

Dooley and Pelosi: Bridging Trump's Divide

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Announcer: This is Climate One, changing the conversation about energy, economy and the environment.

Burning fossil fuels disrupts all of the systems around us. But one system climate has not disrupted is American politics – despite there being a strong conservative case for climate action.

Debbie Dooley: Moving to a decentralized grid structure is a national security issue. Rooftop solar is a national security issue. There is nothing more centralized in our nation, nor more vulnerable to a terrorist attack, than our power grid.

Announcer: So when it comes to climate, Republicans and Democrats are not always as divided it looks in Washington.

Christine Pelosi: if you took out the big money and you just looked at the facts, most of the decisions would be made closer to where the people are which I think there is a climate action majority in the country.

Announcer: Bridging the partisan divide. Up next on Climate One.

Announcer: Is climate really as partisan an issue as politics in Washington makes it seem? Welcome to Climate One – changing the conversation about America's energy, economy and environment. I'm Devon Strolovitch. Climate One conversations – with oil companies and environmentalists, Republicans and Democrats – are recorded before a live audience, and hosted by Greg Dalton.

Today's show features two guests from opposite sides of the aisle who've found common ground advocating for clean energy – one, a member of the political establishment, and the other, an insurgent who's shaking it up. They'll tell us about surprising alliances among standard-bearers on the left and right who are also putting aside their differences to advance solar and wind energy, often in red states.

Debbie Dooley was one of the original founders of the Tea Party and is a staunch supporter of Donald Trump. She works in many states around the country advocating for competition and consumer choice in energy markets and stewardship of God's creation. Christine Pelosi is Executive Committeewoman of the Democratic National Committee. She's the daughter of House minority leader Nancy Pelosi, and runs a boot camp that trains aspiring Democratic politicians.

Here's our conversation about bridging the partisan divide on climate.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, tell us how you went from growing up the daughter of a Baptist preacher at Louisiana to founding -- the early founder of the Tea Party now advocating for clean energy.

Debbie Dooley: Well I am, I've always been somewhat of a rebel if you know any preacher's kid, I mean you probably understand that, you know, they're very rebellious, want to make their own way. But growing up, I have always cared about the environment because I believe as a Christian, that we should not destroy what God created. We should not destroy the art that God created. I believe, and post bailout, I believe in individual liberty and freedom. And I have been active in Republican politics since 1976 since I was in high school. And I've been volunteered as a political activist. I got pretty upset with the Republican Party under George W. Bush's administration. I was appalled with the Wall Street bailouts. I think a lot of the CEOs should have ended up in jail like most of us would have been. And so I was one of the 22 people that co-founded the Tea Party Movement, but the Tea Party Movement actually really began under George W. Bush. If you got a Tea Party rally and you mentioned his name or Karl Rove's name you'll get a lot of sneers. And so it was a natural fit. I've got into a very big public fight with an electric monopoly, Georgia Power over Plant Vogtle. These are two nuclear reactors they're building and I found out with the massive cost overruns that were projected they were making a guarantee profit off the cost overruns. I felt like that was a bailout and I'm like why should we board irresponsibility of this corporation this monopoly and I post it and I began to look for ways to provide competition and choice to find a better way to provide energy than these expensive nuclear reactors. I started investigating clean energy and solar and found out a lot of the things that I had been told for years about solar energy were not true. And so I began to be a very strong solar energy advocate. And I, you know, often butt heads with -- I will try to keep from sneering when I say the name, Koch brothers, but I really don't like them because I find a lot of their groups in different states nationwide. And I am thrilled to be here and being good stewards of the environment God gave us should not be a partisan issue.

Greg Dalton: Christine Pelosi, I'm not sure how rebellious you are. But certainly grew up in politics. So tell us your story how you got to where you are growing up, you know, political family in California very much the environment part of that. Tell us your story.

