

NH Gubernatorial Forum on Young Children

Monday, August 27, 2018
Saint Anselm College

Full Transcript

Candidates for Governor of the State of New Hampshire were asked questions related to the policy recommendations outlined in the *Framework for Action for New Hampshire's Young Children*.

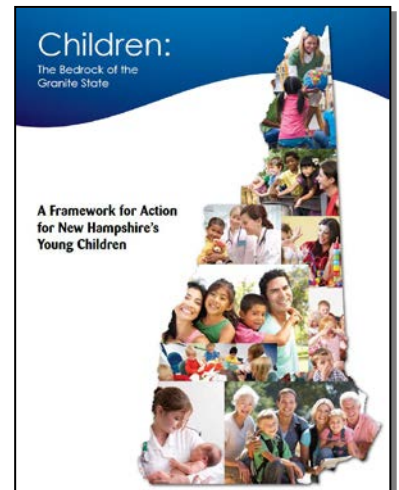
SPARKNH.COM/RESOURCES/Framework-For-Action

Attending the Forum were the following candidates who appeared on stage in the order, below.

- **Governor Chris Sununu**
- **Former Mayor Steve Marchand, and Senator Molly Kelly appeared on stage together**

There were eleven questions prepared to ask of all the candidates. As you will note in the full transcript, some questions were not asked of some candidates as their scheduled time ran out. Below is a list of the prepared questions along with who asked them.

At the end of the transcript, please see the full list of the Forum Co-Hosts.



Question 1 – Scott Spradling, Forum Moderator

Can you take about a minute to tell us a little bit about your commitment to young children and their families – either drawing on your past record or what you are planning for the future?

QUESTIONS ON POSITIVE EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Question 2 – Amy Brooks

We know that quality early childhood education programs, such as child care, Head Start, and preschool, can ensure the next generation has the opportunities and skills they need to succeed in a 21st century workforce. But one of the challenges facing states is that they often lack a system of assessing and communicating the level of “quality” in early care and education programs, which, refers to those policies and practices that provide children with the safe, stable, interactive experiences that can improve developmental outcomes. **What are your thoughts on how the state can best ensure quality and communicate that to families?**

Question 3 – Kathy Eneguess

In 2017, the governor [or “you” if asking Gov. Sununu] signed a bipartisan bill to increase state funding for full day kindergarten programs by using tax revenue from a newly authorized gambling game, Keno. Under this new law, communities with full-day kindergarten services will be provided an additional \$1,100 per pupil by the state starting this year, but the bill didn’t close the gap completely for school districts. **What will you do to close the gap on funding for full day kindergarten? Would your administration be willing to explore the state funding full-day kindergarten like it funds every other grade? Why or why not?**

Question 4 – Tom Raffio

One of the important facets of development that we often overlook is social and emotional development. Skills like persistence, attention, learning to play and work well with others are all foundational to more complex skills that develop later. These are skills that business leaders identify as essential in their workforce. **What will you do to make sure our public programs are supporting not just cognitive, but social and emotional development of children?**

QUESTIONS ON HEALTHY CHILDREN, HEALTHY FAMILIES

Question 5 – Jake Berry

The wide availability and addictive potency of opioids are a large part of why we face a crisis unlike any we’ve seen before. And because substance use impacts adults’ ability to foster the healthy development of children, we have to make sure that our response to this problem includes responding to the needs of children in affected families. At the end of 2016, there were 977 children in New Hampshire state custody. Grandparents and other relatives caring for children, and the foster care system is taxed. **How would your administration deal with the immediate needs of children who live with their parents’ addiction every day?**

Question 6 – Christina D’Allesandro

69% of NH children under the age of six have all available parents in the labor force. Working people often are balancing work while caring for children and aging parents, however 2/3 of our workforce lack paid leave to care for a family member. Research shows a clear link between families’ access to paid family and medical leave and children’s positive health outcomes. **Do you support creating a family and medical leave insurance program funded to ensure all working people in New Hampshire have access to an adequate length of leave supported by partial, temporary wage replacement when they need to take time out from work to care for themselves, a new child, or a family member who is sick or recovering? If so, what will you do as Governor to make such a program a reality?**

Question 7 – Rebecca Woitkowski

As Governor, you would consider a variety of policy proposals that seek to ensure New Hampshire communities can prosper and thrive now and into the future. In the last several years, the attention to Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs has been growing. ACEs include childhood abuse and neglect, parental substance use, mental illness, domestic violence and parental loss. The pile up of early adversity is highly correlated with a range of poor health, mental health, and even economic outcomes. Many experts believe a two-pronged approach is needed – to ensure there are resources for those experiencing adversity, but also to PREVENT early adversity from becoming toxic to development. **What would you do to ensure the state is operating in ways to both prevent and alleviate the impact of ACEs?**

QUESTIONS ON STRONG FAMILIES

Question 8 – Caleb Seymour

Home visiting programs match trained professionals with new and expectant parents to promote healthy growth and development, ensure a safe home environment and, connect parents to essential resources. Research has shown that these voluntary home visiting programs work to reduce health care costs and

increase family self-sufficiency. Yet the vast majority of families in NH do not have access to home visiting programs. **Would you work to increase access to voluntary home visiting, and if so, how?**

Question 9 – Cellissa Hoyt

During the family lifecycle, every family will face challenges. We know that family resource centers and home visiting programs can help families be resilient in the face of hardship. NH has a few, but not nearly enough family resource centers. **Do you support sufficient public funding for Family Resource Centers? If so, how would you fund them?**

Question 10 – Scott Spradling, Forum Moderator

How will you prioritize early childhood policies and programs in your State Biennial Budget?

Question 11 – Scott Spradling, Forum Moderator

Finally, you're clearly an accomplished person to have come this far – running for Governor. When you were growing up, was there a community program – after-school, recreation or arts program – or an adult in your community – a coach, a mentor, a teacher - that you feel was pivotal to who you've become?

AUGUST 27, 2018

GUBERNATORIAL FORUM ON YOUNG CHILDREN

[Disclaimer: This document is a transcription of answers to questions posed at the Gubernatorial Forum on Young Children. The original format has been modified for ease of reference. While it is believed to be correct and accurate, it is not warranted to be. If any errors or omissions are found, please contact bostoncart@gmail.com for correction.]

LAURA MILLIKEN: Hello. Welcome, everybody. I am Laura Milliken, the director of Spark New Hampshire. Spark New Hampshire is the non-partisan, governor-appointed early childhood advisory council for New Hampshire.

Spark New Hampshire was created to promote a comprehensive system of early childhood programs and services across the whole early childhood system, including health and early learning and family support for expecting parents, children from birth through grade three and their families.

So first today I would like to thank our generous grantor for this event, the

Endowment for Health. I would like to thank² Saint Anselm College for hosting us and thank all of you for your patience in the shifting venues as Saint Anselm's had to deal with black mold in the other building, so we're very grateful to be in a place without black mold.

I would like to thank our more than 60 co-hosts, who I will not read out loud in the interest of time, but I encourage you to go through in your programs. It's quite an impressive list of partners who share our vision that all New Hampshire children and families are healthy, learning, and thriving now and in the future.

I would also really especially like to thank the Spark New Hampshire Deputy Director, Katie Brissette, who was a leader in organizing and planning this event.

If we want New Hampshire to thrive into the future, we must create the conditions for our youngest generation that they need for healthy growth and learning. Significant advances in developmental science in recent years have provided us with a blueprint for

how to do just that.

We now know that early experiences literally shape the architecture of the developing brain and the active ingredient is the serve and return nature of children's engagement in relationships with caring adults.

We also know that some kinds of stress can derail healthy development. Certain experiences are so severe or chronic they produce toxic stress responses in children, which damages the developing brain architecture leading to lifelong problems in health, learning, and behavior.

But we can create conditions that promote healthy brain architecture, that reduce toxic stress effectively catching kids before they fall. We know you can't build something sturdy on a shaky foundation. So we must focus on shoring up the foundations for children in the early years of life, and that's why we created the Framework for Action. It's a set of action steps that are grounded in the science of what children need for health and well-being and you will find

it on your tables. It looks like this.⁴

The questions that we're asking the candidates today are drawn from that framework for action, and on our web site you will find our accompanying policy paper that explains why we chose these priorities, where we are on the state and federal level with them, what challenges we face, and what recommendations we have to address those challenges.

Now, on your tables you will also find a handout created by New Futures that updates you on recent early childhood policy advances since the framework was introduced in 2016. If you have not done so, please check out Spark New Hampshire's web site at sparknewhampshire.com. There you can check out how children and their families are doing in our state on our interactive data exploration tools. You can also get information about Spark New Hampshire's council and committees. We would love you to get involved in our committees. You can find out when they meet and what they do. We also have information on the web site about the 11

regional early childhood initiatives throughout the state and amazing work that they are doing.

If you don't already do so, please, please, follow us on Twitter and like us on Facebook. If you have not taken our pledge to young children, you can do so on our web site at Take Action. There are also cards on your table. If you haven't taken the pledge, please do so. We'll add your name to the thousand or so people on the web site already.

I also want to remind you Spark New Hampshire has a number of public awareness tools to promote the importance of early childhood. We do a research-based presentation that many of you have seen called "Children: The Bedrock of the Granite State," which we would love for you help us bring to a leadership group in your area.

We have a number of videos we can make available for your use. You can see all of these tools on our public awareness tool kit tab on our web site. So I know you all have your phones with you, so please feel free to

live tweet today. We're using the #sparknhgubernatorialforum. Also today's event is being videotaped and transcribed, so we'll post everything that is said by the candidates on our web site and we would love you to share that far and wide so that everyone understands that investment in early childhood is critical for the future of the Granite State.

Now I would like to introduce our moderator, Scott Spradling. Scott is an Emmy award-winning reporter, anchor, and political director for WMUR TV, is a founder of the Spradling Group, works with clients to boost their profile, leveraging his relationship with media, political, and business leaders to help his clients meet their needs.

As President of the Board of Early Learning New Hampshire, who is the fiscal sponsor for Spark New Hampshire, Scott is committed to ensuring that all New Hampshire children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Scott is really exceptional in his deep commitment to ensuring New Hampshire's

youngest citizens get the best start possible, and we at Early Learning New Hampshire and Spark New Hampshire like to think of him as our knight in shining armor. We're incredibly grateful for his ongoing support. Please welcome Scott Spradling.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Thank you very much, Laura. That was an incredible introduction. Can all of you hear me? Is that okay? First of all, I learned very early on through Early Learning as long as I'm listening to what Laura, Jackie, and Katie tell me to do I stay out of trouble, so thank you very much for that.

I also need to recognize the fact that here we are on the first full day of campus here at Saint Anselm College. Just yesterday I dropped off my oldest who is a sophomore here. His first class is in about 15 minutes. He is asleep in that building right there. So if at 9:05 I bolt out of the room, it's because I am trying to go wake him up.

Thank you all very much for being here for our second New Hampshire Gubernatorial Forum on Young Children.

As Laura said before, this is our⁸ program for this morning. Again, we have a full page of sponsors. I think it really underscores a couple important points. Number one, we have a wonderful alliance of interests across the political spectrum who were deeply interested in the issues that we're going to discuss this morning. Secondly, and to me very importantly, the governor himself and our two major candidates on the democratic side of the aisle were quick to say yes to this event.

