

ILOHI Interview with Clyde Kersey
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Indianapolis, Indiana
Phone Interview by Ben Baumann
Transcribed by Otter.ai and Emily McGuire
MP3 File, Sony
Clyde Kersey=CK
Ben Baumann=BB
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BB:

Okay, so before we begin, I would just like to state for the record that today is July 14, 2023, and my name is Ben Bauman, and I'm in Indianapolis, Indiana, speaking via phone with Clyde Kersey, who is located in Terre Haute, Indiana. And we are doing an interview for the Indiana Legislative Oral History Initiative. So just starting off, when and where were you born?

CK:

I was born in Terre Haute, Indiana on November the fourth, 1937.

BB:

And what were your parents' names?

CK:

My father's name was Clyde Kersey, and my mother's name was Marcelle Kersey.

BB:

When did your family first get to Indiana?

CK:

[Laughs] I - I really don't know...

BB:

Okay.

CK:

...to be honest with you.

BB:

What were your parents' occupations?

CK:

My dad worked for the Terre Haute *Tribune Star* newspaper, and my mother was a - was a housewife.

BB:

Do you have any siblings?

CK:

Yes, I have four sisters and one brother.

BB:

And how would you describe your childhood? [00:01:00]

CK:

I had a great childhood. [Laughs] I lived in a small town, went to a small high school, and everybody knew everybody in the town. I had great teachers in the high school. I had the opportunity to play both basketball and baseball and the high school teams. Uh, I could not have had a greater childhood.

BB:

Yeah, okay, sounds good. And you know, did you know much about your family's political beliefs at all growing up as a kid?

CK:

Yes, my dad was a real strong Democrat. My grandfather was a strong Democrat, so I grew up in a in a political family that had strong Democrat leanings.

BB:

Okay. And did you have a particular view of Indiana growing up compared to other states in the country?

CK:

I - I - I really didn't. It was, you know, Indiana was where I grew up, and I was proud of the state, and you know, [00:02:00] and when I was in high school and -- and the research that we did on, on governors, and I took an Indiana history course, you know, I was very proud to live in this state.

BB:

So, what did you do after high school?

CK:

After high school, right after high school, I went to work for a friend of mine. A friend of mine's dad had a trucking company -- Gibson, uh, trucking -- and I went to work for him for about five or six years. And then I went in, I joined the Air National Guard, and went away for the Air National Guard, and then when I came back, we were activated for a year. [Laughs] And then when I got out of, uh, out of the guard -- when I was discharged, I got married and then went back to college. And graduated with a degree in social science education and started teaching at Terre Haute North High School. [00:03:00]

BB:

Okay, wow. All right, and so where did you serve in the military?

CK:

Well, I went through basic training, and then -- this was in 1961 and President Kennedy, uh, activated the National Guard because of the Berlin crisis, and I spent all my time at home, in field in Terre Haute. Although I did go on several forays into -- at one point we went to Michigan, and then another time we went to -- well, that was Alpena, Michigan, then we went to, uh, to Alabama -- or, uh, Georgia on, uh, trips while I was on active duty, but most time I spent home in field.

BB:

Okay. So, could you envision -- envision kind of when you're in high school, that type of path that you would have in life?

CK:

No. [Laughs]

BB:

[Laughs]

CK:

No, I... [00:04:00] ...honestly, my wife and I have talked about this, but I had no idea that life would take the direction that it took. I, you know, I was working at the trucking company. I had a little problem with my back, and a doctor told me, you know, if you stay in trucking, you'll probably might be a cripple, and so I decided to get out of that, and went - went back to college, got my degree, got a job right out of college, you know, and got in politics. And I had no idea that I would have the kind of life that I had. I'm very proud of it, and I'm very thankful that I had the opportunity to do the things I've done, but I never expected this to ever happen.

BB:

Sure, sure. So, when you were in college, did your awareness of politics change much?

CK:

No, it didn't. And I had to work forty-two and a half hours, [00:05:00] every week when I was in college to pay the bills. So, I went to college and worked full time. So, uh, I didn't spend a lot of time on campus except going to class.

BB:

Yeah.

CK:

So, I missed out on a lot of those kinds of things because I had to work.

BB:

Wow. Okay. Do you have any children?

CK:

Yes, I have a son, uh, Tim. And he is, he works for Euronet. He's a controller for Euronet in Overland Park, Kansas.

BB:

Oh, really? Okay, I'm from the Kansas area, actually, originally.

CK:

Oh, are you?

BB:

Yeah. I'm from, uh, Leavenworth, Kansas, which is probably about 45 minutes from Overland Park.

CK:

Right!

BB:

But I, I went to high school in Shawnee, Kansas, which is probably about 15 minutes from that area, so.

CK:

We like that area. I love that area. We go out there all the time.

BB:

Yeah.

CK:

That's great.

BB:

It's very nice. Yeah, absolutely. All right, cool. So, let's see, how'd you become more seriously involved in politics?

CK:

Well, I was teaching at Terre Haute North High School, [00:06:00] and I was involved with the Vigo County Teachers Association. And one point, I went to a meeting in Indianapolis and Linda Kearns, a girl who knew Lily Lambert, was a friend of mine, and we talked to the folks at the ISTA in Indianapolis, and they said they wanted us to help a local candidate run for state senate, and that was when Dennis Stark was running against Bill Dunbar. Bill was the incumbent, and Dennis was a Democrat running against him, so we co-chaired his campaign, and I kind of got interested in-in politics from being in that campaign. I walked precincts, talked to precinct committeeman, talked to office holders and so on. So, I kind of got the bug. And then in 1980, I was driving home from school, [00:07:00] and they said that the next day was the last day to file for Office. And so, on a whim, I just turned my car around, drove to the courthouse and filed for county council at large. I did it on a whim. I thought, you know, I just wanted to run for office, make speeches, go to things, and rub elbows with candidates and so on. And so, I really didn't -- I think they ran -- they elected three... You could --they elected three out of all those people running. And so, I finished, like fourth or fifth, and I was happy with that.

BB:

Yeah.

