

Thank you all for coming this morning to join me as we begin a journey that will take us to November 4, 2014.

Forty-four years ago, my parents, who are up on stage with me, had their own journey, one that took them from Hong Kong to Providence, Rhode Island. They travelled half way around the world to begin a new life and give their family they were about to start the extraordinary opportunities offered only in the United States.

Housing. Education. The freedom to dream about providing your children, myself and my two sisters Anna and Arlene, a better life than your own. And most importantly, the hope that a better life will keep your children close by, instead of miles away in search of a decent job.

My parents started their own business - a Chinese restaurant – right down the street, with many customers coming from this neighborhood including the employees right here at TACO. Starting at 9 years old, I would be there after school and on weekends, washing dishes, busing tables, and serving the customers. That taught me the value of a hard-earned dollar and the hard work it takes to succeed in business.

This state welcomed my parents and gave them a chance for a good life. This is the Rhode Island I want for every resident in this beautiful state.

A Rhode Island that provides employment opportunities for all seeking work, no matter what their age or ability.

A Rhode Island with safe communities where children play without fear or harm.

A Rhode Island where teachers and administrators are working together to prepare students to pursue their dreams.

This is the Rhode Island I see; this is the Rhode Island I know our state can be. **And this is why I am here this morning to say: I want to be your next Governor (STOP)**
(applause)

For the past five years, I have worked with the citizens of Cranston to make our city a better place. Working together, we have seen business expansion in a wide variety of projects, both small and large. Marchetti's Restaurant has expanded to meet its customers' demands. Garden City embarked on a multi-phased redevelopment to continue to offer a premiere outdoor shopping experience, not only in Rhode Island, but also in the Northeast. Alex and Ani chose Chapel View Shopping Center for their world corporate headquarters.

TACO recently completed a 17 million dollar expansion.

Thank you John for believing in Cranston, my administration, and the State of Rhode Island.

Hospitality. Manufacturing. Retail. In each industry, we created new jobs here in Cranston – more than one thousand. We have supported existing businesses and have attracted new. And this is what I intend to do as Governor in every community throughout the state.

[JOBS AND THE ECONOMY]

I want to put people back to work. I don't want people to keep hearing that our state is one of the worst states for unemployment.

We can do better, and we will do better. It will start on day one of the Fung Administration - I will declare that Rhode Island is **OPEN FOR BUSINESS.**

We will remove barriers to get government out of the way so businesses can pursue ventures. This will help

with job creation so we can get more Rhode Islanders back to work.

We will set deadlines for regulatory reviews as businesses deserve timely answers to their applications.

Let's remember what made Rhode Island a leader in industry in our nation and encourage that entrepreneurial spirit. We can attract people with innovative ideas to launch their startup company right here in Rhode Island.

How are we going to do this? We can do this by establishing and investing in an entrepreneur venture seed fund for those looking to start a new business. For those companies, we will also waive the \$500 minimum corporate tax and provide a tax credit for their new hires for the first few years.

We have proven that we can help large companies – let's prove we can do it for small business as well.

We also need to be more competitive, not only with our neighboring states, but in the region as it relates to taxes. Let's review our entire tax system, including the sales, corporate and estate taxes, and seek changes that will encourage business growth and establish fairness and simplicity.

In the end, our goal must be to create good paying jobs because the people of Rhode Island are hurting. They are struggling to make ends meet. They are concerned about paying their mortgage and putting food on the table. Parents are struggling to find the funds necessary to send their children to college...never mind saving for retirement.

Let me be clear: as Governor, I will be the Chief Economic Development Officer for the State of Rhode Island.

As Mayor, I have spent every day pursuing what can be done to make Cranston more business friendly.

As governor, I will regularly meet with CEOs, small business owners and entrepreneurs both in and outside of Rhode Island to hear what we need to do to improve our business climate. And I will look beyond our national borders to encourage more international tourism and expand our relationships with international markets.

I am asking the voters of Rhode Island to give me four years to create 20,000 new jobs. This is my pledge to the voters of Rhode Island.

