Sinding: How about with Kean?

Joe Doria: Kean was like Florio. He was into everything. He knew more about everything than anybody. When you walked in, he knew everything.

Rick Sinding: Now, is this because they both had had experience in the state legislature?

Joe Doria: I think so. I think that helped them. They already knew a lot of the issues. They knew a lot of the concerns in New Jersey.

Rick Sinding: And probably a lot of the people who worked in the departments.

Joe Doria: And they knew the people, too, so they didn't have to learn all that. So, I think, yeah. And Byrne, when I came in the last two years, it was his last two years, so it was hard to—

Rick Sinding: And you were a freshman <laughs>.

Joe Doria: I was a freshman and I didn't have the kind of access to him that I had to Tom Kean who gave me a great deal of access, and I did a lot of things with him on education, especially. And with Jim Florio, of course, being the Speaker, and then with Christie Whitman, being the minority leader, I spent all that time with her as minority leader. And then knowing everybody better, I obviously had better relationships with them.

Rick Sinding: And then there was this sort of a period of turmoil, when Whitman left, DeFrancesco takes over as an acting governor, then McGreevey comes in, and then Codey takes over as acting governor. There was a significant amount of disruption during that period.

Joe Doria: Well, yes. There was a lot of disruption, but both DiFrancesco and Codey had so much experience and were so knowledgeable that they were able to deal with problems and get them solved and deal with the legislators much more effectively. Being senate president and governor, you get much more done than just being governor.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> That's for sure. One of the reasons why we now have a lieutenant governor.

Joe Doria: One of the bad reasons. We shouldn't have a lieutenant governor. It's much better without one.

Rick Sinding: Really? [You're t]he first person I've talked to who believed that.

Joe Doria: I believe it. I'm a legislator, tried and true. I believe that there was no harm in that. We've created a job that's not necessary. Luckily, we gave them something to do, and so they're in a Cabinet position. And actually, [Lieutenant Governor] Sheila [Oliver] knows this process really well having been the Speaker.

Rick Sinding: Sheila Oliver.

Joe Doria: Sheila Oliver. Very knowledgeable, very competent. Running DCA makes sense. Being Secretary of State, that's—no. That was not as logical. No. Putting somebody like Sheila, with her experience and background, in DCA was a very smart move.

Rick Sinding: And having a potential successor come from the executive branch does make sense from a policy standpoint, does it not? Isn't there an inherent conflict between having the leader of the legislature and the leader of the executive branch be the same person?

Joe Doria: Except you get more done.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> Understood.

Joe Doria: There is definitely a conflict, but the question is, do you concern yourself more with the conflict? And the conflict is to the benefit of the people because you get stuff done. It's not to the detriment of the people.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> We could debate this, Joe <laughs>.

Joe Doria: If you get things done and you're pushing through things that are necessary for the benefit of the citizens of the state, it's not a harmful thing.

Rick Sinding: That's true, if—if!—that's what you do.

Joe Doria: Well, but that doesn't mean that somebody coming from the legislature has any ill will or ill intentions versus a governor who's coming in cold.

Rick Sinding: Or intentions that were more selfish than altruistic.

Joe Doria: I don't know if I would in any way say that they would be more selfish.

Rick Sinding: Well, I'm not speaking about the people who held that position. I'm speaking of potentially people who might hold that position.

Joe Doria: Yes. I have more faith in human nature. I trust.

Rick Sinding: Oh, boy <laughs>.

Joe Doria: I do trust. You have to trust. That's one of the problems that I'm emphasizing.

Rick Sinding: You sure have.

Joe Doria: You have to trust. You can't always be cynical. It's easy to become cynical in politics, but you have to trust that people do want to do what's right and do want to do the best thing. I don't think you spend your life in a position and work in government not having good intentions. Now, sometimes they may get abused, and sometimes you might do something that's stupid. And everybody does something that's stupid. But the question is, do they really want to do something that's good? I think so.

Rick Sinding: I do want to ask you about one other potential conflict. When you were serving in the State Senate, you were simultaneously the Mayor of Bayonne.

Joe Doria: Which I think is, again, nothing wrong with it.

Rick Sinding: But there is now. There wasn't then.

Joe Doria: Yes. I, again, disagreed with that.

Rick Sinding: Okay. It was, in fact, during that period of time that the law was passed to prevent dual office holding but grandfathered folks like you in.

Joe Doria: Actually, it passed after I left and went to the Cabinet.

Rick Sinding: Oh, okay.

Joe Doria: It didn't go through when I was there. Let me assure you.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> You don't consider that a conflict?

Joe Doria: No. I, again, consider it an ability to get more done for you constituents. I was able to get more done.

Rick Sinding: What about the fact that you're essentially double dipping and padding your pension?

Joe Doria: That is something that could be called questionable, and it does have some questionable perceptions by the general public, but the ability to get the job

done—both jobs done—is much greater to do that. And you're not making that much more depending upon what—some mayors make nothing. Some mayors make $15,000 and they got $49,000 as a legislator. Whoopee. Now they're making $54,000. Right now, they're recommending in New York that legislators make $130,000. So, I think most government officials who are doing a good job are being paid less than they should be paid. That's a real problem in the sense that you wonder why sometimes there's corruption. Now, when you look around and you see what work and what knowledge and competency people have, it's not something that ever bothered me, but I think there's some legitimate concern that you're paying people below what they should get paid. Now, in New Jersey, we're not a full-time legislature. In New York they're not really either.

But, no. The final issue is what can you do for your constituents, what can you get done for them? As a mayor and as a legislator, I was able to get a lot more done. There would be no light rail in Bayonne if I hadn't been there. But now, I wasn't a mayor when I got that done, but I understood Bayonne intimately to be able to do that. That's why I became a mayor, because I understood Bayonne, and the people elected me with a 57 percent majority in an election with four candidates, including two incumbent—one incumbent and one previous incumbent. The point is, you have to have the people's belief in you. You have to have trust. If you don't have trust, you don't get the job done. The most important thing that any politician has is their word, their own moral compass, and the ability to have their constituents believe in them, trust in them, and for the elected official to then live up to what the people believe and trust. If that doesn't happen, then the system doesn't work, and that's why I don't see a conflict.

Rick Sinding: I can't think of a more eloquent statement on which to end this conversation than that. Anything that I should have asked you that I didn't? Any recollection that you have?

Joe Doria: No, I think we covered some of the high points and low points.

Rick Sinding: <laughs> Well, I appreciate your spending the time with us today, Joe Doria. Thanks.

Joe Doria: Thank you.