CK:

You know, I got a chance to go out and campaign and do the things that other candidates did. Well, when the election rolled around again in 1984, I had a number of people asked me to run. And so, this time, I really went out in earnest. I, you know, I had a brochure. [00:08:00] One of the local folks helped me. Michael Kearns, who was, uh, whose family had been in politics for a long time at Terre Haute, helped me with my campaign. We had a brochure. We had -- We, uh, I involved a lot of students in my campaign, going door to door with me and all of that. So, when the election rolled around, I was leading by 150 votes, and the computer broke down, and then when the computer came back on, I'd lost by 150 votes. [laughs] I don't know what happened when the computer broke down. But anyway, I lost that election. Well, my friend Mike Kearns, who's helping me, said, the elections over and you lost, but we still have work to do. So, we sat down and wrote a letter in which I gave my support for all the candidates who were running and thanked all the precinct committeemen and folks for helping me. But I was so discouraged, I decided I was never, ever going to run for political office again.

BB:

[Laughs] Ok. [00:09:00]

CK:

And so -- then in 1986, the party chairman, Bob Wright, called me and said, you know, "You ran a good campaign last time, I wonder if you'd consider running for county council in district." And I said, "Well, I have to think about it." So, I went home, talked it over with my wife, and we decided I'd run in District. Now, in District, you run in a small, smaller area than when you run at large, because you run the entire county when you run at large, and so I had a better job managing that campaign. And we went door to door. I involved a lot of students in that in that election, and the legislature had passed a law that said that students who worked in the election could get out of school -- could get an excuse out of school. And so, um, I spread the word in school, and I had a lot of students that wanted to work. [00:10:00] And so I involved them in my campaign, and I was lucky enough to win the county council District One seat in in 1986.

BB:

Wow. Okay, that's interesting. And so, let's see, when did you first decide to run for the General Assembly then?

CK:

Well, I served on the county council for 10 years, as president for four years, and had a lot of success. I chaired the 9-1-1, committee and did a lot of things that I thought I was, you know, I thought I found my home. [laughs] And I had, uh, I was really happy just serving on the county council and a number of other great people that served with me. And-and in, uh, in 1996 -- Well, in 1994, Jerry Kearns, who was the state representative, had lost to a guy by the name of John Kimmel and, so the folks in in Vigo County were not too happy with the direction that Representative Kimmel was taking in the legislature. [00:11:00] And so, and I think it was in December 1996 -- Charlie Totes, who was the president of the laborers in- in Vigo County, came to me and said, "We're looking for a candidate to run first state rep." And I said, "Well, it's kind of late." And he said, "I know, but we think that you might be the person." And I said, "Well, you know, I have to think about that." So, he said, "Well, why don't you take a personal day tomorrow and I'll take you around all the building construction trades, and those folks can - - you can talk to them and decide whether you want to run or not." So, we went around the next day. We went to the carpenter's union. We went to the operating engineers, uh, went to the plumber system fitters, went to the IBEW, all those local unions that, uh, were operating in Terre Haute. [00:12:00] And the last one we went to was the [inaudible, phone connection cuts out]. I think it's, um, part of the labor union. And Jerry Lee was the president of that, of that labor union, and we went to talk to him, and Jerry had -- was kind of the leader of all of the building construction trades. Uh, I sat down with Jerry, and Jerry -- and we talked for a while, and the union guys are pretty blunt sometimes. And so, after was over, Jerry turned to me and he said, "Well, are you in or you're out? If you're in, we're going to support

you. If you're out, get out of my office, because we need to find a candidate." So, I said, "Well, I guess I'm in." [Laughs]

BB:

[Laughs]

CK:

So, that's how, that's how I got, uh, involved in running for the legislature.

BB:

Yeah. Do you remember your main opponent when you were running?

CK:

Yeah, the first year, it was John Kimmel, and I had the support -- I said, before I ran, I had the support -- I'd had the support of teachers, building construction trades and senior citizens. [00:13:00] Because those were the three groups that were upset with-with my opponent. And so, in 1996, I ran against John Kimmel. He was - he'd only been, uh, one term state rep, and it was a very, very bitter campaign. My race had been targeted by the Indiana House Democrats, and they put a lot of money into my campaign, and we had, uh, TV commercials, we had brochures, we had the whole nine yards, and it was a very bitter and dirty campaign, and I vowed that I'd never, ever [laughs] be involved in a dirty campaign again like that. But it was dirty on both sides.

BB:

Wow. Ok.

CK:

I decided that I'm a real proponent of walking door to door. When you walk door to door, and you look a person in the eye and ask him to vote for you, they're probably going to vote for you, and they're probably going to spread the word that, you know, the candidate came by the house and talked to them. [00:14:00] So, we went door to door. We went door to door, my wife and my son, we went door to door, and I think we covered about, uh, 18 of the 26 precincts that that I had. And just before the election, Jerry Payne, who was the, I think, was the treasurer of the AFL CIO, called me up and said, "What do we need to win this election?" And I said, "Well, I think we need to finish out those precincts that I haven't covered." And he said, "when you want to do it?" Well, it was a Saturday before the election, and he came into town with a bunch of labor guys, construction guys, and I gave them the paperwork, and the political material, and they went out and covered the rest of my - of my precincts. And so, when election came around, I didn't know if I was going to win or not. The Indiana House Democrats had been doing some polling, and their polling indicated that I was probably going to lose. [00:15:00] And so, about a week before the election, John Gregg called me up and said, "You know, the polling doesn't look good. I think I want to pull the money out of your campaign." And I said, "John, I don't think that's

true. I walked precincts, and I think I want to win this thing." Well, he said, "The polling doesn't indicate that." So, I went to my building construction buddies and talked to them, and they called, uh, John Gregg, and he changed his mind and continued to fund my campaign. But the night before the election, or the night of the election, I didn't know whether I was going to win or not. You know, I had -- we had worked hard, we spent a lot of money, uh, we did all the things that you're supposed to do to win. But I don't know if I was going to win or not. Well, the polls -- the, uh, election results start coming in, and I was winning in Republican districts that should have gone to my opponent. [00:16:00] And so, when the election was over, I won by 1200 votes. So, it was pretty significant victory.

BB:

Wow. Okay, yeah, that's interesting. And so, what was your reaction when you found out that you won?

CK:

[Laughs] Well, I really couldn't hardly believe it. You know, it was one of those things where you work so hard and you're so tired [laughs] and, you know, I've been campaigning all day, for 12 hours, walking precincts and handing out stuff and talking to people that you know, you, uh, it's just when I went to bed, it was hard to even go to sleep because of, uh, all the work and the excitement of the election. But -- but I was, you know, really gratified that so many people turned out to vote for me.

BB:

Yeah, yeah, that's pretty interesting. Okay, cool. And did you -- what did you think of like the election process? Did it seem like pretty straightforward, or was it confusing at all?

