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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

caucus, people, political, queer, hate crimes, houston, organization, task force, important, meeting, equality, hear, gay, folks, michelle, national, sheila jackson lee, political action committee, group, issues

## SPEAKERS

Michelle Meyers, Jimmy Carper

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00:01

The sound of Texas KPFT Houston, Pacifica radio network station 90.1 FM 89.1k EOS College Station



00:12

The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature that may be considered objectionable by some listener discretion is advised.



Jimmy Carper 00:46

Oh yes, you've tuned into after hours queer radio with attitude right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of after hours is ready to bring you news interviews, dialogue and music geared for gay lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and their friends. Hear it after hours. We may be diverse, but we have one thing in common. We are all out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closet. That means standing up for yourself taking responsibility for your own life and being proud of who you are. Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of age job or frame of mind. That's okay, we're here for you too. So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of after hours.



02:10

Hello, Houston and welcome to after hours queer radio with attitude. Heard every Saturday night at midnight right here on KPFT Houston, and ke O 's College Station. We are the sound of Texas. I'm Jimmy Carper. And with me tonight



Michelle Meyers 02:29

is Michelle Weiner.



02:30

Hi, how you doing?



Michelle Meyers 02:32

Oh, pretty good.



02:33

Well, this has got a weird because it's the fifth Saturday. Yes.



Michelle Meyers 02:36

We don't have many of



02:37

them. No, we don't. And we don't have scheduled co hosts for those shows either. Because normally they're supposed to be all music shows. Oh, because I never get to play all the music. I like



Michelle Meyers 02:50

I know. There's hardly anything of the qmD anymore. I



02:54

know it. I know. It's so I supposedly reserved the fifth Saturday for music. However,



Michelle Meyers 03:01

we have a guest tonight.



03:03

We've got a couple of them actually.



Michelle Meyers 03:05

Oh, I know parents Bagby at the political caucuses here. That's



Jimmy Carper 03:09

right. He sure is. And we're going to find out just what does it mean? I mean, what is the Political Caucus? And what is HRC? And what is all you know, all those other letters



Michelle Meyers 03:20

are out? Yeah, and, and glTF and all that. What are those folks do? I don't know. And I mean, why are they there? Why couldn't ask us questions? Yes, we are.



03:31

We're gonna find out. And later in the show. We've got members from the pride committee coming in.



Michelle Meyers 03:38

Oh, great. Yeah, I really surprised me. I was in here yesterday. And, and all of a sudden, I realized we're into Pride Week. Yeah, talking about it on the radio. And we've been mentioning all the things that were going on here. And all of a sudden, I find out that there's an event tomorrow night that I'm supposed to go to and it's not on my calendar. Oops. And so I quickly filled it in. I want to go to diverse works tomorrow night to see probably divide yes and ask some questions and maybe answer some questions that



04:10

would be great because I know tonight I missed the quack thing. I wish I had the quack thing was denied and I missed it and you know, I really support quack they are a great group



Michelle Meyers 04:22

and wonders what's quack is that's the queer artists collective. Right.



04:26

This is young folks doing performance art. And it's fantastic. It is it really is. It makes you think, folks, yeah, so

M

Michelle Meyers 04:34

I'm all at diverse works. I really got shocked and surprised to find myself in Pride Week and not ready for it. And I hope everybody out there isn't in the same shape or



04:46

perhaps later in the show. We can, you know, kind of towards the the two o'clock hour. We can play some music and I would like it to be requests for queer music or dedications. This is graduation and I Oh, people might want to make those requests and they can do it at 526-573-8526 que PFT

M

Michelle Meyers 05:10

that we've got to keep big Roy and Chris busy on the phone. Because Because if we don't, folks, they're at each other's throat. Wow, not quite they just and those are big throats. They argue with each other all the time, so let's keep them on the phone.