The only challenge that we had was in finding a schedule hold that fit all three of them, but that the interest in being here was very high. We thank Governor Sununu for doing this for the second year in a row and having this conversation, and we believe again that reflects the very nonpartisan, data-driven conversation that we intend to have here this morning.

A few basic ground rules that we're going to do in honor of the passing of John McCain over the course of the weekend, I

think we can all approach this with a ⁹sense of humility and civility in our conversation.

There may be answers that you hear that you are not crazy about and there may be answers that you hear that you absolutely adore. I think what we'll try to do is lop off the emotional extremes of this morning's events. A little bit of polite applause is fine. We'll save cat-calling, booing, campaigning for an event held in another state because they don't know what they are doing. We do. Thank you again for being here.

We are just moments away from the arrival of Governor Sununu. He will go first. By structure, what we have out of our audience is a handful of folks that have worked with us not only on the questions based on our framework, but have questions specifically themselves. So you know who you are. You know the order with which you will be asking the questions. What I will ask is Amy Brooks-- where is Amy? There is Amy. You will be first. I know the microphone is there for you. So you can stand right up.

For each -- once the question is asked,

what I will do just for flow is to have¹⁰ the next person in line step up and be ready to ask the next question. You can introduce yourself, go right into the question.

My role here is really facilitator and traffic cop. These candidates are here and given plenty of time, but also have tight schedules so I will try to keep things moving.

I may have a quick follow-up on an answer they have given. I may not. We have ten questions to get through and we advised the candidates to try to keep their answers brief. Don't go into the War and Peace story of your life. Maybe give us the abridged version and that way hopefully we can get through all ten questions.

So we'll keep this moving. Thank you very much for being here. We will resume and I will let you know as soon as the governor has arrived and we will jump right in. So thank you all very much for being here. With that, I would like to welcome Governor Chris Sununu.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Congratulations

on the smallest stage in New Hampshire.¹¹

SCOTT SPRADLING: We choreographed that intro.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: You can't afford a bigger stage? Welcome, thank you so much for being here. Many friendly faces. Thank you so much for being here.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Absolutely.

SCOTT SPRADLING: I am now officially watching the clock because I know you have a tight time schedule.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Do I? I'm good.

SCOTT SPRADLING: I explained to these kind folks we have ten questions, we'll do our best to get through all ten. If we do, great. If not, we respect your time. So thank you so much.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Great. No comment.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Off to a flying start. We'll get started. Governor, can you take a minute --

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: How much time do we have? I don't know.

SCOTT SPRADLING: My understanding

is you have roughly 30 minutes, does that¹² work?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Thirty plus. Honestly, take as much as you need.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Excellent. For the purposes of background and to reset the conversation, all the questions that you are getting today will come from The Framework For Action For New Hampshire's Young Children.

That is essentially a policy recommendation sheet that comes from Spark New Hampshire and as you well know that framework was developed by Spark and the governor-appointed Early Childhood Advisory Council for the State of New Hampshire.

When you are governor, they will be your council. This is not news to you because they are your council and you worked very closely with them the last two years.

So with that said, let me start off with a very broad, high altitude question. Can you take a minute to tell us a little bit about your commitment to young children and their families?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: I thought we¹³ were talking about Market Basket cheese? I was told --

SCOTT SPRADLING: That was well-done, by the way. I appreciate that, but talk to us about your commitment to young children, either on your record as governor in your term or what would you like to do in the future.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: It's great to see everyone and a lot of folks came out. Look, it's no secret we made everything from kids, early childhood development, early childhood education -- from the inaugural speech on we made it an absolute top priority.

I'm going to take a little bit of a step back. We had 30 or 40 things we really wanted to go after and I know I have only been governor for 20 months. It seems like a lot longer sometimes, just ask Valerie. She reminds me all the time. If you don't know my wife, she is not political. She does not like politics very much, but she has been kind of my muse, if you will, when it comes to this

issue.

She understands it at a very deep level. She was a special ed teacher, a kindergarten teacher, got her master's at Harvard. And when I have questions about how things work because I'm the engineer -- I want to design the system, how it works, what outcomes we should be looking for.

She has been tremendous. When I got elected she was the first one to come to me and said, "Now remember why you ran for governor." It was a great point for me. It was like literally like the day, it might have even been the night of the election, and we had won, and she says, "Now remember why you did this." I said, "It was about our kids." She said, "Yes." What she really said was, "Don't lose that focus. Don't go to Concord and let all of the political rhetoric drive you into something else."

So we focused on the things that I knew were going to be the hardest. We focused on kindergarten and everyone I think knows the story now. Everyone came to us and said, "Governor, you know, you talked about

kindergarten in the campaign. You know¹⁵ you can't do that, right?" Of course you can. Of course you can. You design it the right way, you put the right emphasis behind it, put some political capital where it needs to be. They said, "Well, no, governor even proposed that before. You have a Republican governor with Republicans. Oh, that will never happen."

We got it done. We got it done. Did it get done exactly as I imagined? No. I mean, this whole Keno thing, boy, it's been going gangbusters. It wasn't really my idea, but it's really worked. It's worked out very, very well. The revenues for the state are huge. We are doing a big Keno night in three weeks, by the way, so if anyone wants to play Keno?

The reason I focus on kindergarten, it wasn't a big win, but just really set the tone for all of the things we want to do, which is mental health, prevention of opioid problems, behavioral health, DCYF crisis, which we took head on. We got rid of management, took on a whole new team and made

huge leaps and strides.

The reason I bring those issues up is because it's all connected. No longer will we treat education over here and abused kids here and mental health here and opioids over here. We were finally going to as a government really appreciate that all of these things were tied together, which makes it a lot more difficult. There is no doubt about it, but it is the only way you will get the outcome.

So I mean, we can go over all of the issues individually, but I think we made huge strides in all those different areas. Will it all turn around and be perfect tomorrow? No, of course not.

I think that's why for so long there wasn't leadership to get behind some of these initiatives. They said, well, we're not going to put a lot of behind it.

Are we going to get the results by the next election? That's how people used to think. That's really the mentality we're trying to change in Concord. You have to think five and ten and twenty years down the

road because, as Valerie said, this is ¹⁷why I did it. I did it for my kids.

When I look at Leo who is five years old, I'm not worried about him. He is going to end kindergarten this year, which is great, but it's not about what we're going to provide him in the next two years, but we're going to create New Hampshire a structure, a long-term structure in New Hampshire for five, ten and twenty years down the road for my kids, for your kids, for all of our kids that we can really count on and they can count on in the long-run.

SCOTT SPRADLING: It is my honor now to introduce the two democratic candidates for governor, Senator Molly Kelly and Mr. Steve Marchand.

So for both of you, can you take a minute to tell us a little bit about your commitment to young children and families, either drawing on your past record or what you were planning for the future?

MOLLY KELLY: Thank you, Scott. He is telling me to do this in a minute.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Take two.

MOLLY KELLY: I want to thank¹⁸ you and thank the New Hampshire Spark advisory council for putting together this great forum this morning and giving me an opportunity to talk to you about what is most important to me, and always has been and will continue to be, and that is the real welfare of our children.

All of our children. I will just tell you that, you know, I can't even remember a time in my life where children were not in my daily life and continue to be. I think some of you know I am number two of eleven children. The oldest girl. So, you know, we learned early on in our family that if one of us was to succeed we all must succeed and that is a value that I hold very close to me and will take with me to the seat as governor because I believe that if one of us is to thrive, we must all thrive and we know that about children. We know that.

Also, I -- you probably know as well, maybe not, but my husband is here today, too, as well, Art, but we are the proud parents of four children and seven grandchildren, but

there was a time in my life when actually¹⁹ I was a single mom.

I had three small children. I know that I needed to go back and finish my education and I did. I took my children with me. It wasn't easy. It wasn't easy. But I knew that the education was our hope. It was how we were going to be able to move forward as a mother, as a provider and to open doors of possibilities for my children as well.

It was hard, it was hard work and I understand, truly understand, what it's like to try to move through some kind of stability economically when you are going through that. I worked part-time, and with my children, and it was difficult.

I know what that is like to worry about putting food on the table. I know what it is like to worry about good daycare. I lived it. I will never forget that.

That's why it's important to me. You know, so many of the things that you are doing today, I look out and see so many, actually friends, people I work with in the senate for ten years. I am proud of my record

in the senate and the work that I did as²⁰ an advocate for children because it is most important to me.

You know, as a young mother, very young mother, I was at the La Leche League. I became a guardian ad litem in my career and to be able to spend ten years in the senate really advocating for our children and their best interests from birth all the way to adulthood because we know how precious they are. And we know how important every single one of those children are from birth on. You know, I did come from a big family, so I feel like my mother has some credibility for being an authority.

One of the things that she always said that I remember is, she said that every baby born has a right and needs to come home to a nest. That is so perfect if you picture that. So I feel that as governor my job is to make sure that we keep that nest intact. That I work with all of you who are the experts to make sure that our community and our state supports each one of our children from the beginning until they reach

adulthood.

Because what I want, what I want is a New Hampshire where every child can thrive. Not just a few. Every single child. That's why I am running for governor and I want to thank you so much again for allowing me to be here today with you to talk about what is so important to me.

Thank you.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Senator Kelly, thank you. Again, welcome to Mr. Marchand, Steve Marchand, thank you very much for your time. Share with us your perspective on the value of early childhood development either from your record or your agenda moving forward.

STEVE MARCHAND: Appreciate it. Good to see all of you. I always take, I hope you don't mind, a point of personal privilege whenever I am at the campus of Saint Anselm. I did two years ago on this stage. My sister works here in food service. My dad is on six weeks knee replacement rehab and he is 73 and coming back to work.

Also works at Saint Anselm in construction and maintenance. The institute of politics was an armory and we got it here, and then my dad, we were out of work in 1990 to the point where we ended up filing bankruptcy because my mom had a heart attack at 39 years old while we were unable to afford insurance.

There was no hope and then my dad got hired as a contractor to help build what became the Institute of Politics, so I have an affection for Saint Anselm. This place saved my family at a point when I didn't know what was going to happen. So the level of affection I have for this college, although I am not an alum, exceeds that of many of your alums I suspect, so I told my folks I will always mention that whenever I get a chance to be on this campus.

We have a challenge in New Hampshire. I am a dad. My older girl is going to be 15 in a week. Younger girl just turned 13. We've got the lowest birth rate in America. We have seen the biggest drop in high school population as a percentage of any state in

America in the last ten years. We lost²³ a quarter of our K through 12 population in just the last 15 years.

These are not coincidental figures. They are all elements that highlight that when we conflate being frugal with being cheap we pay a price down the line. As one of six states that do not provide state funding for pre K, when we had to do Keno in order to finally budge our way to full-day kindergarten because we could not find the money in an almost \$5.9 billion a year operating budget to find \$30 million bucks to do what pretty much everybody else already does and knows is the right thing to do. Pay for kindergarten. We have long ago transcended, stumbled over, leapt over that line of frugality into downright cheapness. We see that in consequences for pediatric psychiatric services. We see that in not having pre K, in the cheap way we do kindergarten.

We know our northern neighbors in Quebec have done the world's best study in how we can provide high quality daycare

that's accessible to everybody, irrespective²⁴ of income level. We do not have to go far to understand what we can do in order to get there.

But one thing we must say as leaders in a time of chaos, political chaos, is we have to be willing to pay for things. If you want things you have to pay for them, so I have gone around the state for a year and a half and among other things that I highlight as somebody who was a successful mayor and who audits city, county, and state governments professional, born and bred in this state, is we need additional revenue, in other words, to do the things that matter, many of which will be part of what we discuss today.