CK:

Well, I have campaigned for county council, and there's a whole big difference between campaigning for county council and campaigning for a state office. [00:17:00] I found that out. And, you know, I had a lot of funding from the Indiana House Democrats, and so they kind of took over my campaign. They had hired, uh, a company to provide all the TV commercials and -- and brochures and all that. And so, they just took over my campaign, and it was something that if I had to do over again, it probably wouldn't happen. But, uh, again, I never ran for state office before, and so, one day they called and said they were going to make some, uh, some TV commercials. And so, we looked out, and a big truck came in, driving into our driveway, and about four or five guys got out and they put tracks through the house for their cameras and they -- they ran a commercial there. They ran one at school. They ran one out of the construction job with the workers. And so, it was -- it was a whole new experience for us. [00:18:00] And, um, we had weekly -- monthly meetings with the folks in Indy, where we talked about our campaign and where it was going, and so on. And so, it was - it was totally different than anything I had ever experienced before.

BB:

Yeah, okay, that's cool. And what were they like, the key issues you focused your campaign on?

CK:

Well, there were, there were several. One was the building construction trade unions in Indiana. And my opponent had, uh, supported legislation to take some benefits away from the unions, and they became very upset. And I think there was something like 8,000 of them marched on the Capitol during that -- before I was elected. And so that was one big issue. And the other one was teachers. And, uh, they had taken some I think there was some legislation that had to do with the membership in the Union [00:19:00]. And so that was another big issue. And then, senior citizens were upset because of some of the legislation that my opponent sponsored when he was serving. So those were the three big issues.

BB:

Yeah, okay, let's see. So, you know, thinking to the time when you first started serving, what were you thinking when you first walked into the state house, your first day in office?

CK:

[Laughs] Well, you know, I guess that it's a thrill the first time you walk into the state house. A matter of fact, it was a thrill every time I walked in that place. There was something about it that, in my opinion, magical, and I, and I just enjoyed serving every day that I served there. And um, so that that was my -- my first reaction. But there were a number of things happened that -- And again, I never served in legislature and didn't have a very good understanding of how, of how things worked. [00:20:00] And I remember right after the election, Marilyn Schultz, who was -- who had served in the Indiana House and was a, um, lobbyist for Indiana State University, called me right after I got elected -- the day after I got elected -- and said, "How would you like to serve on Ways and Means?" And I said, "I [pause]... I would love to serve on Ways and Means, because it's the most prestigious committee in the legislature. But the way I understand it, you know, you have to serve your time, and you have to, it's all done by seniority. And she said, "Well, you let me worry about that. So, when John Gregg," -- [aside] who was the speaker -- "says -- when he hands out the request for committee assignments, you'd be sure and put down Ways and Means first." And, and I said, "Okay, I'll do that." So, I did it. And, and, uh, when the committee assignments came out, I was on Ways and Means. A freshman on Ways and Means! And so, you know, I had to learn how the whole thing, uh, the whole thing worked. [00:21:00] And along with that, again, when I was elected, I thought, my first year, I'm just going to sit back and learn how the system works and, and not make any big wave. Well, again, before the session started that first -- first year I was elected, Indiana State University met with me and talked to me about their capital projects. And so, when the legislature started, Marilyn Schultz came to me and said, "Clyde, you need to talk to Pat Bauer" -- [aside] Pat Bauer was the chairman of Ways and Means -- "about our capital request." Well, I was a little hesitant to talk to Pat because he was kind of an intimidating figure when I first got elected. He and I became very good friends, and his wife and my wife were good friends, and we shared an office later on. But I was little intimidated by him, and so I was reluctant to take the capital request to him. So, she kept asking me and asking me and I said, "Well, I'll do it." So, finally, one day, she said, "Now, we're gonna do it today." [00:22:00] So, we went up to Pat's office, and I walked in, and she

stayed out in the hall. And I walked in and talked to the secretary, and I said, "May I see Pat - Pat Bauer?" And she said, "Sure, go on back." So, I went back, and I said, "Hi Pat." I said -- he said, "What do you want Kersey?" And I said, uh, well, I said, "I have Indiana State's capital project request here." And I said, "I have been reluctant to give it to you, but I would like to have it in the budget." So, he looked at me for a minute, and his office was kind of open, and there were other offices down the hall, and so he said, "Hey, John, get in here." And John Grew who was the fiscal analyst came in, and -- and, uh, Pat Bauer said to me, "Kersey, give, give John your Indiana State's capital project request." So I did. And John looked at me and looked at Pat after I told him what we needed, he said, "Pat," he said, "we've already finalized a budget." [00:23:00] And Pat said, "Make it work, John, just make it work." So that's how I got that in the budget the first time. So, later out in the hall, Marilyn was pacing back and forth. And so, she came up and said, "How'd it go? How'd it go?" And I said, "Piece of cake, Marilyn, piece of cake." But that's how, you know, that's how things worked, and you had to understand, you know, what to do and how things actually work. But I got a -- I had a -- it was real learning experience that first year.

BB:

[Laughs] Yeah, sounds like it. I mean, wow, jeez, okay, but you managed to get that, that to work, I guess, in the budget. So.

CK:

Yeah, I got in the budget.

BB:

Pretty big for your first year.

CK:

Right, right.

BB:

So, was that the first bill that you sponsored or authored at all, or...?

CK:

Uh, no, um, that was just a request to go in the budget. But I, you know, I can't remember the first bill. It was a bill that, um, [00:24:00] had something to do with DNR, Department of Natural Resources, and it was kind of a small, insignificant bill, but that was the first bill I got through.

BB:

Yeah, okay. Did you ever have any challenges getting a bill passed at all?

CK:

[Laughs] Yeah. [Laughs]

BB:

[Laughs]

CK:

Yeah, I had -- right after I got elected, I worked with Jerry Payne, with the AFL CIO, and we were trying to get a bill through to get low-cost prescription drugs for senior citizens. At that time, the cost of prescription drugs was so high that some senior citizens had to decide whether to buy food or buy drugs -- prescription drugs. And so, uh, we, we, uh, we put together several pieces of legislation to, um, to try to get prescription drug companies to lower their prices for seniors -- senior citizens. [00:25:00] Well, as you can imagine, the prescription drug companies didn't like that very much at all, and so as they brought in a lot of people to testify against, uh, against my bill -- I got it out of the house once, and then it went to the Senate, and the Senate killed it. But we worked on that like four or five different sessions, and we're never able to get that bill through. We also worked and sponsored trips to Canada for senior citizens in Indianapolis to go to Canada and get their drugs cheaper --

BB:

Wow.