05:28

Okay, well, since this is kind of officially music night, let's start with a song by new artists to after hours David Garza. I read about him in the gay press and so went over to sound waves and tada, there it is. David Garza and this kind of different music. It's it's 90s music. I like it. It's called. This is off of his album, this euphoria. The name of the tune is called kinder. You're listening to it on KPFT Houston and ke O 's College Station. Oh, yeah. David Garza from his album this euphoria, that call the tune was kinder. Why don't you give us a call at 5265738 and let us know what you think of David Garza. And maybe you want to hear more of it. I can play more. I can play less. Anyway, you're listening to after hours. We're here with who are we here with? Yeah, I heard that. We're

M

Michelle Meyers 06:39

we're here with Clarence Bagby.



06:43

Clarence, you are the president of the Houston gay and lesbian political HGL. PC. Okay. It's more initials. Okay. Yeah, no more initials.



06:51

We say the caucus. That caucus? Yeah, that's kind of how we



06:54

refer to it, don't we?



Michelle Meyers 06:55

Yeah, that's a lot easier to remember. And, you know,



06:59

we've got, well, we've got the GH GL CC and the HL GCC and the HDL P who can keep up with all that no one. Not me. It's



07:10

the caucus. Yep. And the caucus does.



07:12

The caucus is an educational advocacy organization. Well, that's good. We do advocacy on equality issues, we advocate with the general public with elected officials with appointed officials. And we also, of course, own a political action committee. And that's what people tend to think of. When they think of the caucus, they think of endorsing candidates and screening candidates, they don't realize that there's a whole lot more to what's going on. Okay.



07:45

That's the way I look at the caucus, you know, it's like, I'm not a political person. I don't know if this is a good person or not. I like a group that thinks like me, to be able to, to talk to these folks and make the decision. Is this a good person or not? And I want to go along with that, sure, sure,



08:05

make a recommendation just based on that kind of narrow criteria of equality issues,



08:10

not that I'm asleep, or anything. But I'm not a political person. And it is important that I vote and that I have they vote for the things that are important to me.



08:20

Sure. And those of us that are environmentalist, and they're concerned about social justice issues kind of go through and we look at what Planned Parenthood's Action Fund has done is what the Sierra Club's done was the caucus has done and kind of weigh that in as recommendations on what to do.



08:37

So but that is only one thing that the caucus does isn't right.



08:41

That's only one thing. You know, something a big thing that we're trying to do more of is education. We've, we're having the police chief at our next meeting this coming Wednesday. Wow. The third of course, we meet at the Lesbian Gay community center, the new one at 803. Hawthorne. Right, right. And at we start at seven with kind of a social time, and then he'll be speaking at 730. But that is the third time in the last year and a half that Chief Bradford has come to the caucus to have a dialogue with the community. And it really is a dialogue and wants to talk to people and those are the kinds of things whether it's a hate crimes summit or having someone from the Houston area Women's Center, come and speak about same sex domestic violence, or having an elected official come and and talk about what's going on and hear from here from the community. We even had the chair of the Harris County Democratic Party. Michelle remembers that, you know, we had Sue Schecter come and kind of do a focus group.



Michelle Meyers 09:42

Oh, yes, that was that was very interesting. The Democratic Party was interested and got the feedback from the community on what are the community's thoughts about the party. What is in which direction should the party be going? What issues Up on the top, what issues Shouldn't we worry about? So it's those kinds of things that provide a lot of information for people. And I really not in the strictest sense, political, because I'm not a political type person either. But I belong to the caucus. And I know you're not political, and you belong to the caucus,



10:22

right? Because I think it's important to to make my endorsement to the caucus with with a check to be a member. Yes. And to get that information. I like getting the newsletters. I like getting the postcards,



10:37

and those, you know, those 40,000 voters guides that Stephen hates, he is very upset that we continue to send out around election time, cost money. Yeah. Now and know that, you know,

we need those \$30 \$100 \$200 You know, whatever it is, whatever level people want to join at, you know, we we need those folks to step forward and doesn't mean you have to come to every meeting or it doesn't mean you have to come to a meeting, even the

 Jimmy Carper 11:03


low folks like me the you know, what was it? \$30 membership, right, it's right. It's the basic, that's the basic art, if take advantage of it in two years for 50. That's what I did. Sure, sure.

