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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** And say they're. Yeah.

[00:00:03] **Speaker 2** It's. I am rolling with her. All right. So let's start with when did you first and obviously it's only been a few months since this race even became a possibility. But how quickly did you start to think, you know, you may be in line to run for this?

[00:00:16] **Speaker 1** When I heard about the opportunity with Alberta Darling's retirement, I started thinking about it. And I knew then, and I certainly know a lot more now, how incredibly high the stakes are for this, the seat for Wisconsin's future. So I really gave it a lot of thought, and I looked at my own professional experience. I looked at all my years living in this district and the values and concerns that I have. And that's really where I began to focus on how I can contribute and move our district and Wisconsin to a better place.

[00:00:54] **Speaker 2** Was there ever a thought of like, this is the right time because of the peculiarities of a special election versus, you know, do really want to get into the nastiness of modern politics?

[00:01:05] **Speaker 1** It's a question I really wasn't thinking about then. I'm not a politician, so I wasn't as familiar with the nuances of a special election versus a regular election. But I did know what I have accomplished in the past. I've always been someone in my own work with the legislature and as an environmental attorney and policy adviser, familiar with how Madison conducts itself, so to speak. And I've personally been tracking how over recent years it has become so extreme and so difficult for anything to get done there. So I have been very much aware of it following bills that have been vetoed, for example, by Governor Evers that were just harmful and extreme. So I was up to date on it. I just didn't necessarily appreciate back then that I would be the one who would really need to step forward to bring balance back.

[00:02:04] **Speaker 2** So what was your level of appreciation for how significant this race was? I mean, was that did you know that going in or was it impressed upon you that this, you know, carried more importance than just one Senate seat?

[00:02:18] **Speaker 1** I did know personally only because, as I had mentioned, I had been tracking many of the bills that had moved their way through the legislature. And I knew from having lived in this district almost all of my life that they did not represent what was important to me and were not positioned to help Wisconsin move forward. In fact, they would have contributed to Wisconsin moving backward on women's health and voting rights and democracy, even on tracking, attracting young families to either stay in Wisconsin or move to Wisconsin. It was all going the wrong way on those issues. So I knew that this seat was necessary to protect Governor Evers ability to veto harmful bills like the ones he had to over recent years. I knew that going in. I didn't realize then that if this seat doesn't flip blue, that the Senate GOP will have achieved a supermajority which would allow them to also begin impeachment proceedings against Governor Evers or our Attorney General, Judge Cao, or even Dane County judges, for example, that I didn't appreciate. I was really just tracking the bills that were being vetoed out in necessity and concern.

[00:03:39] **Speaker 2** So let's step back and say, what do you consider to be the most important issues in this race? You've mentioned a few topics. Is that is that what you want voters to be thinking about?

[00:03:49] **Speaker 1** The ones that have been most important to me and what I have been hearing while I've been knocking doors and at these events and talking to people and I've been really concentrating on the parts of the district where I am most had the best chance of meeting new people since I've lived in these communities in Milwaukee County. Like I said, all these decades, what I am continuing to hear the greatest concern to folks is women's right to choose and women's health care options in general. That's really been number one, and I agree with that. The second is the safety of our communities. I agree with that 100%. I didn't realize until I started meeting with police chiefs in the area and talking to others involved with law enforcement and local communities that for years now under the current legislature, there has been a shortage of the necessary funds and resources to keep our community safe. You know, just said pretty simply law enforcement doesn't have enough money to hire enough staff to secure the vehicles and the resources they need to be proactive. Give in their police work. So when crime is coming out of Milwaukee, which is actually in the same situation in terms of not having enough resources, it's coming into the suburbs, into Senate District eight. And what the police have been explaining to me, which makes sense, is without proper resources and enough. They can't they can't take on this rising crime. It's going under the radar and they must react rather than be proactive. So that is an issue that is really important to me because I want us to be safe. And we need this legislature, which has been using something called shared revenues in a fashion that has, in effect, been defunding the police. It makes them unable to achieve budgets that provide for the safety of our communities.

[00:05:51] **Speaker 2** So when you look at the issue of crime across the aith, is it the reality of rising crime or is it the fear of the proximity to the crime issue in Milwaukee and having that bleed out into the suburbs?