CK:

-- there than -- because Canada had lower prescription drug prices than Indiana did. But then about that time, then about the last time we carried that, then the federal government went with their prescription drug program that lowered the price. [00:26:00] If people were on Medicare, they got a break in their prescription drug prices, so we really did didn't need to, uh, to push that through. But then a few years later, Mike Phillips, who was, uh, he served in the House and was speaker for a while, and he's an attorney, and he had a lobbying firm, and one of their main clients was Pharma. And Pharma is a political organization over all the prescription drug companies. And he came to me with a bill, and it was called the drug pooling bill. And what it did, it organized several units into one pool. All the state employees, all the university -- public universities, all the public-school personnel, and all the county employees would be in-- in one big pool. [00:27:00] And it was organized so that they could buy their drugs cheaper through a prescription drug company, because they were selling in quantity. And so, everybody liked that bill. Prescription Drug companies liked it because they'd sell more prescription drugs, and the employees liked it because they could get cheaper. And so that bill went through both the House and the Senate. Governor Kernan was the governor then, and he was running for a re-election against, uh, Daniels, and so he made that the cornerstone of his, uh, of his election, because he thought that was one of the better bills that it passed in the legislature in that past session. So, I did get one through. [Laughs]

BB:

Okay. [Laughs] Interesting. All right, how often did you have to work with Republicans on legislation?

CK:

Oh, I worked with Sam constantly, and I had some great friends on the other side of the aisle. [00:28:00] Mike Murphy, Senator Representative Mike Murphy. Oh, there was, you know, a whole number of them that I worked with and, and we had a great relationship until about '19 -- 2010. 2010 the whole personality of legislature changed. But up until then, we worked very well together.

BB:

Okay, let's see. So, what were the differences between the House and Senate?

CK:

Well, the house... [pause] I was elected in '96 and for the next twelve of the fourteen years, the Democrats had the majority in the House, and so the Senate was just the opposite. The majority of the Senate was Republican, and I really, really think that was a bad thing, to be honest with you, because, you know, we would pass some legislation that probably wasn't that good, and it would go over to the Senate, and they'd change it or reject it. And so, we passed some good legislation, I think, during those twelve years. And we were forced to work together. [00:29:00] And it worked out very well for -- for the people in Indiana, and I had some really good friends on the Republican side and the Democrat side in the Senate.

BB:

How influential would you say party leadership was to getting legislation passed?

CK:

Well, you know it was -- it was very important. I had, uh, John Gregg was the Speaker of the House. Senator Long was the majority leader in the Senate. I worked really well with -- with both of them. Then Pat Bauer was speaker for a number of years, and Pat was outstanding and, um, but yeah, yeah, I got along really well with -- and for the most part, I think both the Senate and the House members were interested in moving Indiana forward, and the most important thing was not politics, not whether Democrats won or whether Republicans won, but whether the state of Indiana moved on. [00:30:00] And [inaudible] I'm saying it is true today, but it was certainly true back then.

BB:

Yeah. Did you ever go against party leadership?

CK:

[Laughs] No, I don't think I ever did.

BB:

[Laughs] Okay.

CK:

I had so much respect for John Gregg. He's just an outstanding leader, and Pat Bauer was a close friend of mine. Both of those guys were just super. And even the Republican leadership in the House, Speaker Bosma, did a great job. And he was, you know, he was on the opposite side of the aisle, but for the most part, you know, I think Speaker -- Speaker Bosma was interested in moving Indiana forward as well.

BB:

Yeah, sure. How has your legislative service affect your family life?

CK:

[Laughs] Well, I was probably pretty unique in -- in that in that area. I, um, when I was elected in 1996, I was still teaching at Terre Haute North [00:31:00]. And for, uh, for two years, I tried to do both. I tried to teach and, and serve in the Indiana House. And to me, that was just kind of impossible to do, because you have so many meetings to go to, so many telephone calls, and you just can't leave your class and go -- and go to a meeting. And so, at the end of 1996, after I ran reelection in '98 I decided to retire as a teacher. And so I retired in '98 and then from that time on, then I had the freedom to go and -- and go to meetings and -- and do all that. My wife was also a teacher -- was still, uh, was still teaching. And so, for the first, uh, well, seven years, or eight years, I guess, I drove back and forth to Indy rather than stay all night. And then she retired. [00:32:00] And when she retired, she would go with me to Indy. We got an apartment on at Canal Overlook, and we were only about a block or two from the Capitol, and we stayed in in Indy during the session. So, it really didn't affect my family life as much as it did some of the others. Some of the others who had children, and I know it, it put a hardship on -- on the family life for those people to serve in the house.

BB:

Yeah, makes sense. How influential were lobbyists in the General Assembly?

CK:

Well, I have a different -- when I, when I first was elected, I had this idea that lobbyists were, you know, were out there to try -- to -- to force you to vote this way or that way. And I had a, I had a bad feeling about, about lobbyists, but once I got there, you, you form a friendship with those lobbyists, and they provide a lot of information on bills. [00:33:00] And so I think, uh, I think that's the important part of the lobby system, is that they provide a lot of information. And most of them are very honest about it. You know, they'll tell you why they're pushing this piece of legislation or why they're against it, and they don't -- and they don't, you know, they don't push your arm to vote this way or that, but they do try to convince you, uh, you know, their position on the issue. And so, I think they play a valuable -- make a valuable contribution to the system, because they provide so much information. And -- and the only thing is that you never lie to them. You know, if they say, "Can you support this?" And you say, "No, I can't." They say, "Fine." If you say, "I can support it," that's fine also. But they don't want you going in

there and saying you're going to vote for it, then vote against it. And then, you lose their friendship if you do that. And, uh, and you know, you depend upon them so much for all the information.

BB:

Yeah. [00:34:00] Did you ever find any lobbyists to be, like, sort of untrustworthy at all? Or did you -- or were they really all pretty straightforward with you?

CK:

Now, there's some that's not -- that they weren't very trustworthy. [Laughs]

BB:

[Laughs] Okay.

CK:

You know, they, they, they would, well, they would just, you know, lie to you about things and -- but very quickly you had, you know, there's, uh, you find out very quickly whether they are with you or not, or if you're -- they're a good, good friend or not. And so, you have those people that you're -- you're close to, that you have friendship with. You have people who never come and talk to you because they know you're not going to be, uh, supporting their legislation. So, but the system works out very well. I think.