 11:14

Or join the Liberty club for 10 or more dollars a month and, you know, give up a night at the Black Eyed Pea and help out. Really staining, exactly membership program, you know, of the caucus,

 11:27

it's all part of it.

 Michelle Meyers 11:28

More people who listen to KPFT know about EFT, and I certainly talk about it all the time.

 11:36


And we and we like EFT at

 11:39

the caucus, yes, that means that you get money coming in, you know, every month, every month, and that's nice.

 11:45

Well, it's the reliability factor. It's you know that whether it's 20, or 50, or 100, you have some amount that you can count on that you know, is going to come in and that you can depend and plan your programming around.

 Michelle Meyers 12:03

When Roy and I do news, we talk about news that people in the community, can you so I'm going to ask you a few questions about the community. And the caucus. If someone is

interested in finding out what the caucus is really all about, other than listening to this one in more details, what do they do?



12:25

Well, they can certainly call 521 1000 713-521-1000. And there are several options. There are different, you know, buttons, you can press different extensions, you can dial to get whatever information you want. You can always email a lot of people like to get stuff by email, they can email us at HGL PC at Neo soft.com. And we're glad to respond in that way. I you know, we get we get quite a number of inquiries that way. And we're happy to mail it out or email it out. However people fax it out. However people want to get it we're pretty up to date technologically so we can get it to him and just about any format,



Michelle Meyers 13:07

okay? Could they just show up at one of the meetings,



13:09

you bet we meet at the at the community center the first Wednesday of every month. And it's nice for people to show up at seven and kind of mellow around and have a glass of wine or have a Sprite or a cup of coffee and kind of chit chat. And then the meeting actually starts at 730. So it's time to because a lot of us when we go to an organization we're looking for, you know, maybe to meet some new people to socialize a little bit meet some like minded folks. And that's why we started in the last several months, this idea of being a little more social, and letting people chit chat a little bit.



Michelle Meyers 13:46


And what happens if you're a Republican or if you're a Democrat, does that make any difference?





13:52


It doesn't actually the caucus is a nonprofit. And as such, we're nonpartisan, we're not even bipartisan, but the caucus is nonpartisan. And our vice president is a Republican. I'm a Democrat and and proudly so but we're proud that that we have an organization that welcomes all viewpoints. And we want to hear from everybody. We don't always agree, but we can disagree politely and agreeably. And then, of course, the political action committee is nonpartisan as well. We just endorse on the basis of equality issues, things like, you know, non discrimination policy, hate crimes, legislation, AIDS funding, those kinds of things, as opposed to party affiliation. And we have a history of endorsing Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, because and that's just kind of by happenstance, because we don't use that as a barometer. So everybody's welcome.





 Michelle Meyers 14:52  
Oh, great.


 14:53  
How did you get involved in all of this?

 14:57  
He says with a well string You look in his eyes, what possessed you, Clarence?

 15:06  
Michelle, and I say that we're not political. But you know what you really are? What? Yeah, what is the definition of political, but you are political. You know, the ins and outs, you know, people who are in office, you know, where the the areas are that they cover. I mean, I don't even know where I just go over to love it and and vote. Somebody told me, I don't know where the boundaries are?

 15:34  
Well, I come from a political family. My great grandfather was a populist candidate for governor in 1896. And I have had family in politics, working worked with Lyndon Johnson and Jim Wright and many other people. So I kind of come back naturally. And I come from a very civic minded family that that always thought it was neat to talk about who great grandpa was, but more importantly, what have you done lately? You know, how have you helped the world be a better place?

 Michelle Meyers 16:11  
So that street might have been named for your?

 16:15  
I don't like to get into all that. You know, I think it's more important, as I said, to talk about what we're doing now and what you did yesterday, and what you're doing today and what you're going to do tomorrow, but yes, that was the religious part of the family, the Episcopalians but we're not a fiscal McFarland family.