Over the course of this time I would love to get into that a little bit, but I think it will be critically important when we take it on to the sitting governor who I understand you just saw in the last hour, that we're going to have to do more than simply say we're not Donald Trump, we're not Chris Sununu, we're not Republicans. We have to create and articulate an affirmative,

alternative, positive vision about what²⁵ it's going to mean for the next 20 years to be a Democrat, to be a New Hampshireite and in our own small way to be an American.

A big part of that is communicating that in order to stop being cheap and to go back to being fiscally responsible, early investment is the biggest payoff on the back end. Much of what you describe is at the bull's eye of that and we need to be comfortable having difficult but necessary conversations if we're going to get to the place where I think most of us know we need to get to.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Thank you for that. As you know, and working with Spark, advances in the science of early childhood development now show that early experiences in a child's life actually shape the architecture of his or her developing brain. And children who have strong foundation in the early years are more prepared to become productive contributors to our economy. Children truly are the bedrock of the Granite State and we're proud of it.

I would like to transition to our series of questions from special guests and would like to start with Amy Brooks with a question on quality child care.

AMY BROOKS: Good morning. Can you hear me? We know that quality early childhood programs such as Head Start preschool can ensure the next generation has the opportunities and skills they need to succeed in the 21st century work force, but one of the challenges facing states is that they often lack a system of assessing and communicating the level of quality in early care and education programs, which refers to those policies and practices that provide children with safe, stable, interactive experiences that can improve developmental outcomes. What are your thoughts on how the state will best ensure quality and communicate that to families?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Something we talk about is QRIS system. Again, something that's been talked about for years, no one really got anywhere on it.

One of the biggest frustrations, and I

will take my Governor's hat off for a second. Just as a parent, right? We have a lot of parents in this room I'm guessing. If you want to know what options are out there for you and your kids, where do you go? How do you know? How do you know if that daycare over there is doing what they need to do for outcomes or that kindergarten over there or that preschool over there or this, you know, third-party center that's providing some sort of services.

Right now we're very community driven so we really rely on word of mouth a little bit. I'm an engineer. I am a data and outcome and accountability return, you know, on what we're getting from an individual or business, so simply as a parent it's a very frustrating system to navigate.

We absolutely need a system where you can actually start seeing what, at minimum, services are provided. Right? And then you can start looking at a ranking system that really says, well, these guys meet certain metrics and these guys don't.

The hesitation that at least I can tell

you I have there is what we do, we have²⁸ to set it up right. What you don't want to do is create a purely punitive system. The goal of the system should be, and this is what has happened in other states, they set a system up so they can penalize these guys to make sure they get up to that level.

Well, you want everyone to get to a certain level of course, but I come at it from a customer service aspect first. Does that require a little bit of funding? Absolutely. Should we look at doing that? Absolutely. We have talked about it in depth and I didn't even know, I mean, Valerie would talk to me about it in terms of, hey, how do we know who is good and who isn't? Just as a simple, kind of a simple parent speak.

But when we look at kind of -- I think some of the proposals that are out there, if we set it up the right it can be effective. It will take some money. Not a ton. I mean, it's in the millions of dollars to get the system where you want it to be.

But I'm also a believer, do you have to buy the Cadillac if you are going to go buy a

new car? I say Cadillac. People want ²⁹--
people don't want Cadillacs any more. No
offense.

SCOTT SPRADLING: I'm sure some
do.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: I have a 2007
Sienna. Do you have to buy the best car on
the market for your first car? No. Right?
So what I'm trying to do is work with Spark
and other organizations and say, how do we
step into this? How do we make a first,
second, and maybe third step?

Does it all get done in this budget
cycle? Probably not. Because I think folks
are wondering, can we just take not a baby
step, but break it into a phased approach to
make sure we're doing it right?

It would be easy just to throw a whole
bunch of money out there and this is what
happens. My budget is here. I propose \$10
million for the program. And good luck. Then
what happens, the whole thing goes down
because no one wants to spend \$10 million so
we end up with nothing, right?

So I think by having a structured,

phased approach and how to actually get³⁰ this thing up and running will be the best solution.

STEVE MARCHAND: Well, first of all, there are certain elements of public policy where we're not even at the question yet of providing quality opportunity. We do not provide the opportunity and that's where I am the only candidate -- I have been pounding the drum for two years on this to say state funded pre K, we're the only state east of South Dakota that does not provide state funding for pre K.

If we do not communicate through public policy the seriousness of purpose in committing to early education, early health care and so forth, then why would we be surprised that we lack relatively young people and families to come here?

We lack private investment because we are unwilling to make public investment. So in Quebec, for example, in terms of daycare, they have what is generally seen as the world's best study because we have over 20 years of arced study the outcomes from the

work. It's not enough to simply ensure daycare for families. The difference in outcomes is not simply daycare versus not having daycare available. It is high quality daycare that's available versus substandard and none.

Because we now know some of the best practices that work, as a guy who audits cities for a living my job is to identify best practices and bring them into whoever my client is. Well, I want my client to be New Hampshire. I want to identify what other states and countries do and bring them in.

It turns out that early intervention is the best return on investment. The longer we're waiting to identify children that are suffering from any number of situations, including abuse at home, learning disabilities, anything along the spectrum, the more difficult and expensive it will be to address it on the back end.

So one of the things that I found in over 300 meet and greets that has been effective not just with Democrats but Republicans is when we discussed this in the

context of return on investment and identifying best practices. Most people are not anti-government. They are not anti-spending. What they are afraid of is nonoutcome oriented government. Nondata-driven government. For folks that are fleeing the party of Trump and are looking for a place to call home for the next 20 plus years being able to articulate what I would describe as progressive, inclusive policies including universal pre K, including universal daycare, legitimately funded kindergarten and more requires using the data to identify best practices and being committed to fund those best practices.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Thank you. Senator, as a refresher we're talking about access to quality child care, but the challenge is of assessment and ensuring that we know who is doing a good job, so what are your thoughts on how the state can best ensure quality and then communicate that?

MOLLY KELLY: I do think we have a need for an overall state-wide data collecting system that we can actually look

at the what is available today. Is it working? We do have and we know that and, look, I am here before all of you who are experts and you work every single day toward these goals to make sure that every child has access to quality child care or preschool.

So we have the expertise. What we don't have I believe is a comprehensive system where we bring that information together so that we can communicate it to each other and to the experts and to allow and provide information for parents to make the right choices as to what they need to do.

Now I know that the framework that New Hampshire Spark has put together with ten recommendations is the very best plan for New Hampshire. It is the best plan. The advisory council are experts throughout the state and one of your goals is to make sure that we have a data base system in this state to address this issue.

As we continue to talk I think we all have to agree that every child needs from the beginning to have quality care. Whether it's daycare, preschool, in the home, moving on to

school, but it is the expertise here and the³⁴ different initiatives that you are all doing that we need to bring together for a system to work of communication for the future and so, yes, we do need to do that.

I commend New Hampshire Spark's advisory council for putting that together and as governor I would work closely with you to make that possible, whether you need funding to make that possible. How we communicate to the parents and to each other to do that in the very best way.

But we have the tools. You have the expertise and I will be the effective leader to bring that together.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Thank you. Let's turn now to Kathy Eneguess with a question about full-day kindergarten.

KATHY ENEGUESS: Good morning. You just spoke about your bipartisan bill that you signed and using the tax revenue known as newly authorized gambling game named Keno. Congratulations. It is successful.

Under this new law communities with full day kindergarten services will be

provided an additional \$1,100 per pupil³⁵ by the state starting this year, but the bill doesn't close the gap completely for all school districts.

What will you do to close the gap on funding for full-day kindergarten and would your administration be willing to explore the state funding of full-day kindergarten like it funds every other grade? Why and why not?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Yes, absolutely. This is a great example of "I was governor I'm going to get it done." Right?

At the end of the day it wasn't perfect. Even the Keno funding mechanism, which again it's not tax dollars, dollars that go to it. You can play Keno or not. It ends up funding it and I think it's 80% this year and it gets to 100% next year, which is great. We have half dozen to a dozen new schools coming on line this year with more likely to come on next year. The towns still have the choice to do that of course.

There is a powerful sense of local control. I do not believe the state should be mandating everything out of the state as it

comes to education, except maybe starting³⁶ after Labor Day. We'll talk about that a little bit. This was a huge first step and I think, you know, some of the folks, some of the detractors in the legislature I think tried to make the steps, they actually tried to make the bill so good that they thought it would fail.

Right? But we got it done. So look, kindergarten is part of the, is a K-12 system. I don't think different grades should have different rules when it comes to funding. So we'll keep fighting for it and we'll keep pushing and try to get there absolutely.

MOLLY KELLY: Yes is the answer to that. I will explain why. Full-day kindergarten is a must. We are ready. We are there. We have been talking about this I can't tell you how many years. We know -- I am looking at someone here in the audience nodding her head and she knows quite well from Senator Shaheen who was the one who pushed this originally that said every child has a right to full-day kindergarten. We are

here. It must happen.

The Keno is a way to, I think, compromise to move it forward, but we have a responsibility as a state to ensure that we have full-day kindergarten and funded as we do through our adequacy formula for all children in the state no matter where you live, what school you go to, every child has a right to the same start, a good start, and a quality start.

Yes, I would fund full-day kindergarten through our adequacy funding as we fund education in the state. It is the wisest investment with the greatest return for everyone here in the state and we need to make sure, I think of it in terms of if we're going to have a body of elected officials who I know agree with this, and we are going to get this passed, and as governor I will ensure that we have full-day kindergarten and it is funded.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Mr. Marchand talking about Keno, closing the gap on funding for full-day kindergarten, but it's not quite closed yet, what would you do and

how do you feel about state funding for³⁸ full-day kindergarten?

STEVE MARCHAND: Keno is a lousy way to do it. You do it the same way you do all grades in education. You pay for it. And indeed, like I said a moment ago, it involves pre K. We need to treat pre K in the same way we're talking about 1st through 12th grade in a way we should be talking about kindergarten. This is endemic. This is part of what I would describe as more than 40 years of moving the goalpost, about what is okay to talk about in public policy and what is not okay to talk about in public policy. Right now the definition -- I would argue the democratic success is to defeat the voucherization of public education rather than that we're going to fund pre K. The definition of success from a democratic perspective has been hopefully freezing what is already America's highest instate tuition.

Instead of saying we should have a debt-free plan for higher education, but getting kindergarten, but only if we can do Keno and by the way it's only two-thirds of

the gap we're trying to fill anyway. ³⁹ Instead of thinking it's a priority, and I think we and all of us agree it certainly is then you have to fund it.

We need to yank the goalpost back certainly toward the center and I would argue a little bit toward the left in terms of the future of what education policy should be and how we pay for it.

If we do that, we will find that there is a coalition of folks well beyond traditional democratic base or that sort of thing who aren't just okay with it but who are eager to embrace something like that because of, as Molly mentioned a moment ago, the return on investment is unparalleled in the policy areas that we're talking about today. As a former mayor, if you are in a community that did not have full day kindergarten because you did not think you had the money for it, this plan did not provide proficient surety the money would be there too close the sale. That you would feel comfortable going to your constituents and doing it.