BB:

Okay. Do you think like campaign donations or gifts had much influence on politicians when you served or...

CK:

Oh, I think they do. I was very careful about that. You know, I know that some of the, uh the legislators would take -- go on these golf trips around the country and go to on these lavish trips and so on. [00:35:00] I never took -- I never went on any of those. And I guess, the other thing is that I was in a very Democrat district, so I really didn't need to raise a lot of money, and so I didn't take part in any of those kinds of things. I did go to some dinners, like, um, Indiana State University would have a dinner, or Ball State or IU, and I went to the, uh, like the building construction trade's lunches and dinners. I did go to those but -- but I didn't, I didn't accept any of those gifts from, uh, from lobbyists.

BB:

Yeah, okay.

CK:

There's a lot -- there's a lot of them out there, but I just didn't take part in any of that.

BB:

Yeah, okay. How influential would you say redistricting was? [00:36:00]

CK:

[Laughs] It was very, very influential. I guess -- I had this idea that -- I've always had the idea that redistricting and the way it's done in Indiana -- the way it was done in Indiana -- was just the way it was. And so, when Democrats were in, they drew the districts, and when Republicans were in, they do the drew the districts. I remember going to a meeting in, uh, Clay County, and the Democrats -- or Republicans had just won, and were going to do the redistricting. I think that was -- must have been in 2010. Anyway, they asked me, and I said, "Well, the Republicans won, and they have the right to do the redistricting, and we'll just have to live with it." 'Cause that's the way it is. Well, up until that time, until 2010, the way they drew the districts, whether it was Democrat or Republican, there weren't over one- or two-members difference in the whole thing. [00:37:00] And the Democrats drew the districts in 2000 and, uh, and the difference was, I think maybe there was like two -- most of the time we had about -- Democrats had about a two-membership majority, nothing more than that. And one time in 2007 -- no 2006, we lost to the -- to the Republicans. The Republicans controlled the -- controlled the House. So, the difference between Democrats and Republicans when we drew the districts was very, very small. And the same thing before that in -- in 1990 when the Republicans drew the districts. It was the difference was very, very small. But in 2010, things had changed, and in 2010, we had computer systems that could identify every, every person in the district. And whether they were Democrat, or Republican or whether they were independent or whatever. [00:38:00] And in 2010, the Republicans really did a number on us. We went from, um, I think it was 52 to 48 Democrat, to 60 - 40 in -- in, after the redistricting. So, um, redistricting is a whole different thing now than it used to be with the computer systems that they have. And whether Democrats are drawing them, or Republicans are drawing them, they can draw them to really favor themselves. And I think that's unfortunate.

BB:

Yeah, wow. Okay, so you know, based on your experiences serving the General Assembly would, would you, you know -- is there anything that you'd want to change about the legislative process at all or...?

CK:

The only thing that -- that I would change is redistricting. That should be done by an independent group to try to maintain the balance of Democrats and Republicans. [00:39:00] Because since 2010 -- and I served another eight years after 2010 -- the Republicans had the super majority and, and in a super majority, you -- I don't think you get the representation you -- you get when it's -- when it's closer. And so, I think that's unfortunate. I think that may work its way out eventually, because I think people will become so upset with the one sidedness of it that they'll go out and they'll elect different legislators. But that's the only thing I would change. I really enjoyed serving there, and it was just an honor and a privilege to be part of the system.

BB:

Yeah, okay. When you served, did you think that there were, there was, like a sort of -- the general assembly was transparent enough when it comes, like, ethics rules and stuff like that? Or were there any issues you came across or...?

CK:

Well, I served on the ethics committee for about ten years. [00:40:00]

BB:

Okay.

CK:

And I was president of it for about, uh, or chairman of it for about four of those years. And there were times when we did have things to come before us, ethics violation that, um, that we had to deal with. Most of them were people who got upset with a legislator and tried to push some ethics violation that really didn't exist. There were a couple times when we had some real difficult decisions to make in terms of ethics, and that's a hard thing to do. [Laughs]

BB:

Yeah.

CK:

Really, you have to make judgment down on your fellow legislatures. But, uh, for the most part, there wasn't a problem. There were times when we would -- the ethics committee wouldn't even meet, because -- the only time we met was if we had an ethics complaint filed against one of our legislators. [00:41:00] And so most of the time, that was not a problem.

BB:

Okay. What would you say were the most controversial legislative issues when you served?

CK:

[Laughs] Well, in 2011, the Republicans had won the majority in 2010 and one thing that they always pushed but could never get through was the right to work law in Indiana. And the right to work law is, if you work for a company and the union is there -- before the right to work, you had to belong to the Union whether you wanted to or not. And so, the Republicans were always unhappy about that. And so, in 2011, they decided to pass -- to bring up the right to work law. The building construction trades and the AFL CIO and all the unions through Indiana were opposed to that. [00:42:00] Because -- and their point was that the union bargains for all the workers, and the workers who pay into it, pay into the bargaining. They bargain wages and fringe benefits and so on. If we have right to work, that person wouldn't belong to the union and would get the benefit of the bargaining for them, but not have to pay

other dues. And so, when this came up, the deal on the Democrat side, we were opposed to the right to work. So, Republicans kept pushing it. And so, in 2000 -- this is the 2000 [inaudible]. The protest it, the Democrats left the state. They had -- the Republicans had to have Democrats there for the, um, to have a quorum, and so we left the state and went to Illinois. We went to Urbana, Illinois, and stayed there for thirty-five days. At the end of those thirty-five days, the Republicans agreed that they wouldn't, uh, they wouldn't try to pass a right to work in 2011. [00:43:00] And so we came back and finished the session. That was probably the most controversial bill that I was involved in in my 22 years there.

BB:

Yeah. Now, do you think the legislative walkout, in hindsight, do you think that was a good thing to do, or do you think you would want to do it differently if you could? Or..?

CK:

Well, I think that's a good point. You know, at the time, we didn't have a choice. They were going to pass it one way or the other, and we didn't want it passed. So, we met -- the Democrats met with the, all the unions, and we said, you know, "We'll walk out, and we'll probably get it stopped this year, but you have to have a plan to stop it in 2012 because we can't walk out every year." And so, they promised us that they would have a plan in 2012 to stop, you know, the right to work. [00:44:00] Well, we walked out. We got it stopped in 2011 but in 2012, they didn't have much of a plan to stop it, and so it went ahead and passed in 2012. So, I think it was a good idea. I-I felt like, you know, it was something we needed to do to protect, uh, you know, the working people -- working men and women in Indiana. But, uh, and I do it again. And there was a lot of opposition to it. I got a lot of letters [Laughs] from my constituents who said, "You ought to be back in Indianapolis, not in Illinois," but, but it was something I think that -- there are times when you have to do those things and, uh, and I think it was a good thing to do. The only thing I'm disappointed in that is that we -- the unions were not prepared to have much opposition to it in 2012.