[00:06:06] **Speaker 1** I think it's a combination of both. I think there is a perception of rising crime, but it's also a reality. Again, based on my conversations with chiefs in the district, when I say chiefs, I mean police chiefs and gays and others who are very much involved in our law enforcement system. Yes, we are hearing on the news about rising reckless driving and the dangers that poses the rise in human trafficking, illegal guns and domestic abuse. That is all over our local news and newspapers. But there's facts and reality behind those reports. And that's why we do need local communities like those within our Senate district, to be given the resources to make our communities more safe. And this legislature, really, under my opponent's watch, they are part of this problem. They are not providing our law enforcement with what they need to keep us safe. So we need to go to the experts and ask them what they need from our legislature rather than the legislature withholding the funds necessary.

[00:07:16] **Speaker 2** Obviously, Republicans have used crime and the fear of crime, especially in African-American sections of of of our state, as a bludgeon in political advertising for the last number of years. And that'll likely come up in this race as well. Is there a danger in feeding into that or how do you balance that, that legitimate fear versus the the racial component that comes with it?

[00:07:43] **Speaker 1** I have not encountered in my discussions that racial component, although I know exactly what you mean about those political ads. As a Brewers fan family, I suffered through those political ads all summer long and there is that. Racial biased aspect. That undertone that is disturbing. What I am speaking to is basic police work. We need police officers to have the money for training to make sure that their officers are fully aware so that they can be proactive and reach out and take on crime, illegal guns, whatever people look like. It's addressing the problem. I have long felt frustrated as somebody who's lived in the Milwaukee area for as long as I have been. How Republicans seem to be speaking out of two sides of their mouth on crime. On one side, they're like, Oh, Milwaukee, what a bad place. All this crime and really focusing on the negativity of the difficulties that Milwaukee is having. Again, mostly due to budget shortfalls. The other side of their mouth, they are not providing Milwaukee or surrounding communities like ours with what is needed to remedy the problem. It's almost as if they want that problem to continue as a talking point, and I just don't think that's right at all. It's not right for Milwaukee. It's not right for surrounding communities like Senate District eight communities, and it's not right for Wisconsin. We need to be working together to advance the all the communities in our state and not try to scapegoat one for political gain.

[00:09:36] **Speaker 2** The other topic you mentioned was abortion and women's health care. How much will that. Obviously, it was a big factor last fall. Is that still a motivating factor to get people out? And is that crossing political lines in terms of people that may support or have voted for Republicans in the past now changing their votes because of that issue?

[00:09:55] **Speaker 1** I am seeing exactly that, Zach. The people that I'm talking to, Republican women, Republican men, Democratic women, Democratic men are very tuned into that issue. They understand that it's very difficult to tease out a right to choose the abortion concern from general health care issues for women. Again, going to because you're so involved with the media, we are all reading about women who are needing to be rushed to the borders for basic care, for dangerous miscarriages. We hear the same for problematic pregnancies where they just can't remain in Wisconsin with that type of fear about being able to keep the baby when doctors here are subject to potential criminal prosecution, jail time losing their license. It really affects not just the doctors, but our health care options for women, not just in the future. But I'm hearing from doctors and hospital folks and the lawyers who represent those people that it is having unintended negative consequences for health care for Wisconsin. It's politicians injecting their agendas into the medical judgment of doctors, interrupting what women's life decisions need to be, and taking it out of what we expect to be private decisions between a woman and her doctor and allowing politicians agendas to be framing and controlling those issues. It's not okay. I could give you one example. I was in gosh, I think it was Menomonee Falls or Grafton, and I opened the door and a dad who said he looked right at me and he says, I know you. And I said, Oh, wow, great. Thank you. And he said, You've got my vote. I'll tell you why. I have three daughters. And that was it. And I'm really hearing it surprisingly from a lot of dads. For women, they already are able to connect the dots between needing care for our bodies and for our families going forward. And the disruption with that relationship with their doctors. And understand, it's going to be far reaching implications. I'm hearing from folks who are concerned that their kids aren't going to move back to Wisconsin. They're not going to want to stay here. This isn't the right place to start. A young family. All of those things. So what I've been hearing.

[00:12:41] **Speaker 2** So obviously, there's another big race at the same time with Supreme Court election. And the outcome of that race will likely determine the outcome of the 1849 abortion law in Wisconsin. But if that law does stay on the books and you are in the state Senate down the road, would you support amending the law to provide exceptions for rape and incest, even if that cemented in that 1849 law? How will you be parsing some of those decisions you'd have to make if that law is upheld? And down the road, the state, the legislature is trying to figure out what should be the new exemptions or the new law. And where will Democrats fall in line with that.