 16:37  
- . . . . .

But just talking hearing you speak. I mean, you know, how the cogs fit together and, and what makes them what grace is used to make them run smoother. And



16:52

I try. I try. A lot of it is just being around and meeting people and having people get familiar with you. You know, I had the the wonderful opportunity again today to spend some time with our wonderful 18th congressional district representative Sheila Jackson Lee, who were fortunate enough to have us represent us in Congress. And you know, Sheila, is just a fabulous person. And it's such a wonderful opportunity to be able to get to know folks like Deborah Hamburg, and Rodney Ellis and Sheila Jackson Lee, and a lot of the understanding is not necessarily any more than just having been around and seeing people and knowing people, she'll have been friends for years. And she just did a wonderful thing that I know the listeners and you all will be interested in. She gave a wonderful speech on the floor of the House in favor of James Hormel. So approval of his President Clinton's nomination of Mr. Hormel, to be the ambassador to Luxembourg. And, you know, that's the kind of stuff she does all the time, whether it's advocating for federal funding of needle exchange programs. And she does it so quietly, I kind of chastised her a little bit today. I said, you know, why didn't you send out a press release? You know, that should have been in the Houston voice. Congress member Lee and, you know, endorsing karma articulately supports Hormel on the floor of the House of Representatives, that's what we want to hear, we



18:25

need to know that she's our member of



18:27

Congress, you know, and, and we need to let her know that we think that's good and let other people know she's doing and but it's a lot of fun. I'll tell you I it's it's a lot of fun being involved in the local level, that's always been more of my focus, but it's it's a lot of fun. The state work is so important and and the National work and the work that the national organizations are are doing to support the local grassroots organizing work it's all so gratifying, you know, it's something you can do kind of like mowing the yard. I love to mow the yard and you know, weed the flowerbeds. You know, at the end of the day, you can look and you have this sense of accomplishment for a boy look at that it's neat and trim and, and politics, although not often not quite as rewarding, immediately rewarding



19:21

is a lot you know, it's just the impressions that that people make that you take with you and many I've known many past caucus presidents and they've always seemed to represent the stand on the street corner and screen for gay rights gay rights gay rights, but you're more laid back and you know what's going on inside and and you know how things work it's it's kind of a different I get the diff a different impression from you. Well,



19:50

I'm a pragmatist rolled into an idealist rolled into a little realist I guess. I you know, I think it's really important to establish relationships. And it's easier to establish a relationship over a cup of coffee once a meal than it is yelling at somebody on the street corner, not that direct Jack direct action doesn't, hasn't had its place in the past, and, and probably will continue to have its place in the future. But it's the relationships that we established and sitting down going to City Hall and sitting down. I can't tell you how many council members and and state representatives have commented in the last several months, how appreciative they are, to have different caucus board members, me and and or others come to them and articulate issues. And I say, gosh, you know, we just haven't had too much of this self initiated, you know, communication, we need to be going to these folks and telling them what our issues are telling them about needle exchange program. A lot of them have never thought about it. A lot of them have never heard the issues articulated. And, you know, one of the things we were very quietly involved behind the scenes on this latest issue with the city regarding the mobile HIV testing unit. Yes. You know, we we started asking questions several months ago, where is this thing? And why isn't it out at our events? And stuff? Yeah. And the question, the answer was, it hasn't been working. But you know, the caucus, and if we have done anything wrong, in the last several years, and something that we're working real hard right now to address, it's articulating to the general public what we're doing, we've had so much energy and some so many fine people involved over the years who have worked so hard. But we've often failed to let the broader community know what we're doing. And that's so critical. People need to hear that we are the reason that we have this enhanced hate crimes program. Because the caucus sat down with then candidate, Lee Brown in December, and wrote down and asked him to sign a piece of paper that said, we will have a hate crimes hotline, we will have a hate crimes coordinator, we will increase sensitivity training. And we did that, you know the caucus did that on the behalf of the broader community. And we need to make sure people know that those are the kinds of things and so we get more of those \$30 checks.