BB:

Mhm, okay. What was the most complex piece of legislation that you worked on? [00:45:00]

CK:

Well, probably the most complex one was the recreational center for Indiana State University. I think it was around 2007, maybe. The Republicans were--had the majority in the Indiana house. Craig Good, who was a lobbyist for Indiana State University, called me in December, and he said that the student government at Indiana State had gone to the Board of Trustees and asked if they could have a recreational center on the campus of ISU. And their point was that other universities had them. It's a great recruiting tool and so on. So, they wanted a place where they could swim, where they could play basketball, where they -- a workout center where they could work out. And so, Craig told me this, and I said, "Well, that's fine, but it's too late to file a bill, and so we'll have to work with Republicans to put an amendment in a bill to get it through." [00:46:00] Craig said, you know, "We can do that." So, the

session started. Representative Buell from Indianapolis had a bill that was compatible with, with our amendment. We put the amendment in that bill. It went through the House, fine, but when it got into the Senate, we had all kind of problems. They took it out, they put it back in. Finally, they put it back in, and it passed the Senate, but then it went to conference committee. And so, I was afraid that they would take it out in conference committee. Well, we were getting toward the end of the legislature, and Craig Good called me and told me that [pause] I came out of conference committee, but it was going for the final vote the last day of the session. And Craig Good called me and said that Stan Jones, who was the president of the Higher Ed Commission, was going to try to get that bill killed in the House. [00:47:00] And so I said, "Why?" And he said, "I don't know. Would you talk to him?" And so, I knew Stan and so I called Stan. And I said, "Stan, what's, what's the deal? Are you going to try to kill my bill?" And he said, "Well," he said, "You know how it is. You know, Representative Kersey, you're supposed to take all requests for higher education through the Higher Ed Commission." And so, I knew right then that his feelings were hurt because we hadn't, you know, kissed his ring and asked for his approval to get the Rec Center bill in. And I said, "Well, Stan, the thing is, this is not a bill. It's an amendment to a bill. And we didn't have time to bring it to the Higher Ed Commission before, uh, before we, uh, before we put it, put it in amendment." And so, I said, "Funny." I said, "Stan, I will ask, ask you one question, and that is, are you going to try to kill my bill tomorrow?" [00:48:00] Well, there were just silence on the other end for a while, and I knew what he was thinking. I was on the Ways and Means Committee, and from time to time, he would bring higher education requests to the Ways and Means. And he always depended on me to support him, and I always had. And so, after a while, I came back on. He said, "No, I'm not gonna do that. But from now on, you bring it to the Higher Ed Commission before you propose a bill." [Laughs] So, it went on and it, it passed, and it's a beautiful building on campus, and students are making use of it.

BB:

Okay, yeah, wow, all right, so guess a little bit of a complex thing then.

CK:

[Laughs] Yeah.

BB:

So now, when you were serving, uh, I think I read somewhere in some of the newspapers at the time that you served, that you had gone on a trip to Japan...

CK:

[Laughs] Yeah.

BB:

...for Indiana, like, what was that about? And can you talk about that?

CK:

Yeah, it was -- it was about 2007 maybe? [00:49:00] I, I, I was, it was during the summer and, uh, and Pat Bauer was speaker of the house. And Pat called me, and he said, "Representative Kersey," he said, "We got a trip to Japan coming up, and I am supposed to go, but I gotta go with -- with Governor Daniels, and we're not getting along very well." And he said, "I'd like -- I'd like you to go in my place." And I said, "Well, Pat, I haven't thought about that." And I said, "I'll have to think about that," and he said, "Well, take all the time you need. I need to know by seven o'clock in the morning." So, Susie and I talked about it -- my wife and I talked about it. So, the next day, I called him and said we'd go. Well, when -- when I -- we had to pay for our flight over there. Everything else was paid for, but we had to pay for the flight over and back. And so, when I got my bill from the governor's office for the flight, it seemed kind of high. So, I called him, and I said, "You know, is this, is this right?" [00:50:00] And they said, "Yeah, that's what everybody's paying." And so, I said, "Okay." So, when we got to the airport -- my wife went with me -- and we got to the airport and got on the plane, they sort of said, "Oh, you're, you're in first class." And I thought, oh my gosh, that's the reason the bill was so high. [Laughs] But as it turned out, it was well worth the money, because the guys in the, you know, and regular class were just packed in there, and we had all this room up on the top deck. It was two deck plane, with us on top deck. Well, we got up there and got situated, and my wife said, "You know, there's not anybody up here from our group, except us." And -- but she said, "I think Governor Daniels is sitting up in the front of the plane." And so, I looked up there and -- and there was Governor Daniels. And after a while, he got tired, and he came back and he saw us, so he came back and talked to us. And of course, it's a thirteen-hour flight. [00:51:00] So, we got -- had several conversations during the flight over. Uh, the funny thing was, we did not talk anything about politics. We talked about sports and college and, and all kinds of things, but we never talked -- books we read, but we never talked about politics the whole time there. But when we got in Japan, I think it was the second day. I got a knock on the door, and it was one of the assistants to Governor Daniels, and he said, "Governor Daniels would like for you to go to a meeting tomorrow. He's going to meet with three of the mayors from around Tokyo, and he would like for you to go with him." And so, I said, "Okay." So -- but he said, "We don't want you to say anything. Just go and listen. But we don't want any international incidents, so don't say anything." So, I said, "Okay." So, with that -- this is funny, because everything seems to be political -- has to be politically correct, because I was sitting on the left side of Governor Daniels and Jim Buck, who was a Republican from Kokomo, was sitting on the right side of Governor Daniels. [00:52:00] But I was impressed with Governor Daniels in his -- the way he -- the questions he asked the mayors of -- of the cities. Well, he finished, and he said, "I don't have any more questions." He said, "Representative Kersey, do you have any?" And I thought, oh, gosh, you know, I wasn't prepared to ask any questions. And so, I thought for a minute, and one of the mayors had -- had just won reelection, and so I asked him what he was going to do in his next administration. And of course, he talked for about twenty minutes after that, but that was, that was a great trip, and we had never been to Japan before. The people are so gracious. They're so, they're so great. I remember we went to a reception the first night we were there. It was at a university, and all the Japanese people were one side, the Americans were on the other, and finally, I told Susie, "Let's just go

sit down." [00:53:00] So, we went in sit down, and immediately, there were four or five of them that came over and sat down and talked to us. A lot of them had, had been in America and worked for Japanese companies here, and knew all about America. They want to know about the political situation. You know they, they were so, so neat. We went on several trips through, went on the high-speed rail, and we went on the subway. And that place is -- Japan, is such a clean country. You know, the subway just immaculate. This high-speed train was something we'd never experienced before, and we had just had a great trip. It was a really fun time.