Some may say that I am setting the bar too high, but my administration will have a laser focus on job creation. We have done it in Cranston, we can do it statewide.

We have attracted new businesses to Cranston. We can do this in Providence, in Woonsocket and Westerly.

By reducing regulations, supporting startups and lowering taxes, we will improve the economy and put more Rhode Islanders back to work. (pause)

[EDUCATION]

Education has always been the stepping-stone for a better life. It has been for my sisters and me, and I want it for all children in Rhode Island.

We need to be innovative and accountable. Every boy and girl in Rhode Island deserves an education that will provide not only essential skills, but also emphasizes science, technology, engineering and math. More and more jobs today are requiring this STEM foundation combined with critical thinking and problem solving skills.

And I want to ensure that STEM is expanded to STREAM by adding robotics and the arts to many schools' core

curriculum. This will link our students with good paying jobs for the future.

We also know that the one-size-fits-all model does not work with the diverse student population we have in Rhode Island. It is time to address the achievement gap between low-income and minority students and their fellow classmates.

We can be the Rhode Island we need to be if every discussion we have regarding education starts and ends with what is best for the students.

Education doesn't stop at high school. As more and more jobs require a bachelor's degree, there will be a greater demand for a college education. Yet the cost of college has become almost out of reach for many Rhode Island families.

As Governor, I will call for a four-year freeze - - a four year freeze on tuition at the University of Rhode Island,

Rhode Island College, my alma mater, and the Community College of Rhode Island. Starting in the fall of 2015, students and their families will be able to budget their hard earned dollars knowing what the cost of earning a diploma at our state's schools will be.

Two years ago, the General Assembly approved a restructuring of the governance of education. We need to take this one step further.

It is time for the commissioner of education to report directly to the governor. The voters rightfully hold the governor accountable for the state of education in Rhode Island. As Governor, I want the Commissioner of Education to be accountable to me. In Cranston, I have been a hands-on mayor, and that is what I intend to be as governor.

[INFRASTRUCTURE]

I am also a problem solver. During my time in Cranston, we have continuously improved our infrastructure, and I can tell you this: tolls on the Sakonnet Bridge is not the answer. We need a statewide solution to properly maintain all of our bridges and roads. This is a matter of public safety, and it is critical to our efforts to attract and maintain businesses in our state.

We need to put in place an innovative funding mechanism to address our infrastructure needs; this includes exploring public-private partnerships and an infrastructure bank. Federal grants, bonding and relying on money from the gas tax just can't get us where we need to be.

Just as I have in Cranston, I will promise Rhode Island taxpayers that their hard-earned dollars will be spent wisely for services they expect and deserve **based on what we can afford.**

Efficient...cost effective...accountable – this is the government we have in Cranston, and this is how it should be statewide

[Ending]

From my many years working in the private sector and in public service, I have learned that government can only do two things when it comes to business – put hurdles in your path or take them away. I plan to take them away.

Good government is compromise that is achieved by working respectfully with people with opposing opinions.

I have done this for years as a councilman and Mayor in Cranston – just look what we did with pension reform with not only our retirees to help our local pension problem, but also with our unions as we moved new city hall employees into a 401(k) type retirement plan. I will continue to reach out and work with all sides as Governor.

Respectful. Result oriented. Fiscally responsible. This is who I am.

I am a Rhode Islander. I was born and raised here. I love Rhode Island. I love all that it is and what it can be.

From this day forward, I will be working non-stop to let the people of Rhode Island know who I am. And this is where I need your help.

Tell your friends, neighbors, and coworkers, that I am a proven leader who has created over 1,000 jobs in Cranston.

Tell them I will be fiscally responsible with Rhode Island's taxpayer dollars.

Tell them to expect results from a Fung Administration
– more jobs; lower taxes and fewer regulations; an
educated workforce; and safer roads.

Today, we begin our yearlong journey to the statehouse.
We – you and I - share the belief that better days are
ahead for all Rhode Islanders.

I look forward to being with you again on the night of
November 4, 2014. Together we will celebrate a new
beginning of hope and prosperity for the State of Rhode
Island.

With your support, I will be your next Governor.

Thank you!!

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