22:32

Well, you see, that's the other thing about you is that I think people like me, just general. Just general citizens think of politics as you know, really serious and, and then a year in long meetings and all of that kind of stuff. But you're humorous. I mean, well,



22:57

are you laughing with me? At me?



23:01

It's because you make it fun.



23:04

What is it? Michelle, what do you think?



Michelle Meyers 23:06

The caucus meetings are interesting, because they're not exceedingly long. They're to the point. And they always have one particular topic that is of interest to the general public. So yeah, there's a little bit of businesses carried on, that has to be carried on because it is an organization that is incorporated, but most of it is very informative. And presented in a real easy way. So this isn't like the old smoke filled back room.



23:44

Well, you know, this is the 90s. And the days when two or 300, folks would show up at caucus meetings on a regular basis, back in the days when we used to meet twice a month. And we had to meet in an auditorium because there were that many people that participated. People were willing to sit and listen to this report and that report and or, you know, people don't want to listen to that anymore. People want a little entertainment, they want some information, and then they want to go home. That's right. And when you bore them with all that, and you know, you can ask Michelle, we move those meetings along. And we offer an opportunity for dialogue and some questions, but you don't get more than one chance. When when rather than meeting, and I get in a little trouble over that. But



24:41

a lot of business should be done in committee.



24:43

Right. And then you give a report and then you get recorded. That's it. That's right. And there's some discussion and if you didn't like it, well, you know, you should have listened the last six months when we were asking for volunteers. That's right. Yeah. We ain't having a committee meeting tonight. You know, we're



Michelle Meyers 24:59

that one. was a question I was going to ask if somebody is interested and all that nitty gritty political stuff?



25:06

Well, there's some great opportunities. There the normal kind of organizational committees. We have a membership committee, we have a volunteers committee. We have a special events and fundraising committee, which has a lot of fun. You know, there's there's several committees, and I'm sure I'm forgetting some advocacy committee, right. We have our legislative advocacy committee that we we formed just in January, that was part of my thing

that that I think we all thought it was real important, so that we could have a cogent legislative agenda. And quite frankly, instead of just sending the President out, to do whatever the President felt like doing, which I think is, at times what we've done in the past, I wanted some directive. And so we have directed the legislative advocacy committee to come up with an agenda of some prioritized items, you know, that there will probably include the typical, you know, employment, non discrimination, education, non discrimination, hate crimes, I'm sure AIDS funding breast cancer research. We all that all that. woman's right, choose, supporting that continuing that. But we need a group of people to sit down and come up with that, and our political action committee, which is actually a separate Corporation, but our and I'm actually president of both corporations, but the PAC has some, a lot of fun things to get involved in as well. And you can be involved on election day, you know, some people like the pushcarts polling place. Yes, yes. And it's amazing to me, it's always been interesting and fun. To every couple of years do that. I used to do it a lot more than I do. Now. Now I find myself, you know, making sure people are there instead of being one of the people that that it's there. But the interesting thing is to see the large number of heterosexual people that come up and want that push car, you bet.



27:15

You bet and Bryce have respect



27:17

for that, because they know it's a structured fair process that's gone through to evaluate candidates based on certain issues.



27:27

I think the caucus can be very proud of that.



27:29

We really are. I'll tell you, we have you know, 23 years of history, the oldest, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender political group in the South. Yeah. And I think that's, that's impressive. He was impressive. You know, age means we've stuck it out and we've stuck around and we're still doing a lot of things and I wasn't involved in 1975 I'm happy to tell you where I was in 1975.



27:57

No, I don't want to hear it. Anyway. We're gonna take a break right now. We're going to come back after after the break and talk about other groups you're involved in and, and what all that means. But we'll take calls at 5265738 If you want to know some more about the caucus. Right now. I've got some sweet mama cotton. She is a wonderful performer. You can hear every

Tuesday night at the briar patch. She has a new CD out called expect delays. Sweet mama cotton and the sugar daddies and this is my favorite song. Because sometimes this is the way I feel. We'll be right back.