BB:

Yeah, that sounds like a really interesting experience, and interesting the connection between Indiana and Japan.

CK:

Yeah.

BB:

Another thing I saw was like, something about, like, making -- teaching the Holocaust mandatory in school curriculums. Do you remember anything about that?

CK:

Yeah, there were a couple of bills that that I really pushed in the legislature. [00:54:00] And one of them was the Holocaust Education bill. Eva Kor was the Holocaust survivor from Terre Haute, and I had her son in class, and when we were on the Holocaust, we asked her to come in and speak and -- and she has such a compelling story about, about surviving the concentration camp. And she was a twin, and the only reason she survived was that when her family arrived at Auschwitz, the guard recognized that she and her sister were twins. So, they asked her mother if, if she was -- they were twins. And said, she said, "Yes." And so, they took her and her sister one way, and her mother and the rest of the family went the other way. That's the last time she saw them. So, I had known Eva for a long time, and so she came to me and asked me if I would carry some legislation to keep the Holocaust alive. [00:55:00] There were people in Europe and Asia that were talking about -- political leaders, that were saying that the Holocaust never happened. And she was so afraid that as time went on, people would forget about what happened in the Holocaust. So, I put together, the first year, I put together a bill that would require a whole new curriculum subject that would require the teaching of the Holocaust one semester. Well, I ran into all kind of opposition, because the, um, the state didn't like the idea of increasing the curriculum. That's when we had ISTEP. And then the curriculum was set, and they didn't think there was any, um, any room for another subject. So, I didn't get any support. So, and the Republicans were in control of then. And so, anyway, during that time, Eva and I got a lot of support from the media. [00:56:00] There was an Indianapolis TV station that ran a story. The Terre Haute, Channel 10 and Channel 2 ran stories, and the *Terre Haute Tribune* had a big article on it. And so, by the time the next session rolled around, I decided to make some changes in it, and instead of going with a completely new subject, I made it part

of the US History subject. Everyone's required to take full year of US history. And so, I made it a requirement that -- that the Holocaust must be taught in the US history classes. And that was much more acceptable to everyone. When we had the committee meeting on the Holocaust bill, Eva came in and spoke. And there must have been five TV stations [laughs] there. There were a number of reporters. The thing was packed. There were probably as many media people as anyone else in there. [00:57:00] And then it went to the floor of the house, and I introduced the bill and talked about it. And it passed unanimously in the house. As a matter of fact, I had five co-authors of the bill, and that was the max that you could put on unless the speaker opened it up to allow more to go on it. So, after I had presented the bill, Bosma was speaker, [inaudible] speaker of the House, Representative Bosma, and he sent his secretary around and asked if he could be on the bill. And I said, "Well, you know, it's, it's up to you, because you have to open it up to let more people, because I've got the max." And so, he -- he did and -- and the speaker was on the bill with-- with it, then it went over to the Senate, and it passed unanimously in the Senate. So yeah, it was a good bill. And Eva was such a great, great person. She died a couple years ago. Ironically, she went back to Auschwitz with a bunch of people on a tour, and she passed away on that trip. [00:58:00]

BB:

Wow. Okay, yeah, wow. Let's see. So, I guess thinking now towards the big picture, near the end of your service, and just, I guess, some reflections, you know, why did you leave the Indiana General Assembly?

CK:

Well, you know, a lot of people ask me that question. And I guess there comes a time when, you know, it's time to leave. And I was 81 years old. I'd served 22 years, and I really, really enjoyed serving in the legislature. You know, the whole process, to me, is just phenomenal, and, uh, but it was just time for me to leave. And, and the other thing was that things had changed. In 2010, we had a number of people who were elected on the other side of the aisle on the Republican side that had a little different philosophy about things than -- than the old guard had. [00:59:00] And so, I had trouble dealing with those folks. And it was not the same after 2010. Some of the same people were there, and I still worked with them, but it was just not the same as it was before. And so, I just felt like, in 2018, it was time for me to leave. I'm not -- I've not regretted that decision totally, but there is an adjustment you have to make after you leave the legislature. And I didn't realize that -- what it was going to be. And that adjustment is that you know you no longer have meetings to go to, you no longer receive telephone calls or emails. Things just kind of stop. And it's kind of hard and difficult to get used to not having all that, uh, being all that active in politics.

BB:

Yeah, no, that makes total sense. What lessons did you learn from your experiences? [01:00:00]

CK:

I - I - I think the gratification you get is helping people. And you know, some people would come to me and say, "Where do you get your ideas for your bills?" Well, most of the legislation that I sponsored and authored was -- came from the people. And you go to -- we used to have on -- during the session, we'd have something called a Cracker Barrel, where we would go to the library and all the people from the community, who come in and -- and talk to us and ask us questions and -- and we'd talk about legislation that was, was being passed. But most of the ideas from the bills that I authored in the legislature -- to the legislature came from the people, and it's so gratifying to get a bill passed that started out with someone asking me about something at a meeting we've had, and then following that all the way through until it becomes a law and helps people and -- and I think that's the most gratifying part about it. [01:01:00] And not only that, there are other opportunities you have as legislator to help people. We get a lot of telephone calls from people who have problems, and most -- a lot of the time we can't help them, but we can point them in the right direction. They have trouble with their Social Security, so we hook them up with a U.S. congressman or, you know, a state senator to help them. So, you know, there's a lot of opportunities help people, other than just bills that pass out the legislature. And we're sometimes, we're kind of a conduit for problems people have, and we point them in the right direction and offer them some help that's a -- it's just a great honor to serve and -- it's uh, you're part of a system that is really spectacular.

BB:

Yeah, okay, sounds good. [01:02:00] Do you have a proudest moment as a legislator?