Christine Pelosi: Well I did grow up here in San Francisco. My mom had five kids within six years -- so my parents a very devout Catholics, had all these kids and we were at the Cal Mart over in Laurel Village for those of you locals who know where it is. And my sister Jaclyn was trying to get some Pepperidge Farm cookies and I was insisting that we couldn't get the cookies because they were owned by Campbell Soup and Campbell Soup was abusing the farmworkers in the field and therefore no Pepperidge Farm cookies. And Jac was like, "Mom, you said politics wasn't gonna be in our lives." Because my mom is the northern chair of the state party, state Democratic Party. But the fact is politics is in all our lives and that's just the way it is. And now it's the same thing when we talk about justice for farmworkers. I'm quite active in the Me Too politics movement. We said enough so we're very concerned about the food safety program for workers in the field. We're concerned about Me Too STEM and all of the women who've been locked out of the climate science discussion because they've been harassed or they were co-opted. So there is a lot of justice around picking out the cookies in the supermarket or participating and making consumer choices. I have gone on to serve in my own right, elected to the Democratic Party the National Committee and I laugh when you said how much of a rebel am I because actually I've been fighting for years the role of corporate money in politics. And a year ago, last week, I had a rather crushing defeat on national television as the party rejected my efforts to ban all corporate money. But I came back from that, built some coalitions which is what you have to do and last October convinced my colleagues at the Democratic National Committee to not take predatory money. So no nuclear, no guns, no tobacco, no

money that conflicts with our platform. And I think that the lesson that I give people in my campaign boot camps around the country, whether it's here in California where we have a fossil fuel money out of politics pledge that R.L. Miller, our great environmentalist has started or whether you're talking about identifying people who are harming the planet and saying as we fight to get elected or as we fight to make our way in public life, we're not gonna take the polluters money in order to stop the polluters. We have to draw a clear line and build a coalition instead in a grassroots way. So that's my climate rebellion.

Greg Dalton: The Yale project on climate communication has found the Republicans do not always align with their party leaders and elected officials when it comes to climate issues. Here's Matto Mildenberger from the University of California to explain more.

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Matto Mildenberger: The public end up having more bipartisan support for various climate policies than you might expect just listening to political leader is actually majority belief that climate is changing in, you know, most parts of the country amongst Republican voters specifically. And while not all Republicans necessarily believe that humans are responsible for climate change there still is pretty substantial support for different types of climate policy. So we find for instance that Republicans across the country in all states and in most congressional districts support regulation of carbon pollution. And we find similar support for renewable energy research and development. Even Trump voters some of them believe in climate change, some of them want to see climate action. So it's certainly not a monolithic block. Many members of the public are of course taking their climate and energy positions from elites right there responding to elite cues and partisan rhetoric on this issue. As it turns out, our representatives aren't very good at estimating sort of the local distribution of public opinion. And this really sharp elite polarization between Democrats and Republicans is really something that's quite recent. You know it is worth remembering that Newt Gingrich and Nancy Pelosi were making ads talking about their shared interest in seeing climate change addressed, you know, as recently as the late 2000.

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Greg Dalton: That's Matto Mildenberger, assistant professor from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Debbie Dooley, why is there such a gap between the Republican rank-and-file in the country and their elected leaders. We heard that the Trump voters support research into renewable energy want to attack carbon pollution, and yet that's not what people in Congress and even the administration are doing.

Debbie Dooley: Follow the money. And, you know, that's what it all, I mean that simple, follow the money.

[Applause]

Christine Pelosi: I think she's right. I would echo that on the Democratic side before you get to me. Same thing, follow the money because I think that our activists we just had our Democratic state convention recently in California and again our activists are against fracking. Not all of our candidates for governor are out here on the Democratic side. In fact the strangest thing a few years ago in 2014 when I came out against fracking, I actually got death threats on Twitter, who threatens to kill somebody over opposition of fracking? But it was interesting because as it turns out, you know, where California, we're San Francisco, earthquake country, hopefully not during this broadcast. But when you look at the earthquakes that are happening the USGS studies that earthquakes are happening in Ohio, they're happening in Oklahoma and that do have a connection to

fracking. Again, follow the money. We only really won the rhetorical point when the head of Exxon as it turns out opposed fracking on his block because he just bought a new house and he didn't want to contaminate his drinking water. And so he said see, alright now there's a market-based solution for you but it's still there. So I do think you have to follow the money in both parties and say if you took out the big money and you took out the money that's funding the think tank based studies and you just looked at the facts, I would bet you most of the decisions would be made closer to where the people are which I think there is a climate action majority in the country.

Greg Dalton: Debbie, one story there is to bring back our sun effort in Nevada. Nevada was a sort of a clash of Warren Buffett against Elon Musk, electric utility. Tell us that story because that's a really interesting story of kind of the people winning something back.