28:46

The sound of Texas KPFT Houston of Pacifica radio network station 90.1 FM 89.1k e os College Station.



29:00

If you'd like good toe tap and get you up and jump in music. Check out Joe's Roadhouse, where you'll find a great mix of music, comedy and interviews with local and national musicians. For the best in blues, swing and rock and roll tune into Joe's Roadhouse Sundays. Three to 6pm on Houston's 90.1 KPFT the sound of Texas stereo



29:26

Oh, yeah, Joe's Roadhouse, that's my favorite blues program and the fabulous KPFT blue Sunday starts right after this show at three o'clock, with Big Daddy j and the Red Eye special, but you're listening to after hours queer radio with attitude. And we're here with Michelle and Clarence Bagby, president of



29:54

the Houston gay and lesbian Political Caucus caucus. The caucus



29:59

now you're all So you're involved in other groups? Do I just read something about you? And in the gay press, you're you're on the board. Damn



30:08

that press.



30:09

I know it can't keep away from you're on the board of a national organization.



30:14

I am I am. I was,



30:17

Oh, my God, really? You mean a national organization has represented representation from the middle of America rather than just both coasts?



30:26

Imagine that. Yeah, more than just LA and New York and Washington. Imagine that. I I am I'm recently attended my first meeting as a board member of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. And the task force is another organization actually, we're just talking earlier about the little bit of the history of the caucus. And the task force is another organization with a proud history as the first queer political organization founded in the country was founded in 1975. We're celebrating our silver anniversary, 25 years this year, I What is it? 25 years of grassroots advocacy and grassroots organizing, equality, freedom and justice. Okay.



31:12

Okay. Is that enough? No. I'm all confused here. We've got the task force. We've got LG ARL. We've got HRC. What? What are these groups? What do they do? I don't, it would seem like they're big national political groups and everything overlaps, and why shouldn't we just have one group?



Michelle Meyers 31:35

And let me try to ask the same question and a different way we can both get, because I think we're asking the same question. I've always heard that you politics is local politics. And so here's the state stuff in this this national staff and how does it all fit together? And is there any rationale to it? Or is it just a bunch of people all running, sometimes in the same direction and sometimes in different directions?



32:04

Well, certainly there there been a proliferation of queer organizations in the last several years. The Lesbian Gay rights lobby was founded by the caucus and five other local caucuses and alliances in Texas kidding, that came together. Yes, the Lesbian Gay rights lobby of Texas, was founded by six local caucuses and alliances that got together and decided we needed a paid voice in Austin, okay, and decided that a paid lobbyist was the next step. Take us to the next level, since everybody else has a paid lobbyists. And so we got together and formed the lobby, they got together and formed a lobby several years ago. And they're about two thirds of the board or large seats, and about a third are the caucus and Alliance seats. And the Houston gay and lesbian Political Caucus, has a seat on that board. And then of course, the task force, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, having been founded in 1975, was the first national

organization and probably one of the first queer political organizations in the entire country. And its entire mission is about focusing on local grassroots organizing and advocacy. For instance,



33:35

we wait a minute now, we've got the lobbying here in our state, right, we have now got the lesbian,



33:45

gay rights lobby of Texas. And then we have the Human Rights Campaign, which lobbies Congress and lobbies in Washington and does that very well.



33:53

Okay, but isn't the task force kind of overlapping here? No,



33:57

the task force doesn't do much lobbying. We do a little lobbying, lobbying, but our focus is more on the states. And the task force really sees as the local grassroots work as the essence of the movement. And that's why we're sponsoring the equality begins at home actions in every state, the 50 state action that will be next March. And we've just committed a significant amount of money in hiring organizers and initiating a grant program to statewide organizations, and actually in the 14 states because there are only 36 states that have statewide queer political groups. So in those 14 states, the task force will actually be organizing the statewide marches that need to occur. Wow.



