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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** All right.

[00:00:01] **Speaker 2** Well, I guess let's start by going back to when this C was created. What was your thought process as it was clear the legislature was going to be creating a new set of maps and that there were going to be some realignments opening up here?

[00:00:15] **Speaker 1** Yeah. So, I mean, it was obviously an opportunity, you know, throughout my entire life. What happens is I've noticed doors open and doors close. And this was clearly a door that was opening. Jon Marco was the incumbent at the time. He's still currently sitting in that seat. But he was drawn out of his area by a 530 some odd feet. And so that opened up up the door. You know, it's an open seat now. So talk with my wife. You know, she's been a wonderful support system for me throughout my military career and everything. And, hey, do you want to do this? And she's like, well, you've been talking about getting involved in politics since before we started having kids. And my son turns 14 next month. So that's how long we've been wanting to do this. And you just can't do it in the Air Force. Active duty. So the door opened. The opportunity was there. She fully backed and supported me. And so we decided to just. Just run and go with it.

[00:01:14] **Speaker 2** What's that process been like? Because you've gone through a primary, how you won a primary. Now you're entering a general election. It's an extraordinarily competitive seat. Yeah.

[00:01:23] **Speaker 1** It's been really nice, honestly. You know, one of the things that I talk about, if you go to my website, for example, it will talk about how we've been stationed at many different places throughout the United States during a time of the Air Force. And that that allowed us to see some of the best people that this country has to offer. And since moving here, this place has certainly been no exception. We've been able to talk to many people throughout the many doors that we have knocked, had some great conversations with people. But there are some struggles, and those struggles are real, are real to people. And so we're excited because we're in a position now where we can maybe serve our community in a little bit different way than what we're used to, but we're still helping people. And so it's been really refreshing through this whole process.

[00:02:05] **Speaker 2** What are the issues that are most important to you in this race?

[00:02:09] **Speaker 1** Yeah, I think the big thing, you know, again, from knocking on doors and hearing from people. The biggest thing is the cost of living inflation, similar to what you experienced nationwide. But people here are feeling it as well. There was a recent poll that came out that said three out of five Americans feel like we're already in a recession. So whether we actually are in a recession or not, it is kind of up for debate. But the fact that people are feeling that way is a very real thing. And so I think that that's certainly important to help people with that. Of course, the cost of health care, we have a lot of retirees as well in our community. So, you know, looking at what people are getting for Social Security and things like that and taxation on those things, those are some big issues that I hear over and over again.

[00:02:56] **Speaker 2** When you look at what your opponent's going to try and make the most important issues. Are you worried about what she's bringing to this race or is it just focusing on what you're going to be doing?

[00:03:05] **Speaker 1** I'm mostly just focusing on what I'm doing. My opponent's name is Christy Welch, and I don't know a ton about her. I do know that she's going to bring a pro-choice thing when it comes to abortion, to the table. I am pro-life, with a few exceptions, such as rape, incest or the life of the mother is in danger. I think that that is something that we really need to to come to common ground on and figure out a solution so that we can put that argument behind us. But yeah, that I think is probably the biggest thing that she'll probably bring to the table. I'll let her answer all the questions herself.

[00:03:44] **Speaker 2** On that issue, Republicans, especially under Robin Vos in the Assembly, really struggled with trying to bring the different wings of the Republican Party together to try and create a unified voice and how to approach it, whether what exceptions should be there or what language should surround health of the mother, what qualifies, you know. And eventually that did lead to the Supreme Court is now handling that. Yeah, but do you think that Republicans would be able to find agreement within themselves? Because there are some that are very hardline, no exceptions. There are some that are would would see a certain number of weeks as being an option.

[00:04:15] **Speaker 1** Yeah. And I think I think to be fair, there's passionate feelings from both sides of the aisle. And every individual has their own perception on things. Right. And this is a very hard question to answer as a male as well. Right. And so that's where it becomes super important to go knock on the doors, talk to all the women that are in the 18th District and hear what they have to say about it. I'm a big proponent of the Ron Johnson approach. I'm sure you've probably heard about that, of leaving it, leaving it up to the voters. I don't feel like regardless of my personal opinion on on on how I think it should go. At the end of the day, when you're an elected representative, you need to represent the people that are in your district. And so I would recommend putting it up for a vote. And a referendum, so to speak, and then just let the people decide on if they want to put a timeline on that.

[00:05:06] **Speaker 2** What do you think about the other races up and down the ticket? How will they play out into your race in terms of the number of voters it brings, how they feel they're separating issues somewhere else in the ballot?