[00:13:20] **Speaker 1** Based on the reality that you're describing, where an 1849 law, 174 year old law from a time before the Civil War, before women had the right to vote, much less to choose. If this legislature is going to want to use that framework to move such important health care provisions forward, then I'll answer it as this. First and foremost, that is not the place to start. It's an improper foundation. It's the law is so crummy. It's so outdated. It's so dangerous to Wisconsin's future. And women's health care options that it should just be thrown out. And we should start over from a place that we at 2023, no more. We have more knowledge of facts, of science of. Society. We have more input from doctors and women and families. We have much more that we can bring into that discussion and an 1849 law. But going with your hypothetical, if the best we can get is. A legislature that refuses to move off that 1849 structure. Yes, I would work my hardest to bring in improvements and try to modernize our understanding and application of that law. We need to have exceptions for rape. We need to have exceptions for incest. We need to have exceptions for the health of the mother. That must be taken into account, not just the life. It doesn't have to be in such dramatic terms, but the health and well-being of the mother that in today's world is vital. And we understand more the nuances of that. And if I could just make a note with regard to exceptions for rape. I have heard that there's some kind of olive branch or something along the lines of stating that if a woman. Who has been subject to a rape or has an unwanted pregnancy. She could go to the police and file a police report. That is the olive branch that is being offered to resign. This 1849 law. But we all know intuitively, just as people living in today's world. How unlikely, how slim of an option. How. Disingenuous. That suggestion is for how the world works. It won't address the problem. The problem needs to be fixed at a much more fun loving, fundamental level than that option.

[00:16:18] **Speaker 2** Part of all of this dovetails together with what the eighth District looks like nowadays, and people have been looking back to the Obama days like, oh, it's getting bluer. And then Trump came along and it changed some of the outlook of the suburbs and the abortion issue changed and it changed a little bit more. The top of the line ticket metric still point towards leans Republican. What are you feeling when you look at where this district is today in terms of it becoming more democratic or more open to a Democratic candidate?

[00:16:48] **Speaker 1** I think. In my interactions with people, and I'm doing a lot of outreach, a lot of meetings with people all around the district, primarily in those areas that you have correctly described as Republican leaning. I am hearing that people are feeling increasingly aware and uncomfortable with the dysfunction in Madison, the extremism, the hyper politics where nothing's getting done. They they're not extreme in their day to day lives. They get along with each other. They get along with their neighbors. They get along with folks at their kids schools in this grocery store. That's who we are is Wisconsin. All the legislative accomplishments I've been able to work on in my work as an environmental attorney. It's always been across party lines. It's always been about diverse interests and experts working together to reach long term results. People get that. They understand we need a legislature that isn't just about hyper politics, but about working together. So on an issue like abortion, where polling is telling us that the vast majority between 70 and 80% of the district is strongly pro-choice, they want politicians out of women's personal family decisions. When you're talking on that point, it really becomes very much blurred the political lines. What they don't appreciate is that Kernodle, who is my opponent, is extreme on abortion. His demeanor, maybe how he comports himself seems to be moderate, but it's not the effect of his actual policies. His policies are very much in support of that 1849 ban, with no exceptions for incest or rape. That's where he is coming from. He is endorsed by some of the most extreme organizations, not just in the state, but in the country. They don't even allow for an exception for the life of the mother. That is where he is getting his commendations and recognition by these groups. Folks have to connect the dots between where he is, in effect, and his policies and what their values and aspirations are. In that respect, no matter how somebody acts as a person. It's the policies that they are going to put in place as a legislature, as a legislator that will matter in this race. And I really hope that voters understand and can appreciate that that's where they need to address their attention.

[00:19:34] **Speaker 2** What do you make of the Democratic Party playing in the Republican Party, sending out mailers, trying to boost Danielle Branch? What did that say to you about who they wanted to see you face in this election And the fact that Dan Canuto came through with the majority of the vote?

[00:19:50] **Speaker 1** That's an interesting question. My understanding just is my approach is it's very hard to distinguish again, on policy by policy, by policy, on democracy, on choice, on the environment, etc., any difference between Janelle Branch and Anthony Day in Canada? They are identical. They are in lockstep on every one of those issues and far more. I believe that the decision was really much focused on who is more out there in the news and people had. If you've been reading the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, there's been quite a bit of attention on Janelle Branch and because of the dysfunction between her and Robin Vos, So it just seemed that that would be resonate in some respect. But I can just tell you, every single one of those statements and those ads could and should have been directed at Dan Kernodle because it's the same positions. He does the same thing with shared revenues crippling our local communities. He's doing the same thing on women's health care, making us have to leave the state for the care we need and causing doctors to fear for their ability to practice medicine as they can for the environment, for our voting rights. Fair maps. They are one in the same. I cannot impress upon you enough how similar they are and how this legislature has put Wisconsin in a really rough place and we need to fix it.