In many communities they already had⁴⁰ that comfort level, but in the ones that did not, not only is this a really lousy way to fund key public policy because I don't even like Keno in the first place. That's a different thing. But because it did not communicate clearly to the communities that were on the fence that the level of funding and sustainable level was going to be there for them.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Before we turn over to Tom, a quick follow-up. It sounds like according to news reports that the overall, overarching issue of education funding, rich communities versus poor communities, is going to be a hot topic in 2019. Can you give us your take on what you anticipate that conversation is going to look like?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: So there are a couple of things. We have a couple ideas on the table in terms of changing the structure a bit. Look, fundamentally, at 30,000 feet I will say we have -- let's back up a little bit again.

We have the most representative ⁴¹body of the government on the planet with the House of Representatives. Four hundred members of the House of Representatives that represent only 1 million people. That means you, the people, have all of the power in the world. And that is really the voice. That's why we let the legislature dictate for the most part at the state level how the money is spent.

There is immense accountability in that system because it's truly the people's voice. It's a great way to do it and they are all volunteers beholden to nobody. They get \$100 a year, so it's a great system in that sense.

When it comes to education funding, they are limited in terms of how much and the adequacy funding piece, filling in the gaps a little here and a little bit there. The legislature really does not have all of the power that I think they need in terms of making the best decisions for the states when it comes to community that's doing well, community that isn't doing well.

It isn't just about rich and poor communities. It's not. There is external variables that come into play all the time. We see that all the time. So to have legislature be able to balance those variables, be able to discuss them in an open debate and say this is happening here and that's happening there and, you know, maybe it is a little bit of rich versus poor community.

Look business just went out, this traditionally was a kind of a middle of the road community. But a factory just closed. Not that any factories are closing in New Hampshire, but God forbid something devastating happens to the community the legislature can react and it isn't just in the corporate and formula stuff. At 30,000 feet I want as much power of the purse not to the governor, but to legislature.

Those are the representatives and the ones that I think can make the best decision and understand and have that debate at the state level as a whole as opposed to the special interest of one organization or an

individual.

SCOTT SPRADLING: It was at this point earlier in the program with the Governor I asked a follow-up question. In a sense of fairness I would like to give you a crack at the same follow-up. As we're talking about fully funding our needs and interests when it comes to education, I think we're all well aware that there are a number of school districts that are planning to try to make school funding and the followups to our Claremont lawsuit dialogue a major conversation in 2019 in talking about the rich town versus poor town, have versus have not, however you clarify or qualify that. Senator, I will start with you first. What do you anticipate from that conversation and how important that dialogue is in 2019?

MOLLY KELLY: It is important and I said this before and continue to say that every child has an equal opportunity for an education and quality education no matter where they live and what neighborhood or what school that they go to. We do need to

equalize the funding across the board⁴⁴ for the states and in the beginning as a senator I was part of writing the adequacy formula, and we did that, and we made sure every child in every community had what they needed for a base to continue to provide that education.

It has changed over time, and it is not the same formula that it was before, and we're starting to see the consequences of that. I will also say that we have a governor today that is providing \$100 million in tax breaks to the 3% of the wealthiest corporations in our state. That funding, that funding is what we can start with and to use to fund our public schools and also job training.

That's where that is going to come from. If we can give tax breaks of over \$100 million to 3% of the wealthiest corporations we can fund education equally for all students across the state.

STEVE MARCHAND: First of all, I think we're likely to get sued again because the discrepancy between the have and have not community is wider now than it was at the

time of the first Claremont lawsuit. I spent⁴⁵ two and a half hours -- we were both invited to a town hall forum, two and a half hours of questions on a Saturday night in Claremont you would be surprised how many people in Claremont are eager to talk to a gubernatorial candidate who wants to talk about education funding for two and a half hours.

That is going into the belly of the beast and we talked about it. They are desperate in a growing number of communities because the gap is getting wider. If we are serious about economic development in places like Claremont, much of western New Hampshire and northern New Hampshire certainly, if you do not have quality public education in a community, if the perception is that if you move there you are going to have to worry about the quality of education or you are going to have to commute 45 minutes to be in a school district that you do like, but now your quality of life is down the hole. They don't move there. So it is a truism in my 20 years off and on of public audits, smart

public investment breeds private investment. It is not the other way around.

And in Claremont we have Republicans there and undeclareds and they all agree the way we do it right now is unsustainable. I will say in terms of Governor Sununu being on a stage, of Governor Sununu in that first week in November, there are a number of places I would argue he is vulnerable not just completely, but also on policy including this one. We should reverse the tax cut about \$100 million a year, but the challenge here as someone that's banged a drum against it for a long time, with all due respect to Molly, Molly was part of a senate that voted for the first round of the business tax cut, so although I appreciate the desire to reverse it and I agree with that, it is going to be easy for Chris Sununu on a number of issues where he is highly vulnerable, he should be held accountable for it.

We need to be able to pound away at that with clarity, clarity of message and clarity of record that allows us to say without any question it was wrong, it still

is wrong, and in the meantime towns like⁴⁷ Claremont will have to sue the state because we are not serious about dealing with it the way that pretty much the rest of the country does already.

MOLLY KELLY: I would like to respond to some of the comments that my opponent has made, in particular to tax breaks and my experience in the state senate. I worked on five budgets in the state senate. Five budgets and we balanced those budgets. That is not easy. It is not easy, especially if you are in a senate where you are in the minority or the house is in the minority.

That original tax break was to minimize and compromise so that we were equal to the regions around us to move forward to balance a budget. But the tax breaks that have taken, gone further under Governor Sununu are wrong and need to be repealed. There is a clear distinction. That needs to be clear for all of you as well.

The other thing that a governor does and I would do when we talk about funding is

you start, the governor starts the budget process and like all of you when you put a budget together, what do you put at the top of your budget? You put the thing that means the most to you, don't you? The thing that you want to fund because you know it's going to be in the best interest of those you care about.

So as governor I'm putting at the top of my budget what matters the most to me and that's education from K through 12 and working with colleges to make college affordable as well.

So those are the two things that we can do and that I will do to make sure that we ensure every child, whether in Claremont or wherever we are in the state, has an equal opportunity to an education because that is the foundation for all of us. That's how we will succeed. That's how businesses will be able to have what they are crying out for is a prepared and educated work force where we can grow the economy to have an innovative, creative economy and reinvest in our children and in education, and that's my plan.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Final word?⁴⁹

STEVE MARCHAND: Few

points. Number one, as somebody who was a city councilor and mayor at a very young age, and maybe in part due to my hairstyle, and I appreciate yours as well, Scott, is easily recognizable at Hannafords.

And there is the ultimate in accountability when you are a 32-year-old mayor who is walking around with your two and zero-year-old, that's where my kids were at the time, getting a gallon of milk and 45 minutes later paying for it because it became instant accountability.

One of the things that I learned early on in public life that I think serve me well and maybe is part of the reason for the way that I have been campaigning over the last year and a half and I'm pretty direct and specific about the issues is that it turns out that if you try to do difficult things, 40 to 45% of people are going to disagree with you to begin and that's if you are lucky. If you only had 45% of people disagree with you, you are a blowout winner and it

means you get comfortable very quickly⁵⁰ doing things that are hard, but are going to be necessary.

In the element of education funding as a state because the gap is so pronounced, because there are people talking about reengaging in a Claremont style lawsuit, which I believe will occur some time in the near future, right now if you ask like in the UNH polling what's the number one issue facing New Hampshire, it continues to be as it has for several years, the opioid crisis, addiction crisis, over half of New Hampshire say that's the number one issue. Nothing else is remotely close to that in those studies.

But believe you me, within the next two to four years education funding will be right back as it was for many years in the 90's and early 2000s. It will be right back to the top. The longer we wait to move vigorously and not taking the pledge, and part of the reason I'm not taking the pledge is that we need to begin moving the culture of moving to a 21st century method of raising and spending

money in New Hampshire. When I tell my⁵¹ fellow auditors that I am from New Hampshire they say that's funny because when I want to know what 19th century governance in America looked like I come to New Hampshire today.

That's our reputation and it means we deliver education, social services, and infrastructure in an incredibly inefficient and unfair way. It will lead to difficult conversations in the next few years. We need to begin ramping up for those conversations sooner than later.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Thank you for that. Tom Raffio joins us. Good morning, Tom.

TOM RAFFIO: Good morning. Thank you for being here and the commitment to the most important area. You all know this, but how we treat children 0-5 is the most important years, so I really, really appreciate that. I am speaking on behalf of the Coalition for Business and Education. I'm on the Early Learning board and I wear this tie two or three times a year. I appreciate it.

So one of the most important facets of development which we sometimes overlook is social and problem solving development. Skills like persistence, attention to detail, learning to play and work well with others are all foundational to more complex skills that develop later. These are skills that business leaders and companies just as Northeast Delta identify as essential in their workforce. What will you do to make sure our public programs are supporting not just cognitive but the social and softer skill development of children such as your son knowing that it's 9:00 means 9:00?

SCOTT SPRADLING: He better be on his way to class. Thanks, Tom.

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Huge issue. I can talk about this for 30 minutes in terms of how it impacts not just the work force. It impacts individual's abilities to cope with stress. What schools are actually doing to red flag certain students that are having issues, whatever it might be, and again, I think I'm preaching to the choir a little bit.

A lot of you have heard we made ⁵³social emotional learning a key priority in this state. Not asking for it in a community, not hoping for the best. But we're providing a program and one of the back bones, what I'm basically saying is individual communities and schools can pick the program that works best for them.

If a lot of folks, and it's amazing there are a lot of schools out there that don't have SEL type programs. To be a little blunt a lot of schools think they do, but they really don't. They are antiquated, not talking about issues that need to be talking about.

A lot of folks know I of worked very tightly with the True Love program with Scarlet Lewis who lost her son at Sandy Hook.

She created a program. She is incredibly positive. It's a program that works in the classrooms, that doesn't overburden teachers, that's easy to train to. And we are basically saying if your classroom has something that works that's great, but if not here is the backbone of a program that

can really work that's proven success,⁵⁴ that's been a great model for individual communities across the country. But as a state we're making this a priority.

A lot, for example, don't understand what it is. That's okay. I didn't know what it was for a long time. You know, sitting down and working with folks, talking to teachers, looking at some of the pilot programs we tried in the state with issues like this, and making sure that there is a continuum of programming from K to 12. Right? Social emotional learning, soft skill learning, problem solving learning, whatever you want to call it, there are certain schools that might do it, certain grades that might be focused on, but they focus on that in high school years. No.

You need it all the way back at kindergarten, pre-k, whatever it is. You have to get those skills in there. It starts with learning how to share. We're really talking about social emotional learning with that statement right there. Right? That's the precursor, if you will, to getting to the

point with problem solving, coping skills⁵⁵ and things, that when you don't have that can manifest itself into very, very negative violent things. That's a big issue.

Social emotional learning solves everyone's emotional problems. No, that's not the point. The point is that you have a system that students can rely on, a support system that is there for so many students right now that are walking through their halls feeling like nobody cares about them, don't know how to deal with their skills. They don't know how to deal with whether you want to call it anger management, whatever it may be, and they are dealing with it in very unproductive ways. And whether it's with violence or drugs or whatever it is, those are all negatives that aren't just in the moment, but that can last a lifetime.

So I am a big believer you have to have those programs in there. We're the first state to ever champion these programs at a statewide level. We're making it priority. We hired somebody. If you didn't have money in the budget over at education, you know,

education budget is so tight because we're⁵⁶ putting it into the middle of the budget. My own staff is on it. I brought my staff to farm out so we are going out, talking to schools, talking to teachers, talking to communities, one to one, to understand what these programs are, how to implement them.