[00:05:17] **Speaker 1** Well, I think the presidential election clearly brings a lot more voters to the table. Typically, in a primary race, for example, in the eighth District, you'd see historically about a 20% turnout on people coming out to vote. This particular time around, we had the biggest turnout in the history of the 80th district. Now, some of that may be due to a little bit of the realignment. There may be some other outlying issues. But I think that at the end of the day, what that does is that speaks volumes to the traction that, you know, people feel passionate right now on both sides of the aisle. And but I think it's a great opportunity for us to get a really good turnout. We really get a if you look at the numbers, people are telling you what they want, right? And so, again, hopefully at the end of this election cycle, we win the election and we're able to to be blessed to represent the people here in the 80th district.

[00:06:09] **Speaker 2** When it comes to Donald Trump, where do you fall within the Republican, I guess, spectrum of obviously there's never Trump left the party. Two. I've always been a big fan of Donald Trump.

[00:06:20] **Speaker 1** Yeah. So I will certainly vote for Donald Trump. Do I think that. His final word is gospel. No, I don't. But I think that at the end of the day, we're all conservatives. And I think our conservative value base is is what we have common ground on. And so I will be voting for Donald Trump.

[00:06:43] **Speaker 2** The eighth congressional you mentioned the primary that had a large turnout, obviously a very competitive eighth congressional. Did you? Was it just trying to lay low on that or did you have feelings for which one of the candidates you like best in that race.

[00:06:55] **Speaker 1** As far as.

[00:06:56] **Speaker 2** In terms of the primary and what that meant? Because obviously Andre Joc and Roger Ross have long, longstanding state rep history and obviously win. We've got to be from the rest of the state perspective, came out of nowhere and was endorsed by Donald Trump. Did that make them more legitimate in that area?

[00:07:11] **Speaker 1** Yeah, I didn't really back any one of those people. I'm new to politics myself. I'm not a career politician. This is our first go round. And what I've noticed is those are three really good options for the Republican Party to represent this area. And so I was just excited to see whoever came out. As we know, that was Toni Weed. And so, you know, I'll support Toni Weed again for a lot of the same reasons I support President Trump and I'll vote for President Trump. I will vote for Toni Weed as well.

[00:07:41] **Speaker 2** Okay. When it looked through the Senate races, obviously another big win here drawing people in. Do you think this Tammy Baldwin has a history of crossover appeal? She's outrun Democrats everywhere else across the ballot. Do you separate out that race in terms of how it might trickle down to the rest of the ballot in terms of whether she wins here? That doesn't necessarily doom your your chances down ballot?

[00:08:03] **Speaker 1** No, I don't think it does. So, again, I'm going to refer to our doorknocking. And one of the things that whether there you have your far left and your far right. And I think that those people are typically going to vote the way that they're going to vote. And a lot of those will be straight tickets. But there's a lot of people that I've talked to, particularly swing voters, like liberals, like conservatives, that they're not necessarily going to vote a straight ticket. And those are the where I get into really meaningful conversations. They won't vote for President Trump because of just whatever reason. Right. Or they won't vote for Kamala Harris for whatever reason they may otherwise vote a straight ticket or for the most part. But I think that some of the feedback that I'm hearing is they like that. I'm coming at them with common sense solutions. I'm not a career politician. I'm really in this to kind of help in a way to serve the community. And they like a lot of my approaches to things. And so I'm hopeful that that will result well for us in the general election.

[00:09:00] **Speaker 2** To me, Robin Vos, as mentioned repeatedly in past elections, how Republicans in the Assembly, both Republican candidates have outperformed Democrats who where Tony Evers has won that district or Tammy Baldwin has won that district. And he said it's the strength and the quality of the candidates. It's the approach of the doors. Is that kind of your focus? You're taking off those particular voters who may choose based on who they need at their door instead of a straight party?

[00:09:25] **Speaker 1** Yeah. And I think you just hit it right on the head, you know, And I feel like I bring a lot to the table. I can relate to a lot of different people. I grew up in Iowa in a little town where it's basically agriculture and and factory work. And so it's a it's a not as well economically off area as some other parts of the country. And that's kind of how I grew up, like your shoes falling off your feet before you get new issues. Right? I remember walking down to the local Aldi and using my paper out money to help get food. So I understand when people are facing tough decisions, especially right now with this economy. I understand those tough decisions, but you're literally you're fighting to put food on the table, right? I've been there and and then I've been in the military. And that gives me a new perspective from that. And then now I'm here as a business owner. And so my life has gone a lot of different ways from my childhood to now. But what that's done is that's more than me, in a way, to where I can really relate to a lot of people, regardless of what they're going through. And I think that that is being received well from the members of the 88th District.