[00:21:22] **Speaker 2** Do you think the party made a mistake then? And perhaps when they sent out that mailer, they almost made Dan Noel look look like the moderate because he wasn't who they were trying to boost?

[00:21:33] **Speaker 1** It's hard to know. Again, I'm not a politician. I'm somebody who is very much a policy person. I really work with those who are the experts, technical experts, the scientists, the university folks, the teachers, the citizens in all the cases and all the work I've ever done over these 30 years. That's where my lane is for the political strategists. I'm not sure exactly what the motivation was. I just know what the policies of these politicians are, and they are the same.

[00:22:09] **Speaker 2** When you look at what else is on the ballot with you that day, do you think that the turnout for the Supreme Court is more likely to help you or do you think your race will impact that race? How will those two work together?

[00:22:21] **Speaker 1** I think the Supreme Court race in this Senate District eight race are very much they're really helping each other. I will be bringing out turnout for Judge Janet and Judge Janet's campaign and its importance to Wisconsin. Vital importance will be helping support my campaign again with that necessary connection for voters that. If they're voting for Judge Janet, they should be voting for me because my positions and reproductive choice, democracy and other concerns are together. And that Dan Kernodle is not as he seems on those issues. He is very much opposed to everything that Judge Janet stands for.

[00:23:10] **Speaker 2** Do you think it's appropriate that the linking the to a partizan special election to what's supposed to be a nonpartisan race? Or is it time that we all got rid of the mirage of nonpartizan when it comes to Supreme Court elections?

[00:23:25] **Speaker 1** It's an interesting question. I've been gosh, it's just this couple of days ago was General Bias had an interesting commentary on Judge Kelly's values as they were described, which are quite evident when it comes to a number of issues that very much. Will affect how he will rule on cases before him. It, of course, is hypocritical because much of his attack has been on Judge Chan and being transparent and open about values that she has as it would pertain to certain crucial issues in our state, like women's right to choose and health care options. So again, it's an interesting question. One person can kind of lie in the grass on it, but then be found out and another one with this come forward and say, this is what I believe as a person. I will judge fairly based on the facts and the law. But this is where I'm coming from. So I don't know if it's a mirage or not. I just think it's real life and real people running for office.

[00:24:32] **Speaker 2** When one of the other issues you brought up that I want to touch on is the 22nd vote and the possibility of Republicans in the Senate getting impeachment powers. And there is there's legitimate questions about how far those powers extend and whether they could go all the way to an attorney general or a constitutional officer like the governor, or if it's more for cabinet level or board level appointed people and removing them. Do you think that this would just end up in lawsuits anyway if they tried to go after someone like Governor Evers or Josh Kaul? Or is it more I mean, can people really grasp a hold of those powers since there's so many other top line issues for people to focus on when it comes to who they're going to vote for?

[00:25:13] **Speaker 1** I don't know. As long as I've lived here, I've never seen that play out. As you're suggesting, it is a mystery. Well, it is tied up in courts. Or will it be something that actually interferes with the balance of powers in the separation of powers, as our Constitution requires? I don't know. But what I do know is that it's another distraction that the legislature, this extremist, at that point, it would be a super majority legislature. It would be like certain other states we're seeing in other parts of the country where there is nothing holding them back from extremism. And we've already seen what that extreme politics is doing for Wisconsin. We are falling behind our neighboring states. We're having more difficulty getting workers here and young people here to fill the jobs that we desperately need. I was just reading about something like a 200,000 person shortfall of open jobs. We need people in Wisconsin and those type of shenanigans, those political games of impeachment, whether they're tied up in court or not. It's not what we need in Wisconsin. We need legislators who are different than those who have been in power. If people vote for the same legislators like Dan Kernodle, for example, who's been in power since 2009 and vote them back in again and again and expect different results. It's just it's just not going to happen. We're going to get more of the same, perhaps even at a more intense degree, to put Wisconsin further behind on education and economic opportunities for our children's futures and the well-being of our communities. So I just think it's just a big distraction and I hope it doesn't happen.

[00:27:07] **Speaker 2** Tying this all back around, your opponent said one of the people that he would like to see impeached with that power is John Chisholm. He thinks he hasn't done enough on crime in Milwaukee. What are your thoughts on whether that particular person who is a constitutional officer is elected and there's a recall process there? If voters wanted to remove him about him being a potential target with these powers.