It doesn't take a whole lot of time. At the high school level it's 15 or 20 minutes out of the week for a student. You have a few teachers that drive that whether in their study hall periods or something like that. Really drive a program and start getting it to be not a new thing, but just part of the culture, part of the curriculum. This is just what we do, right?

When do you that, it doesn't become a burden, it just becomes something that I think to your point create amazing I guess in the professional world we'll call it soft skills of the work force that are really driving positivity to the future.

STEVE MARCHAND: Two points on that, and I appreciate the question. Number one, I used to be director of corporate relations for the

University of New Hampshire for several⁵⁷ years, so while Chris Sununu said he sat down with 100 businesses -- he did not. That was my job. So I did. I would ask self-described conservative CEO's, heads of HR, heads of engineering, what was going to drive future economic growth and prosperity for them. Do you know what the number one thing they said was? When you have outstanding early education all the way through 12 in and around a community you win tie breakers for the talent that they currently often have a hard time finding.

So it is the business community as much as anybody in this room including business leaders who appreciate the impact of getting on it at the earliest stage possible for economic growth. If you look at the Quebec study, for example, with daycare if you look at the best practices of pre K around the country, since most states have some state funding at pre K, we don't, we have some pretty good data to work with here once you describe part of the best practices all the way to the earlier levels of the professional

engagement and intervention.

So it's not simply cognitive or academic environment. It's also developing interpersonal skills and identifying challenges that young children often have that may impede them later in being able to develop interpersonal skills and problem solving skills.

The longer we wait to invest, the more expensive and less effective it will be on the back end. So this is where we have the best practices of other states and the case of Quebec provinces in North America that can instruct us as to what the best public policy should be.

Now our job in moving those goalposts out of where they have been for four years and toward where they need to be for the next 40 years is to make the case forcefully to talk about how much it will cost and willingness to pay for it over the next several years and winning that argument in the civic spirit.

SCOTT SPRADLING: The question to you is what will you do to make sure our

public programs are supporting not just⁵⁹
cognitive but social and emotional
development of children?

MOLLY KELLY: Thank you for that question and clarifying the question. Thank you for the question as well, and it has been always a privilege to work with you on so many of the issues about early learning and children and being a member of the coalition and your work on this state school board and working together to put through stem and that was so necessary for our young children as well.

So let me just say that while I was in the senate I also have a consulting business. Obviously, I am not working in it as much today. What I did was I created a center for civic engagement and brought together people who don't agree with each other, people who had ideas about issues in the community that were important to them, but they want to be able to talk about it but didn't agree, and how do you go forward?

So one of the issues that came to me a number of times was the issue of early

childhood education, so I had put two ⁶⁰forums together and moderated them. There were people around the table who disagreed on different ideas, but they were there because they cared about the children, and they knew that early childhood education was important as do all of you or you wouldn't be here today, and so one of the issues that came up -- we had a big dialogue. Reminds me, Tom, of your question because they talk about, do we need early education where we're learning our numbers one to ten? And is that the focus that we need because parents are hearing that they want to make sure their child gets into the best college and they better start early on? Or do we need more play, to learn through play? It was a very interesting conversation, and what I heard and what I agreed with is that we do need to learn and we always as parents and grandparents and whatever, whoever we are, want all of the children that we are close to and in the state to do the best that they can, so they have to learn.

I think we have moved too far into the

academic world for children and putting⁶¹ pressure on them when they are so young, so we need public policy that encourages a culture of learning through play. I think that's what is most important because that is how we learn to communicate, how we work together, how we strategize, how we learn to solve problems and that's the world that our children and the children today are going to be moving into.

So, yes, I do agree that the public policy has to change our cultural thinking about how we move and start with early learning and it's very, very important. Thank you.

SCOTT SPRADLING: We now have a question on family health and well-being. I would like to welcome Jake Berry with a question about parental substance use and children's well-being. Hi, Jake.

JAKE BERRY: Governor, thank you so much for being here. As you know, the wide availability of addictive, high potency opioids are a large part of why we face a crisis unlike any we have seen

before. Because substance use impacts adult's⁶² ability to foster healthy development of children, we have to make sure that our response to this problem includes response to the needs of children in affected families.

At the end of 2016 there were 977 children in New Hampshire state custody. Grandparents and other relatives caring for children and the foster care system are taxed. How would your administration deal with the immediate needs of children who live with their parent's addiction every day?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: Absolutely. We are dealing with it very aggressively. People were shocked when I came in and got rid of-- we asked the DCYF leadership to step aside because they were not getting it done. It was embarrassing.

Right? We put funding exactly where it needed to be, would be the DCYF program because again it's all interconnected with opioids. We're very locally controlled and locally driven here. If you want to talk specifically about opioids if you remember

what I talked about in 2016 when I talk⁶³ about prevention programs in school I said they stink because they did. They did.

We're finally making a turn there in implementing programs that I think aren't just in the moment. Eleventh graders talk about opioids, the fifth graders talk about drinking.

Let me digress a little bit. If you haven't heard the story before, my son, he was in fifth grade, came home with a flier and in his DARE program they talked about smoking and drinking. That got me angry as a parent because they weren't talking about opioids or marijuana. They weren't talking about pills. They weren't talking about all of these things that were already in his school and he was going to be very drastically experiencing in middle school.

As a parent, my message was we need to wake up, think, and start talking aggressively about this stuff. There has to be a narrative in terms of prevention starting in K and first grade about what is good for you, what isn't good for you that

builds and is proactive not just responsive,⁶⁴
right?

A lot of our prevention programs are responsive. We need to be proactive in terms of the discussion where it's going and then you have to look at all of the aspects of addiction. It's not just about opioids. It isn't. We have had a state of addiction for decades here.

It's about alcohol, it's about marijuana, it's about pills, it's about opioids, it's about meth. Right? The spikes in meth we're seeing right now, that's one of the dangers I see out there that we keep talking about opioids without realizing that is simply the latest and most horrible symptom we have seen because the health crisis is so immense, but again if we want to build a system for the long-term I have to really, really invest in it for the long-term.

Foster care. We finally raised rates for the first time in years. We're finally promoting a foster care system and cherishing a system that provides the flexibility that a

lot of these kids need until their parents⁶⁵ can get back on track. Well, how do you get parents back on track? How do you get these children support services they need? You fund it. We funded 40 new positions in DCYF alone in the past 20 months.

It was a disaster. I don't know what was going on before we showed up. I will be very blunt about that because as a citizen you should be angry about the lack of leadership that was there. We brought in a child advocate. We had the choice between a lot of different child advocates. There were great people there to be sure. You know who I picked to be the child advocate? The toughest one I could find.

Maura is probably not here. If you haven't met Maura O'Neill (phonetic) you have to go meet her. Boy, she doesn't hold back. People say my goodness, she is brilliant, she really is good. She will really hold the state governor accountable. Are you sure you want that? Absolutely we want that. We need that. We need to have folks looking right back at us and holding us

accountable and saying this is it. Where⁶⁶ does it work and does it not? We brought in leadership, Chris Tappan (phonetic), Joe Ribsome (phonetic), Jersey Joe as I like to call him from New Jersey, one of the states that turned their system around. I said, "I want the best and the brightest."

I don't know. I don't care what the political affiliation is. I just want the best people here and we found them. We got them. We brought them New Hampshire. I said, "Outline exactly what the steps need to be." They outlined it and we did it. Is it going to get better? Will it get better overnight? No, of course not. This really is probably a two or three year issue that we really have to create the structure, which we have done and start really churning results.

Walk into a DCYF office. Morale is up. When I went to the Portsmouth office in February of 2017, there were all these young individuals, mostly women, young women, they looked beaten. They looked devastated. Because this was their passion. This was their life. This is how they wanted to give

back. And the system had completely let⁶⁷ them down. They were telling me stories how they had to pull out \$20, \$100 out of their own pockets, as we pay them pennies by the way, their own pocket putting up money to get a mom, you know, to a hotel for the night so she wouldn't get abused by an individual and get their kids safe. They're pulling money out of their pockets to do it. That's shameful that we had a system to let them down like that. Has it completely turned around? No. The strides we made are huge.

I mean, a couple of months we have the first time in I think it was something like six years where more people left foster care than came into it. Right? You know, that's a positive blip. That's a good blip. We have to get more months like that to kind of track, but there is no doubt we are tracking the right way. We're doing the right stuff.

I will take credit for one thing. Putting a lot of emphasis on it and bringing in the best team we could find. I'm not the expert. I'm not, but I am good at finding the experts and empowering them and

encouraging them.

Finally, the last piece I want to talk about is work force. If you don't have those individuals-- finally we got morale up, they want to be working in the world again and be in a system that believes in them, but we need simply more work force. We funded these vacancies, we still haven't even built them. There are still vacant positions not even filled yet, so we have to get the work force there, so making investments at the university level, community college level, and in these areas we're proposing to do now because we believe we have a system that folks will want to be part of, that is going I think take a huge burden off some of the stresses of the individuals where the case load is still a little too high, where some of the individuals are still looking to have a couple of those desks next to them filled so that they are not doing 20 or 30 cases a time and they can get back to 12 to 17 case "normal" level of case work. Even that's a little bit high frankly depending on the workload.

Well, I know I'm giving too long⁶⁹ of an answer. It's a lot of pieces to this puzzle. Workload, not just case load. Right? Not just the number of files on your desk, but certain files take a lot of work. Certain files don't. We need a system that measures not in terms of she has fifteen files on her desk that's too many and she has nine files on her desk she could have more work. No, no, no. The level of those cases, the stress on that system is really important to understand so that's where the balance is. And I think the metrics have to move to not just in terms of cases, but workload.

MOLLY KELLY: Thank you and thank you for that important question. I meet people every day, and I don't think there is a family in New Hampshire that has not been hurt and suffered by this opiate epidemic. To begin with, it's an epidemic and it must be treated as so. It's medical. It is an illness and we need to look at this epidemic as we would any other medical epidemic and treat it that way with a comprehensive plan throughout the state for prevention,

treatment, and recovery. No question. We'll⁷⁰ begin there. Take the stigma off of this opiate epidemic and treat it as an illness because what's happening when we don't do that is that we're really not addressing all of the issues about the epidemic and the implications and what happens.

You are speaking specifically about the children and, yes, they are the innocent, really innocent little ones that are subject to this. I have been with grandparents who are raising their grandchildren because the mother or father is in jail, which is not the place for someone to be who has an opiate epidemic, medical illness. That's not the place for them to be. So we need to address the issue.

I have been in the senate working on legislation that we know that the best thing is for a child to stay with their parents or their mother, but there are times when we have to step in and we have to say for the best interest of the child, we need to protect them, and I have worked on legislation in order to be able to do

that. At the same time, treat the parents⁷¹ as an illness, not in jail, not to put them in jail.

Again, as prevention, treatment, and recovery as we would any epidemic. You know, we all -- we see every day and we talk about this that we need to have that beginning with prevention for a child. As I had said early on, you know, as my mother said every child needs a nest, but our responsibility is to make sure that stays in tact with leadership from the top who understands that we, what we need to do about this epidemic and to fund our prevention treatment and recovery, our drug courts, to keep families in tact and together while they go through this illness.