[00:10:28] **Speaker 2** One of the most important things in the legislation you'd be voting on would be the budget. One of the biggest components of the budget is always public education. So given that you homeschool your kids because that's the best for them, how do you approach those questions when you handle it with people at the door? I want to talk about public schools.

[00:10:44] **Speaker 1** As far as the funding or the education educate.

[00:10:47] **Speaker 2** Just in terms of your support for public education and the state's investment in that?

[00:10:51] **Speaker 1** Yeah. So I think that we all certainly want to give give our up and rising generation the best, right, better than what we had. And so I'm all for funding and making sure that the kids have everything that they need to be successful. I think what we need to do from a legislative standpoint is we really need to look at how are those dollars equating into results, if that makes sense. So you look at some of these schools that are getting a lot of the money. So the peer, for example, we just passed a referendum this year, $4.75 million for the next five years. Milwaukee just passed a 200 is over two, I think, with $212 million. Somewhere around there, you know, And then that's going to be pulling money from Green Bay to help fund that about 1.2 million. So with all this money that we're talking about going around places, what's the results in terms of when they graduate, when they go to a four year university, a two year university, a technical college, or if they just simply choose to enter the workforce, You know, how is that education benefiting the overall society? How is that education creating? So that I think that that's the things that we need to look at is the money equating the results.

[00:12:01] **Speaker 2** Where do you stand on vouchers, school vouchers, private school options?

[00:12:05] **Speaker 1** Yeah, I support I support school vouchers. I think that, you know, in a in a magic world that a magic wand, you know, you'd want to just give a big backpack and stuff it with money. And the money goes wherever the kid wants to go to school. I think parents want choice of where to send their kids. I remember when I was in high school, I was a basketball player and I really want to go play at this other school and I couldn't do it without having to sit up for a whole year, you know? And that's a whole nother conversation. But the point is, I think is I think parents want choice for their kids regardless of the reason behind it. But I think at the end of the day, what everybody wants is they want their kids to be educated, want them to have financial literacy, for them to be able to read, have reading comprehension. You know, reading is the foundation for all other education. And so those are things that I think that we really need to focus on.

[00:12:55] **Speaker 2** When you look at this market and Brown County in general and broadly, the Fox Valley, the Bible counties is gaining new momentum both in Wisconsin and nationally, is realizing how important it is as a whole area when it comes to statewide politics, all the way down to local politics. What what is the message? Are you is there a running as a team or is it you know, you're running in your race and you're going to the doors? Are you mentioning other races or only if the person at the door bring them back? How does the fact that there's competitive race at the state Senate and multiple assembly seats in Congress, obviously all the way up to the presidential ticket, does that work together or they kind of all get separated out?

[00:13:32] **Speaker 1** No, it certainly works together like we talked about earlier in this interview. The general election brings out a lot more voters than a primary election does. And there was I don't know if you've heard it, but this area, the Green Bay area, I'll just call it the whole area. It is the battleground with the battleground states, meaning that as Green Bay votes, we already know different places around the state that they're going to vote red or blue. But this will likely decide if Wisconsin goes red or blue, which affects the Electoral College and the big presidential thing. And I think it affects everything down the ticket. But where my focus is, regardless of all that stuff, is on my election, nothing matters unless I win this election right here, me and my team. And so that's where my focus is.

[00:14:21] **Speaker 2** Obviously, in years past, Republicans have better lock for holding the legislature. The district maps said there was never going to be fewer than 60 districts. Now it's looking is it don't go bad for Democrats if they want to actually win the assembly, but your race now is going to be one of those that may decide who controls the assembly. Does that bring a little more pressure or a different perspective when you go to the doors?

[00:14:44] **Speaker 1** Yeah. I mean, I certainly feel the pressure of that, right, A little bit. But again, I think at the end of the day, I think it's important to remind yourself of why you're running. Right. And and you're really trying to run to serve the community. You know, I have my uniform from the Air Force out, and I looked at it for a long time and it was like, if I could explain like a cup, my cup was like it was felt a little empty on the service side of things. That sense throw my name in the hat and getting out and meeting people and communities, going to events, knocking on these doors, all these different things that we're doing. That cup is filling back up a lot and I've really enjoyed it and we really do have some of the best people here in the district. And I'm not just saying that like I invite anybody to go out, not because of me, but the community. Another thing that I really like is I've had people apologize.