CK:

Oh, um, [pause] I don't know. There was one other bill that I got passed that I was pretty proud of. I've been fighting with the ISTA because they had sponsored some legislation that I didn't think was very good, and so I met with the director of the ISTA, and he wanted me to carry a bill to expand the background check for teachers. We passed a bill in the legislature a few years before that required all teachers to go through a background check in Indiana, and that was to get sexual predators out of the classroom. And so, if we found out anything about that person that they'd had, you know, a record in Indiana in terms of sexual abuse or whatever, and were a teacher, then they wouldn't be hired. [01:03:00] Well, that worked for a while, but then we started getting teachers coming in from like Michigan and Kentucky and Ohio, and they would pass the background check in Indiana, but they had gotten in trouble in a school corporation in some other state. And so, the ISTA, let me carry a bill that would require background checks -- nationwide, background checks through the FBI, so that if a person got in trouble in any corporation in any state and had a record for sexual abuse, then that information would be given to the corporation in Indiana who was trying to hire them. So it was, it was a good, good piece of legislation. The only problem was, the cost is kind of high, because to get those background checks nationwide, the expense was a little high, but to get sexual predators out of the classroom, you know, we all thought it was worth it. Well anyway, I carried that bill and authored that bill. [01:04:00] And one

day, I was walking through, my wife and I were walking through the legislature -- to the State House, and Governor Daniels saw us, of course, we got to know him on the trip to Japan. And he came over and said, "Representative Kersey, you're carrying a bill for background checks for teachers?" And I said, "Yeah." He said, "Can I put amendment in your bill?" I said, "Sure!" And the story was that he had, he had promised the teachers in Marion County that he would do something about the frivolous lawsuits that were filed against teachers. And what was happening was if teachers stopped a fight and had to touch a child, or if they touched a kid anywhere in the school at any time for any reason, they'd wind up in court the next day. And the, uh, I guess the school corporations had decided it was cheaper to settle out of court than it was to take it through the court. And people realized that and realized that they can make some money. [01:05:00] So, they did ask him to carry a bill to end those frivolous lawsuits. And so my bill was compatible with his, so he put that legislation in my bill, and he said, "You need any help?" And I said, "Yeah." So, and when it went through the process and went to the through the education committee all the way up, why, it sent people in from his office to testify in support of that section of the bill. So, that bill went through the House and Senate without any opposition. And then when they had bill signing and the governor, he invited me to be part of the bill signing. So that was a real, a real, great bill, I thought. One, it got sexual predators out of the classroom, and it was unique from the standpoint that the governor was Republican, and I was a Democrat, we worked together to get that bill through.

BB:

Yeah, okay, wow. Okay, interesting. Let's see last few questions then here. [01:06:00] What advice would you give to future legislators or even current legislators?

CK:

My -- the thing that bothers me the most is there's not that feeling of working together to get -- to get legislation through. The problem that's that I see is that everything is political now. That the party's more important, then -- then the legislation that's going to help people. And so, my advice would be to try to get more, um, more of a working relation arrangement between Republicans and Democrats. And I think that's been lost since 2010, and I would love to see that back again. We used to go -- Representative Mike Murphy and I were -- he was a Republican; I was a Democrat. And when I was carrying all that legislation, drug legislation to help -- prescription drug legislation to help senior citizens, he was opposed to it. [01:07:00] And he'd get up and -- and debate me on those issues. And honest, it was, you know, there was -- you know, him and I were friends, but we would debate so strongly, but we always were friends. And -- and when I had that drug pooling bill, he was the first one to get up and speak in support of it. And I think we've lost that and -- and I would love to see that back again. So, that would be the advice I would give to someone interested in running for legislature, to try to get, try to be able to work the other side to get legislation passed.

BB:

Okay, let's see, how has the state of Indiana, as well as the Indiana General Assembly, changed since you were in the legislature, you think? [01:08:00]

CK:

Well, again, I think the makeup the legislature is so much different. We have the, you know, [pause] we used to be the liberals and the conservatives, and I think [inaudible] still there. The Democrats being liberals, the Republicans being conservatives. But now, you have the extreme conservatives. And I think they've taken over the legislature, and they have the majority and -- a super majority, and they passed legislation that they want to pass, not what the people in their district want, necessarily, but what they want. And I think that's how, that's how it's changed, and I think Indiana's suffering because of that.

BB:

Okay. Let's see. Last question, then, what do you think is the most important work of the Indiana General Assembly? And what do you think the people of Indiana should know about the Indiana General Assembly? [01:09:00]

CK:

Well, I - I - I, you know, if you compare the county council with the General Assembly. The county council -- you're accountable to everybody there in the community, because your meetings are there, and they know exactly what's going on. I don't think that the average person understands what the general assembly does. I can remember going to meetings and people say, "Well, what's it like in Washington, DC?" You know, they thought I was a congressman rather than a state representative. So -- so I think that the connection with the legislature is -- is not as great as it is at the county council, at the local level. And so, that's what I think is, is difficult. You know, the role of the General Assembly has always been to provide good legislation for -- for the people of Indiana. [01:10:00] And one of that -- one, one thing that, that they're responsible for is for public education, and the thing that I've seen over the last ten years is the deterioration of public schools. And, again, after 2010, we had the charter school system that came in, and the charter school system took money away from our public -- and students away from our public from our public schools. And so then, we went with the voucher system, which took additional students away from our public schools. And -- and, uh, so, each one of those things that happened took money away from our public schools. And then, the legislature decided that the teachers didn't know how to teach and that we needed a state test to determine whether students were learning what they were supposed to learn. And that test was not compatible with the way teachers were teaching. So, we had a whole period there where teachers had to, had to relearn how to teach to the ISTEP test. [01:11:00] And instead of teaching a general thing, they taught to the test because they were held accountable if their students didn't pass the test. So, I think the thing that's, uh, that's really happened in a negative way over the last ten, thirteen years is the deterioration of our public schools. I read somewhere where only something like 43% of our students are, um, are passing the math part of it, and something like that in terms of other parts of the test. And so, I -- that's, that's a great concern of mine, and I think that the legislature took the wrong direction when they decided that teachers who have gone through five or six

years of education, were not -- were not doing a good job teaching. [01:12:00] And you had to check up on them by giving them a test that was not compatible with what they were teaching. So, that's been my greatest concern about the direction of the legislature.

BB:

Yeah. Okay. Well, is there anything that I didn't ask about that you want to mention it all, or do we cover it all?

CK:

I think we've covered about all.

BB:

All right, sounds good. Well, thank you so much for taking part in the project. And yeah, so I appreciate it. All right. Thank you.