But as a community and as a state we have to make sure that all of those children are taken care of and don't fall through the cracks, in particular, with this epidemic. I know you all do in your individual what you are doing, we see every day, but from the top we have to make sure we fund the process. Thank you to our U.S. delegation for bringing funding into the state to finally

address the epidemic. Our governor has not⁷² been able to fund or to bring any funding from D.C. through the Trump administration, so thank you to our U.S. delegation.

Now funding is starting to move forward and should be addressed in all of the communities in our state equally. So these young children who are innocent -- we need to hold them carefully, provide the support to their families, provide the support in the community, whatever it takes, and to know that they need special care through this process, get their parents well so they can come back together and be an intact family.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Mr. Marchand, the question is how would your administration deal with the immediate needs of children who live with their parents' addiction we see every day?

STEVE MARCHAND: First, I would note piggybacking on what Molly said at the end Governor Sununu has been to the White House more than any governor in America since he took office last year and the results do not suggest those meetings are going very

well.

But it was a federal delegation who moved the ball forward, far more than Governor Sununu ever did on that. We should acknowledge that.

I spent a lot of time predating running for any office in the last year and a half or so talking to folks running recovery centers. There is a funding element that at the state level if we say it's the number one issue, and it certainly is, it certainly is at the top, we should be willing to fund that. I estimate an additional \$8 million a year of sustainable state funding in addition to the good work happening coming from D.C. on this issue.

They need the money for two reasons. One is I would sit down with a lot of the executive directors of recovery centers and I would say, "Show me your current budget and tell me your dream budget." And I look for the delta, the gap between the two. One of the things as a layman at the beginning of this process I learned is that oftentimes that delta was

much smaller than I anticipated -- one hundred and fifty, two hundred and fifty, three hundred and fifty grand difference. I would finish and say, "What else do you want on the dream list?" And they would be done. I would realize that it was, when I said, "What would you do with the money," it is the difference between doing what you have to do the bare minimum to stay open and it is providing holistic services in what is much more of a hub and spoke way, frankly a medical way, of dealing with the problem.

And so it's not just the detoxification. It's also wellness. Remember, often it was prescription drugs that were the entry point to get people down the line that led them to being in that recovery center and it was not curative in nature. It was palliative. They were trying to mask pain and the pain, the source of the pain was not cured along the way, so we need to deal with that at the same time.

It's also mental health services and I presume -- I don't want to be too presumptuous because that is we see every bit

as much of a crisis in New Hampshire as ⁷⁵ the opiate crisis is. It's just we are a little behind in a willingness to talk about it.

I have a family member that has suffered mental health crisis during the course of this campaign, and so now as a family member I have spent a lot of time and counseling sessions and with pediatrician psychiatrists. I am now in it on a personal level. The majority of people coming in seeking long-term recovery help are also in need of mental health, but because we use one-time sources and grants to pay they cannot optimize their budget. They cannot make a decision about next year because they cannot say with a straight face how the money will be there next year.

And if there is ever a place in a state government where additional funding is appropriate and necessary to provide stability, predictability, to be able to optimize budgets for people that know what to do, but they simply cannot say with assurance the money will be there to do it then I don't know what the purpose of state government

is. This is a poor function of state government and I estimate for as little as an additional \$8 million a year targeted at the local level to the various recovery centers we can take care of much of the delta between what their current budget looks like and what those dream budgets look like because it also involves family counseling, peer counseling, job skills. These are the spokes that shoot off of the hub.

If we're not able to fund all of the spokes, then people are going to end up back where they started, they will lose lives, and we're going to lose the lives of the generations of the kids that are trying to figure out how to navigate through this while their parents are seeking recovery.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Governor, our next question comes from Christina D'Allesandro.

CHRISTINA D'ALLESANDRO: We know 69% of New Hampshire children under the age of six have all available parents in the work force. Working people are often balancing work while caring for children and caring for aging parents. However, two-thirds of the

work force currently lack access to paid⁷⁷ leave to care for a family member. Research shows a clear link between family's access to paid family medical leave and children's positive health outcomes. So my question is, do you support creating a family and medical leave insurance program that will ensure all working people in New Hampshire have access to adequate length of leave supported by partial, temporary wage replacement when they need to take time out for work to care for themselves, care for a new child or family member who is sick or in recovery? And if so, what will you be doing as governor to make this program a reality?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: So I absolutely believe in a paid family medical leave program and I absolutely will never support one that will fall apart in a matter of years, and that's exactly what we have with Bill 628. It stunk. It was a disaster. Right? When the insurance commissioner stood up, my employment security commissioner stands up and says we cannot vouch for the financial sustainability of this program that

they are proposing in this bill. You know⁷⁸ what that means? That means a single mom with a few kids that needs family medical leave might pay into the system for a few years then a couple years down the road it might all fall apart. That's exactly what they said.

Think I will sign that bill? How irresponsible that would have been. I believe there is a solution and the solution comes in a truly voluntary program, which 628 was not. You can't tell people they have 24 hours to sign a piece of paper otherwise they are stuck in the system. Right? That's not a voluntary program. Right?

Think of it a little bit like Aflac. When I walked into Waterville Valley we had Aflac. Aflac was an insurance, essentially an insurance provider that came in, you can buy their insurance or you couldn't. They made their presentation. You could invest in the program or not. Whatever you wanted to do was like, you know, the extra insurance that you can get. That's a purely voluntary insurance type system.

I think there is a solution there. That's what I am trying to create that's a voluntary program, that doesn't create an income tax, which is exactly what 628 was, right? You might not want to be in the program, but if you didn't get a piece of paper certified by a notary in 24 hours you were stuck in the system? Are you kidding? Right?

That's a false bill of goods. We can't have that because that will drive -- the only way to pay for systems like that is with a broad based tax. I will never support that. You shouldn't want it. Nobody should want that, right? I want a voluntary system that really works. But it has to be financially sustainable. The numbers that they showed in that last bill were not financially sustainable, so I charged them. I said, look, let's study this thing. Let's bring in experts. Don't let the legislature try to decide what and advocates who are getting paid by special interest decide what the bill should look like. Let's bring in insurance companies, insurance experts,

people who have looked at this stuff before,⁸⁰ who understand how these markets work to really put a viable solution together that we can vote for and pass. 628 was not it. It is quite a disaster of a bill. They were hoping very strongly and I worked closely with the advocates on both sides, but it was very clear to me at the end that the folks that the wanted the bill to pass were just praying the political pressure would get it done.

Political pressure is never a way to get anything done. Not if you want it to be sustainable. I really am concerned and -- or I was when that bill got close to landing on my desk I thought, my goodness, what happens to those individuals when this system falls apart financially because nobody could vouch for it?

Right? Nobody could vouch the money would be there down the road. I mean, let's think about this. Let's do the math on it and they were saying that everyone -- it would only cost everyone one half of one percent of their salary. But every year, every year technically everyone could take whatever it

was, maybe like four weeks of vacation,⁸¹ six weeks I think is what they came up to. Six weeks, which is a lot more than a half percent of your salary.

When you do the math they were hoping those that paid into the system would only use it about once every eleven or twelve years. That's how it was going to maintain its sustainability. Everyone would pay in for ten or eleven years and use it once, then they would pay in for ten or eleven years or use it once. As long as that happened there would be money in the system. Does anybody think that's going to happen?

Would you pay into a system -- and not to mention you are not going to have any medical issues. Mostly this would be for people that want to have children, you know, are having children, young families, for dads and moms. I love the concept, but don't tell me they are only going to use it once every eleven years and we'll hope for the best from there. Right?

That was not a solution for us. So I want it to work. I really do. It should be a

voluntary program. I think we should have⁸² experts driving the solution here in the financial sustainability, not political pundits.

STEVE MARCHAND: I have been very specific about this for a very long time. Two countries in the world don't provide some form of federal paid family leave. You are in one of them. The other one is Papua New Guinea. In the course of my candidacy it was three. I had to revise it to two countries. This is ridiculous. Just because we have the lowest birth rate in America doesn't mean the public policy should mean we're surprised women still get pregnant, but that's what we do with the lack of paid family and medical leave. So here is the thing.

I'm not here to ding Chris Sununu all day, but I will ding him on this significantly because he ran in 2016 as a Republican that was in the main stream. He said, "I'm for paid family medical leave." The legislature, hoping to try to get something that had a shot to get to his desk

put something together, well-intended to⁸³ get something on the books. I totally understand that. However, any reasonable evaluation of it would say it was a very weak version of it. It was a very introductory, with an opt in funding mechanism, which is the not optimal way to do paid family and medical leave, but at least you can get it to Chris's desk and maybe he would sign it and we could build it from there. It looked like it had a chance. And he said, "Oh, my God. This is going to involve money." As if the word "paid" isn't in paid family and medical leave. And then he said, "It will just lead to a back door income tax," which is why I tell my friends don't take the pledge. They will accuse you of everything no matter what you do. So at least open up the conversation to modernize government. So my plan is this: Nine hundredths of 1% payroll tax deduction like the rest of the world does, like the growing number of states do. Do it right so that it has the money in it. It costs the median New Hampshire income about \$29 a year and in exchange it allows us to have three

months of paid family medical leave that⁸⁴ can be used for adoption, birth, long-term family illness and end of life situation.

In other words, your life, the life of everybody around you, and that is one of the ways that we communicate to the people we want to keep in New Hampshire or that we would like to come to New Hampshire that we understand what it's like to be them. It is a pro-entrepreneur, pro-growth element of an agenda, and I think we as Democrats need to change the narrative that goalposting I mentioned right now and for much of the last 40 years we have been committed to that you have to choose in this country. You have to choose between progressive, inclusive policies or a passion for entrepreneurship and growth.

I am here to say that the only path to entrepreneurship and growth are progressive, inclusive policies like comprehensive paid family and medical leave.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Senator, the question is about paid family and medical leave. If you support it and, if so, how you

would make it a reality.

MOLLY KELLY: I do support it. I do want to talk about -- I just want to clarify one comment I continue to hear when I'm at forums from my opponent and that is the comment about this pledge option of not taking the pledge. I just want to be clear that one of the things that we do agree about is that we both agree that we do not support a sales or income tax. I have been very clear with the voters. I want to be clear with you and I also think that all of the voters have a right to know where we stand on that issue.

So now to get back to the Paid Family Medical Leave Act, yes, and thank you for that question. It is a priority. I talk about it. We see it every day when I am out because the way that it really comes home to me is that this is a value that we have, that we have a right to be with the people we love when they need us the most and they have a right to have us with them. If we can't do that in New Hampshire. If we can't do that, then who are we? What are our values here? I had that come home to me. Art and I had

received a phone call. Our daughter had⁸⁶ a simple procedure and it all went wrong, and was in very serious and beyond, and we got on a plane like anyone would to go there to be with her.

And what really came home to me was that when I saw her with her husband, and she is fine by the way and she will be fine, but she was with her husband and he was there with her and surrounded by her children and it was that, the way that he was so loving and kind to her and present was what has healed her and why she is where she is today.

All I could think about when I was there was what if? What if he couldn't be there because he was afraid he would lose his job? Because he might be afraid that he wouldn't be able to pay the mortgage or the rent or feed his children?

Think about that. That's what paid family medical leave is about. It is about the right to be with those you care about when they love you the most.

If we can't find funding to help boost that and get that going, who are we? It is

an advantage to employers because then ⁸⁷ your employers know you care about them and you work together. Why else are we working? We see it every day, but if it's not for the people we care about and to take care of them.