[00:27:31] **Speaker 1** It goes back to an earlier answer to one of your questions. It's a classic move to. Point to an individual, a representative, trying to keep our community safe. And blame them for the very things that their policies are causing. He is having difficulty having enough space in jails to keep people off the streets. He's having difficulties, as I understand it, hiring enough police officers, literally those bodies on the ground who are qualified and trained and capable of addressing these crimes, many of which involve illegal guns and only further complicated with other legislative policies. But by focusing on him, they're not owning up to what they have done to contribute. I would say even to cause the problem, the lack of resources is what is causing the crime that we're seeing. It should come as no coincidence to people that crime has been rising over the last ten years, over the last five years. The more extreme the legislators in Madison, the more out of touch with the best interests of our District of Milwaukee, of this southeastern Wisconsin. The worst crime is getting why we don't have enough resources because they are holding on to those shared revenues and choking us off from progress.

[00:29:01] **Speaker 2** There there are a number of Democrats and Democratic supporters who have kind of given up on the legislature and the Senate in particular over the last few cycles. Assuming that the maps are so set and gerrymandered that there is no chance of reclaiming a majority. Candidates don't want to run. They don't want to invest the money there. They focus strictly on Governor Evers and trying to maintain him in power. And the bare minimum is just keep them away from supermajorities in the in the legislature. Is this one of those shift elections possibly where if Jan Protasevich gets in and there's a new trial and possibly new maps, she's said that she's been very clear that she's open to revisiting the redistricting process. That you winning back a seat here. I mean, is this one of those moments where it could shift the balance going forward and people can look back at this particular election?

[00:29:53] **Speaker 1** Absolutely. This special election for Senate District eight is exactly all of those things you mentioned. Wisconsin is, in fact, at a tipping point. We are at a crossroads on so many key issues to our progress. We're either going forward and becoming more competitive. Improving our economy. Improving the lives of our families and of our local communities. Or we are continuing to move backward and fall behind in all of those vital areas. We need this election and people are becoming more aware of the choices. I could not be more different from my extremist opponent. I am moderate on all the issues that he is extreme on. I need to add that for the past 28 plus years, my husband and I have owned a small business. It started in Milwaukee area. We moved it to Janesville and we employ about 130, 140 employees and we have kept all those jobs in Wisconsin through the pandemic, through a lot of hardship. Being a small business owner, I know a lot of people can relate to that, but that has been our commitment. And what I am seeing and hearing firsthand is that it's really not just about the supply chain disruptions and the difficulties attendant to this pandemic. It's about not having enough workers and the economic policies that this extremist legislature has stuck to has made it harder on businesses like ours to stay in Wisconsin, to flourish in Wisconsin. And I could go on and on about that. But people have to continue to connect the dots. It's one thing to say something. It's another thing to see the consequences or the effects of the policies. And we've had enough years now to see Wisconsin's lack of progress, to know that these policies are not working. We need new people with real life experience in Madison, working for ourselves, our districts, our state.

[00:32:05] **Speaker 2** Anything else you want to add?

[00:32:11] **Speaker 1** Just give me a second. If I think about if you don't mind. As an additional point to emphasize is that in Wisconsin, whether we are Republican or Democrat, we are truly a purple state. We have such a breakdown of different perspectives and different values, but that has always been what makes our state wonderful and interesting. And we have a long history of getting along and making things happen. In my own experience, I felt so proud to contribute to the enactment of the Great Lakes Compact, which protects our amazing Great Lakes for generations to come. I did that for other environmental issues of concern. I did that for the puppy mill bill and others. Always working across party lines, allowing folks to literally work through the details in consulting with the experts to get things done. That has not been happening. The last thing Wisconsin needs is more extremism. The last thing we need is a supermajority that would deny Governor Evers ability to veto harmful bills. The last thing we need is a Senate supermajority where there will be additional distractions and partizan games of impeachment. We need to work together again, like we always have forward progress. We need it for education. We need it for our children. We need it for our families. We need it for our doctors. And we need it to live healthy lives. We literally need to stop being so extremist and start working together again, which is exactly what I am equipped and trained and committed to doing as a person.

[00:34:15] **Speaker 2** All right. State insect. Pardon me? State. Insect.

[00:34:21] **Speaker 1** And would it be the dragon has butterfly?

[00:34:23] **Speaker 2** Oh, you're supposed to guess mosquito. Oh, but it's not.

[00:34:27] **Speaker 1** What is it?

[00:34:28] **Speaker 2** It's the bomb. It's the honeybee.

[00:34:30] **Speaker 1** Oh, I love. I, I. I like to go on a road trip with you. Uh, I.