34:56

And I every time I read about Carrie LaBelle, she's somewhere else Oh,



35:00

Isn't she amazing? She's just wonderful and someone who's truly committed to social, the broader social justice movement. Yeah, no kidding, and really sees the connections that we have to make and encompassing all queers, right. And that's what's so critical, you know, we need to, we need to be including everybody and of all movements, you know, our movements should be the last movement that wants to stand in the way of people that want to be involved. And that want to be a part of, of our movement, we should be the last group that wants to exclude or be exclusionary.





35:36

I agree with you on that.



35:38

And you know, that broad umbrella is why we say gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender. That's a mouthful.



35:44

I know, I wish there was another name, queer community, I know. But you know,



35:49

and you notice, that's what I keep saying, I keep saying queer, or,



35:52

I know I keep saying it too. But I'm of that age that even even though I've been saying it for 10 years, somewhere in the back of my mind, it goes out.



36:03

Well, and we just, you know, it's part of growing, and it's something new for me too, you know, growing up and progressive Houston, Texas. But it's, it's critical. And I have to tell you that Carrie, has been a part in the broadening of my view of of what our movement needs to be and where we need to go. And also Rachel Rosen, you know, Rachel was down here for our hate crimes summit that we had in November, and Rachel's co chair of the National Gay and Lesbian taskforce board. And she is just fabulous. She's from Santa Fe, and you want to talk about somebody who knows politics, there's nothing that you can talk about in New Mexico, that Rachel doesn't know all about, wow. She's really neat. But so I think it's really important to understand that you've got the Human Rights Campaign in Washington lobbying Congress, which is great, which is really important. You have the task force, which is doing things like starting and continuing to staff and facilitate the national policy roundtable, which is a twice a year meeting of all the executive directors of the national queer organizations. And then you have the task force also doing things like starting and staffing and continuing to facilitate the Federation of statewide gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender political organizations. And so you can see a real difference, you know, you've got one national group that's really focused on lobbying members of Congress, then you've got another national group that's really focused on effectuating, the type of grassroots organizing that it takes to get good people in Congress for another organization to lobby, you know, it's so important that we remember that, that we have to be working at the local level. And we have to have the kind of support we need at the local level, to have Sheila Jackson Lee, and to have Jeanne green, and Eddie Bernice Johnson, and Barney Frank and Maxine Waters, and all these other wonderful people across the country that

support equality for all people. And it doesn't come from Washington down to Houston. It comes from Houston, up to Washington. And that's the only way you know, if we're if we're going to keep good state representatives like Ken Yarborough, who represents the garden oaks and oak forest area, who is in really in trouble. In this election, he barely won his last election. And Ken's really in trouble. And we need to make sure that we keep a progressive voice like his in Austin. And you know, we could talk about Democrats and Republicans and yada, yada. Yeah, I don't want to talk about that. I want to talk about people's voting records. And I want to talk about whether they're progressive on and supportive of our issues. Right. And I don't care if you're pink, purple or blue? Yes, what label you want to wear? You know, right. Yes, you know, you're



39:06

right there. But I mean, we're talking about all of these different groups, and that takes person power. And it also takes money. I'll try it. And so why I should give my money to a national organization rather than a local organization?



39:23

And the answer is Jimmy, that you shouldn't. The, the answer is, and when I tell people, I mean this, and some people look at me cross-eyed And but the caucus has really taken a strong stand this year, on emphasizing the importance of supporting local, state and national organizations. And I would say that if you just have that \$30 And that's the only money you have this year to invest in equality. I have a hard time believing that there are too many people who really only have \$30. Well, that's the rest. But let's say you do Let's say that's all you have, well then give \$10 to the caucus \$10 to the Lesbian Gay rights lobby and \$10 to the task force or, you know, another national organization, but, you know, spread it around because each one is critical. We need a lobbyist in Austin. Educating and explaining right there everyday during the legislative session are issues to legislators. I know that's important. We need that and we need a local organization here screening and endorsing and advocating whether it's the