So I think you can hear this, it's important to me. It is. If I have a bill, that is the biggest priority I have. I will be present in the house and in the senate when those bills are before the house and the senate. I will work. I worked ten years bipartisan to pass legislation that is important to me and important to all of you. I am here to work for children and families we see every day as governor and that bill will be a bill that will get to my desk and I will sign. Thank you.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Senator, thank you. Mr. Marchand something to add?

STEVE MARCHAND: Two quick points relating to the pledge. One, you can go on Facebook live, I bark it all the time. I have done over 300 events and we want everybody to hear what I have to say. The

Republican Governor's Association used to⁸⁸ track me. They track the other party. They do that. I told them they can just go on Facebook and see what I'm saying live, you know? They say things like, "You want to increase the gas tax to pay for roads and we caught you on tape." I'm like, "You could have just stayed home and watched it on-line." I will say it hundreds of times because we need to do that. In the course of the pledge part of this is cultural. Mel Thompson (phonetic) and Bill Lobe (phonetic) set the terms of engagement literally before I was born. It has meant that in real terms we continue to contract the impact and significance of state government, which is increasing the inequality in a number of ways that we deliver services including education.

It also allows me to say what I say all over the place, which is income should be a significant if not dominant element of how your remaining local liability is paid for like almost 20 states in the country do because even past Republican governors will acknowledge income is a better way to

determine your ability to pay because that's⁸⁹ how you pay. And when we started the property tax system, it did not tax households. It taxed revenue generating property, which right now has nothing to do with the way we do it any more. So we have to make that cultural change.

What I would say with the paid family and medical leave is this: Part of the question that was asked is, how will you pay for it? That is the difficult part of this. Almost everybody, including in theory even Chris Sununu, supports the concept of paid family and medical leave. But in my 20 years of auditing we have a statement and it's this: A proposal without funding is called an idea.

We need to put the proposals out and that's why nine hundredths of 1%, get specific, when you get specific as a candidate you earn political capital that when you win allows you to spend that capital in office, so it needs to be a payroll tax deduction. In every other place in the world that has a sustainable system,

some form of a deduction into a shared ⁹⁰ risk pool is the way to do it as we do other forms of employment security and so forth.

This is the only way to do it. Otherwise, without the stability of the income stream it will be difficult for it to be sustainable and I want to make sure we do it, we do it right and we do it in a way that the naysayers can't point and say, "See, it can't work because" -- and the reason it would not have worked is because we did not fund it in a sustainable way on the front end.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Governor, I would now like to welcome Rebecca Woitkowski.

REBECCA WOITKOWSKI: As you mentioned earlier, in your role as governor you work on a variety of proposals that seek to ensure New Hampshire communities can prosper and thrive now and in the future. In the last several years, the attention to adverse childhood experiences or ACES has been growing. ACES include childhood abuse and neglect, parental substance use, mental illness, domestic violence, and parental

loss.

The pileup of early adversity is highly correlated with a long range of poor health, mental health, and even economic outcomes. Many experts believed a two-pronged approach is needed to insure first that there are resources for those experiencing adversity, but also to prevent early adversity from being toxic to the development. What would you do to ensure the state is operating in ways to both prevent and alleviate the impacts of ACES?

GOVERNOR SUNUNU: So again I think it really starts with a system in the structure. Right? You have to have individuals in place that understand how, this negativity, let's just use that as a general term, is affecting these kids at a very real level and very one to one level. I will say this. We talk about retail politics a lot. Right? I believe in retail management and what that means is going into the schools. Let's use schools as an example because they are a huge part of the community. And working with parents, right,

with prevention services, which we finally⁹² have installed.

We had cut all of these prevention and intervention services with parents because everything was on the abuse scale was it's founded, it's unfounded, it's black or it's white.

And so what would happen, a lot of cases that DCYF would find founded would get thrown out of court for legal reasons. There was no middle ground. What we finally created is a kind of a third, a third-party if you will, in the middle kind of a gray area that says it's unfounded, but we have concerns. And now I can still have prevention programs for the first time. Why this wasn't done years ago I don't know. Why they cut it out -- I have an idea, but boy what a dumb idea. When you -- when we got rid of prevention services in the homes and with schools, what we basically said was our system is going to be completely reactive. We'll wait until the kids are abused. We'll wait until there is a crisis. We'll wait until there is drug abuse

and then we'll deal with it. Horrible ⁹³ way to deal with it. Right?

Horrible. You have to be proactive. You have to be preventative. Just because a kid isn't getting so abused that it's viable in the court system, doesn't mean you can't go in and say, okay, there is something here. So we have support structures, support systems for the family, for the individual, whatever it may be. We finally instituted these programs again, which I am incredibly excited about.

Now they are just getting underway again. I think there is a lot more we can do, but we have to have a system that becomes preventative and proactive as opposed to the reactive system we have lived by. That failed.

And let's remember I am preaching to the choir. I get it, but let's remember when that system fails it's failing for some six-year-old kid getting the snot beat out of him every day. I mean, that should get us angry. That should get us angry. Politics shouldn't dictate whether we finally will

stand up for that kid or not. Politics shouldn't dictate whether we will put a million or million and a half in. Are you kidding me? Why are we not making that a priority? We didn't do it.

We were just rushing along. I don't have the tolerance for that. You shouldn't have tolerance for that. Other issues I want to talk about is schools. We had a system for a long time and we were focusing on making sure every kid gets a diploma. Do you know what we were doing when we were saying that? We were saying get the kids through as fast as we can. Get them to graduate so we can take credit for a high graduation rate. That's not enough. In many ways that incentivized schools to drive kids through the system, to not identify problems, to not identify issues because you remember when you identify an issue, when we identify something we have the responsibility of dealing with it. Right?

So we have to empower schools to identify those issues and be part of that solution. They have to be part of that

solution.

So whether it's having schools work not just with social emotional learning, but working with guidance counselors, working with teachers, working with kids as individuals, we're going to manage in a retail way one on one. We want schools to manage in a retail way one on one. What's happening with that student and that student and that student. How can we identify it? Are there other supports that are there? Do teachers in schools know what resources are available to them and their communities? One of the reasons I focus so much on this hub and spoke model. This new opioid crisis model that we're building, completely rebuilding it in the state, we announced it a couple weeks ago. It's phenomenal because it's community-centered for the first time whether you are in Pittsburgh or Nashua or Monadnock we will be community centric in terms of how we go about the opioid crisis, which means there is a single funnel and single community entity that somebody expects something or needs resources in a community they can literally

go to the backyard. Somebody right in the⁹⁶ neighborhood. They don't have to-- someone in Bath, New Hampshire doesn't have to call down to downtown Manchester.

Probably don't understand the issues that they are dealing with. But they have somebody in their community, in their county, in their region, that will really understand the pushes and pulls to get them the services they need to be preventative finally instead of just reactive.

I get a little emotional about it because, you know, you hear about these things before you become governor and then you realize just how big some of these holes are. These weren't problems. These were crisis. People just weren't talking about it the way we need to talk about it.

I don't care what the politics is as long as we put the emphasis where it needs to go. We're dealing with crisis. We need to deal with empowering people to come forward with creative ideas. You cannot get change by pushing harder in the same direction.

And that's what we were doing for a

long time. The system isn't really working. We'll give it more money. No. The system isn't working. We need to push in a different direction to get real change. We'll put the money there, too. Don't get us wrong. You have to have the courage to go in a completely different direction sometimes and that's what we're trying to do. Empower individuals to push in a different direction.

MOLLY KELLY: Thank you and thank you for the question. I have a couple thoughts on this and I know time is always the issue, so I wanted to get them out. I have put forth -- and thank you for the work that you do with ACES. That's incredible work you are doing for children. One of the things I think that is the bottom line is economic insecurity, which causes a lot of what we call toxic issues that then come to a head, so I have put together a family economic security plan that I will just go through briefly that includes the issues that you are talking about.

First of all, I would reinstate a minimum wage here in New Hampshire. You know

we have only the federal, and I would increase that to \$15 an hour so that parents can be with their children and not have to work two or three jobs. What we're working for is a livable wage. We have to be able to work with parents in a comprehensive way if they are not present, if they are overstressed, if there is not income coming into a household. It becomes toxic and a lot of these problems rise to the top.

As you know, I want to strengthen public education and we talked about what ideas we have, what plans we have. We have a lot of ideas. We have a lot of plans, but one of the things that I'm good at is I bring those ideas and plans into action. And I did establish a commission and organized a commission that is now working with child hunger. We know that 44,000 children in New Hampshire are food insecure. That is something that I can't go to sleep at night knowing that is happening, so I just put that together. That's another toxic. If children aren't fed, if they are hungry, look at other issues that can happen in their home.

We do need to create education and⁹⁹ training so families can continue to move on and to be who they are. Have an education, bring forward livable wage and I would help with some of those issues by expanding the student loan repayment program and include in there child care educators so that we would then say to young people, come to our state, go to our university systems, university system for education, and we will work with you to pay back student loans through public service in healthcare.

But I'm -- I really believe we need to move forward with early childhood educators which would make a difference in a comprehensive plan for prevention, which you are talking about.

Also pass the Paid Family Medical Leave Act and fair scheduling so parents know if they are working hourly wages what hours they are working. If they are told they will work so many hours and then they don't, they need to be paid for that and compensation for own time. Because the bottom line for a lot of toxic issues we're talking about is the

economy, and that causes so much stress¹⁰⁰ at home and creates a lot of issues you are talking about.

I recently -- very, very disappointed in what our governor has not done enough for DCYF and we know that DCYF is the organization, the agency within our state, that is there for abuse, neglect, and there is a real critical crisis that is happening for children in our state, and as we know we received two reports, one in 2016 right here audited in our own state and then recently in 2018 from the federal government that said we are not in substantial competency and how we address children for abuse, neglect, and they are falling through the cracks and we have even incurred deaths because of it.

Unacceptable. Cannot work. So as governor I would fully fund DCYF and I would put forth the recommendations for the 2018 report, which would fund voluntary services, which we know are so important for families, work with communities on prevention, and we would change the ratio of case workers, which we now have one to forty to one to twelve,

which is the national statistic with what¹⁰¹ actually needs to happen, and I would create an independent system of care that would be prevention, and throughout the state a point of access so that all of the organizations that you are involved with that understand the issues that are most important to you. We would have a point of service within the state that is separate from DCYF to be dealing with prevention, treatment, and intervention so that we never get, we never get to the point of abuse and neglect for any child in this state.

So those two things -- I can talk about this for the rest of the day because it's so important, but I think that a plan for family economic security is what's important for income and to raise that level in that we see every home to address what the issues that are so stressful and also make sure that we are addressing a comprehensive plan for our children on abuse and neglect through the state and agency and to fund that.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Mr. Marchand, the question is, what would you do to ensure

the state is operating in ways to both prevent and alleviate this impact of adverse childhood experiences?

STEVE MARCHAND: One thing Governor Sununu said a few months ago, he said about a surplus, "We have so much money I don't know what to do with it." So the only part of the statement I would agree with is "I don't know what to do with it" because there are needs that are not getting met. We are losing lawsuits. The idea that we have money sitting around is a remarkable statement.

First of all, I agree. Economic insecurity and anxiety and the growing inequality. It is exploding, that inequality, particularly in communities like the ones I was in this weekend including Claremont. So a \$15 minimum wage is the right move in terms of helping buttress up at a time when automation and globalization continues to pound away at folks on the bottom half of the income and skill set level, but it is an element of a livable wage, of the dignity of work and dignity of raising a family. If you

work 40 hours a week you should be able¹⁰³ to have a roof over your head and you should be able to put food in your kid's bellies and you should have reliable transportation to get you to and from what you need to get to.

And you shouldn't have to worry about healthcare. That strikes me as a reasonable destination in public policy for us to reach.

And the thing is it's complex. So the \$15 an hour minimum wage is an element to be sure, but for example the affordable housing element, which takes a large percentage of people's income in New Hampshire or that most states in the country is driving instability including for young families. The number one reason why we have an affordable housing problem in New Hampshire is because of our uniquely high adherence or need of property taxes to drive how we pay for things more than any state in America.

We have in effect over the last 50 years zoned out children. We have zoned out apartments. We have zoned out density and height. We have zoned out diversity of housing options within a community. Our

answer for so many things is if you don't¹⁰⁴ like it just move. Move further away from your work, which brings up and what does it do? It exacerbates the transportation problem.

It used to be that the metric was that not more than 30% of your income should go toward housing or else you are in a bad place. Now it's 40% for housing plus transportation. There is an inverse relationship. The further away the housing is, the higher the transportation costs go, so I think one thing we need in the next governor, and one we certainly do not have in our current governor, is a system's approach to dealing with these issues.

If you look at the two biggest things that drive almost everything we all care about, irrespective of what that issue is, the way that politicians raise the money that get them into office and the way that we raise the money that we spend in government are at the floor of how public policy ends up being influenced.

So any conversation, and I believe

uniquely in the public funding of elections,¹⁰⁵
for example, because it's the only way you
will change a system that is fundamentally
broken and allows you to have a conversation
that's much better like we want to have today
as well as identifying the sources of the
challenges that make it harder for people to
get insurance, reliable transportation,
housing, and food insecurity. These are all
complex, but they are all related, and we
have to look at it that way in public policy
over the next two years.

I tell folks, to close up on this
point, I have to govern in order to ever get
a second term as governor. I'm going to have
to govern like I don't mind being a one term
governor. That's the only way we will get big
things done. We are in a time when we have
two year terms. We have to think
generationally. We have to be very
comfortable with the idea you might end up
being a one term governor because you are
trying to do hard but necessary things.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Okay. Game
reset. We have about ten minutes to go. I

have two more questions from two more questioners, and I have absolute faith we can get through both. So I would like to introduce Caleb Seymour with a question about home visiting.

CALEB SEYMOUR: Good morning. Home visiting programs match trained professionals with new and expectant parents to promote healthy growth and development, ensure safe environment and connect parents to essential resources. Research has shown that these voluntary home visiting programs work to reduce healthcare costs and increase family self-sufficiency yet the vast majority of families in New Hampshire do not have access to home visiting programs.

Would you work to increase access to voluntary home visiting and if so how?

STEVE MARCHAND: Good question. It gets back to a common theme of the day about early intervention provides remarkably exponentially better outcomes on the back end. So first, something that you implied in the question is the inequality of access and opportunity on this issue. By the way, on

almost everything we're talking about today¹⁰⁷ depending on where you live, if you live generally speaking in southern or southeastern New Hampshire, you are generally going to have access to resources that you are not going to get in western and northern New Hampshire.

For example, not to harp on it, but I always bring this up. In terms of pediatric psychiatric access there are whole swaths of the state with literally zero pediatric psychiatrists. Grafton country, most of Sullivan county. This is the same concept, so when I think about public policy it's one reason I traveled, you know, to over 300 of these events because the conversations actually are quite different if I'm having this conversation in Rye versus when I'm having it in Claremont. This comes up in a place like Claremont. It does not come up in a place like Rye, at least not often. I absolutely am committed to it as part of the holistic vision that early intervention is the best return on investment and I'm willing to make the case to people across the

ideological spectrum that if you don't ¹⁰⁸ just do it because it's from the heart. Do it from the wallet. Make the argument that a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneurship, pro-jobs agenda is one that funds early intervention and all of the ways that we're talking about today. To give people that are in often the most vulnerable positions the knowledge and access available.

So when I say additional revenue, the lion's share of it goes to helping fund education at the state level, at a higher level, to get ahead of the likely lawsuit then most of the rest of it actually is pointed at the young edge of investment because of the return and this would be an element of it.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Would you work to increase voluntary in home visiting and if so how?

MOLLY KELLY: Yes, I would. I will just step back. As you know, I was a new mother once. I know what that is like. Everybody kind of looks at you like you know what you are doing, right? And it is a very

difficult job. It's a huge responsibility.¹⁰⁹
The biggest responsibility we have. Nothing more in our life we love more, but it's one of the hardest jobs. I don't know if many of us as mothers and you as fathers could get through that if you didn't have a support system that was there for you.

Some were lucky to live near family that is that support system, but many of us did not. I early on was a La Leche League leader. That's what I did was to provide support for mothers in making choices about breast feeding, and it was something we all needed to do and learn together and to be able to support that choice and to feel like we were moving providing for our children what we wanted to do.

We need to expand that kind of thinking and acceptance in our culture that we are a community together and that we need to be able to help each other. I think there are so many families that would embrace mentoring, whether it's with a newborn or with a two-year-old. How do you read to a two-year-old? Why that is so important?

Healthy food, how we can do this together. Not waiting until it's a crisis and there is a problem and people fall through the crack and so do the children and they lose out. I think the mentoring programs have to be culturally accepted. One way we do that is you have a leader as governor who speaks to that, understands that issue and the importance and follows that up with funding for mentoring programs that many of you have started and are doing.

I know it's part of the ten points for recommendation from Spark and I would support you all as governor to make sure that we move forward with that. We would have to be comprehensive with our medical profession as well. As I said earlier, to encourage young people in college to move forward in those kinds of professions as well to be able to be available for mentoring, but, yes, that's very important.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Senator, thank you. We have time to for one more question on the topic about family resource centers. Good morning.

CELLISSA HOYT: During the ¹¹¹family life cycle we see every family faces challenge. We know that family resource centers and home visiting programs can help families be resilient in the face of hardship. New Hampshire has a few, but not enough, not nearly enough family resource centers. Do you support sufficient public funding for family resource centers? If so, how would you fund them?

MOLLY KELLY: You know, my answer to that is that as we talk just a few minutes ago and I think you heard me explain how important that is and what we are all coming to right here in this last moment in this discussion with all of you is the importance of that child. The importance of that child to be able to thrive here in New Hampshire and be who they are because if we don't we all fail. We all suffer. We know that to be true. That's why you are here and that's why you are so committed.

All of the issues that we're talking about are so important and we talk about exactly how do we fund those? Where does

that come from? Do you know what sometimes¹¹² my answer is? If we can provide tax breaks to 3% of the wealthiest corporations then we will find the funding to take care of what is most important to us is our children.

And that is the way that I look at this again as a priority. To come together to do that. I will not accept, I will not accept the fact that we cannot find funding in our budget in our general revenue that cannot take care of what is most precious to us is our children, to educate them, to make sure they are not subject to abuse and neglect and to make sure they are thriving. I do not accept that.

And that will be a priority as I said for me is our children, investing in education and investing in each of their lives and making our culture a place where that's most important. I have always thought that, like, I don't even know what we see every day. We see every school gets out at the same time. But it's close to 3:00, right?

What if everybody's cell phone went off at 3:00 in the afternoon wherever you were

because then we would stop and we say whatever we're doing, however hard we're working, why are we doing this? What are the decisions we're making? These are decisions for our children. It would be a reminder to everyone and I would like to do that. We see every day at 3:00 to remember that is most important. If our children grow and they thrive we do too.

So does our economy and we reinvest that into a community that's a caring community and that's the kind of New Hampshire that I want. I want a New Hampshire where everyone has the opportunity to move forward and to thrive and that is where we start, with that child, and that we all care and it is a part of our responsibility as a community. It's not just about the economy. It's a moral issue that we have.

We all have that responsibility, so I will not accept the fact that we cannot fund these important resources and programs that are necessary for us all to excel and to be who we are in this beautiful country, in this beautiful state where we all live and want to

thrive and be the very best that we can. Thank you.

SCOTT SPRADLING: Senator, thank you. The question is, do you support sufficient public funding for family resource centers. If so, how do you fund?

STEVE MARCHAND: The short answer we'll get to -- I think it's clear that I am willing to raise the money that we need to do the things that matter most and the things that matter most begin in the earliest stages of life, so that's the values on that.

But to me the democratic party at its best is when we understand and fight for equality of opportunity and that is less present now than it has been in my lifetime. The gap in opportunity between have and have nots is wider now than it's been in my lifetime. I was born in Manchester to a couple of immigrants. My mom didn't graduate high school and my dad didn't go to high school. I grew up about a mile from here. We bounced around a lot. My dad is a carpenter. Like I said, he works here now once his knee gets better. He was waxing floors on the

overnight shift where the Market Basket¹¹⁵ on Elm Street is now. It was a department store if you go back to 1974 when I was born.

And he couldn't hear my mom, there were no cell phones so they couldn't find my dad until I was basically entered into the world, which made for a stressful entry into the world.

When you look at the next 20 years of my life, bouncing around on the west side of Manchester as an immigrant's kid, if it was not for Godster (phonetic) Park Elementary School in Ward 11 and teachers like Mrs. Gogan and Miss Tessier there was no way a kid like me gets an opportunity to do what I'm doing right now.

That's the power of public education. If we had universal healthcare in 1990, my parents would not have had to file bankruptcy because we didn't have health insurance when my mom had a heart attack at 39 years old. That set us back for years to come.

That was the loss of opportunity. And yet through all of these moments they keep

pushing because that's what people are ¹¹⁶trying to do, but they need to know that the folks that they are electing, A, understand what it is like to be them and, B, understand the importance of making sure that if they are willing to work their you know what off we're going to be there to try to maximize equalization of opportunity.

Back in January a family member of mine, we have done all right. A family member of mine made an attempted suicide and was unsuccessful. I think it's because there wasn't a gun in the house, which is why I think it's important to take care of guns. It was a drug overdose attempt. My wife is on the board of Seacoast Mental Health because she has in her family past mental health issues.

So we knew what to do. We knew who to call. We had to wait in an emergency room for several days while we're waiting for access to pediatric facility and we got it. The thing that scares my wife and I the most right now is that our pediatric psychiatrist will take another job or that our counselor

will leave because we know how little she¹¹⁷ makes and we know she could make more money doing almost anything else, but she stays for now.

We knew what to do. We were well enough off with enough information to have the opportunity to do something about it. I know there are a lot of people that don't have that opportunity. They don't have access. They don't have the knowledge base to know where to go.

There are a lot of folks when they were born their dad was waxing floors on the overnight shift off Elm Street in 1947, and if not to the grace of God I do not get the opportunity to know what to do when a loved one in my family suffered through a crisis that we're still dealing with right now. If I do nothing else as governor, I want to communicate to the people of New Hampshire that the next governor is somebody who understands that they know what it's like to be them and will do whatever it takes to make sure that they have the same amount of opportunity that through the grace of God I

have had in my 44 years of life.

What you guys are doing is an integral part of how we get to that day to make this the best day in America to start to raise your family. That's what I want to do as governor and that's what I'm going to do.

SCOTT SPRADLING: We are out of time for our Gubernatorial Forum On Young Children. I would like to thank our questioners for questions and input. Thank to you, our many sponsors, for helping to put this together.

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Spark NH Vision: All New Hampshire children and their families are healthy, learning, and thriving now and in the future.

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