Debbie Dooley: Well I got involved because the PUC which is the regulators in Nevada decided that we're going to go after net metering and we're gonna, you know, allow NV Energy to get their way and not pay fair market value on the electrons that solar users were selling back to NV Energy. And instead of grandfathering it they made it retroactive. So a lot of these people, many Republicans had purchased the solar panels, you know, with the understanding that hey, I'm gonna be receiving this money back so we actually I was part of the bring back, solar back campaign with that. I went out Mark Ruffalo and I were at the same campaign rally, he's actually, you know, when I see him I just like talking to him because he's a down to earth guy. So I had a microphone, a megaphone and all that and while I was going, you know, going to Nevada for the different weekends to gather signatures on the petition, we found out that I think it was Sheldon Adelson and some of the casino owners were also in a fight with NV Energy because they wanted to disconnect from the grid and generate their own power. And NV Energy said, no you can't do that unless we allow you to do that and you have to pay us means of dollars each year. So the casino owners, that was the wrong thing to do with these casino owners with NV Energy. And so they said, okay, and so they funded a referendum to start pushing towards deregulation and it passed overwhelmingly in November of 2016. And I mean, but it was Republican, a Republican donor Sheldon Adelson did actually fund it the ballot initiative to push for deregulation and choice in Nevada.

Announcer: You're listening to a Climate One conversation about bridging the partisan divide. Coming up, Greg Dalton will ask about the prospects for a climate deal from a GOP-led Congress.

Christine Pelosi: We're going to have to see members of the Republican Party believe that they can go to ribbon cuttings in their districts that represent the creation of jobs in their communities. And if you can make it a jobs bill, then I think it has a chance of getting passed.

Announcer: That's up next, when Climate One continues.

Announcer: We continue now with Climate One. Greg Dalton is talking about the partisan divide on climate with Christine Pelosi, Executive Committeewoman of the DNC, and Debbie Dooley, President of Conservatives for Energy Freedom. Before the break, Debbie was describing a recent battle over solar power in Nevada. Let's listen as Greg asks her about a similar situation in Florida.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, tell us about the fight over solar power in the sunshine state.

Debbie Dooley: Well, when I first got involved in the fight in Florida it was in January 2014. Mark Ruffalo had invited me to come his solutions project, he invited me to come, they were sponsoring a car at one of the pre Daytona 500 races -- Leilani Munter had the car. And so I met them and I started talking to folks --

Greg Dalton: She's a NASCAR driver who drives electric car.

Debbie Dooley: Yes. And so I started talking to the activists and I said well Florida must be doing good, you're the sunshine state. And they said, uh no, Georgia still better. And I said, well let's work together. And it was folks from Southern Alliance for Clean Energy and we were very active we put together a coalition in Florida to push for energy, choice and freedom. In our coalition we had the Libertarian Party of Florida, Christian Coalition, Tea Party Network, environmental groups, League of Women Voters, and we all came together. And we were working for a common purpose the monopolies and, you know, even some of the conservative groups like Heartland -- I don't like them either. And, you know, some of these other groups just started telling lies about what we were trying to do and Americans for Prosperity, I kind of butted heads with them too and called them liars on national TV on Chris Hayes show one time. So we started this fight and there were a lot of false information. So the electric utilities got involved in it. And so they created their own. We wanted to have a solar freedom initiative on the ballot that would allow third-party sales and leasing of solar. It would allow individuals, private property owners to have the ability to become entrepreneurs and actually sell excess electricity generated to their neighbors. So we put together a very big coalition. I also forgot to mention that Republican Liberty Caucus was involved in it. So the electric monopolies were threatened because they want to keep customer shackled to them. And they started their own amendment. It was we call it the "scam amendment" and they call theirs the "solar choice amendment" which was a big joke. So our same Floridians for Solar Choice, we started working together and we defeated their amendment. We had to keep them below a 60 percentage threshold. The monopoly spent \$30 million and I don't even think we spent \$100,000 and our coalition defeated it. On election night that was actually in Tampa, in St. Pete, Tampa. I wanted to watch the returns with the people of the coalition. And so certain parts of the evening when we were looking to make sure we defeated the monopolies amendment we were all together over the laptops all together. When we wanted to watch the presidential election returns, we would go to opposite sides to do that. And we were respectful of each other's differences. That's the key. You have to be respectful of each other's differences and you don't focus on it when you're working in a coalition together. And then at the end of the night when we're getting ready closeout we had defeated the amendments so the electric utilities wasted \$30 million, which they'll probably recoup from their ratepayers anyway. And so we all came together with glass of champagne to toast our joint victory. And that sent shockwaves. Now all of a sudden in Florida where a lot of the Republicans are falling all over themselves to energy's pro solar amendments and I mean that's key because of the involvement I was down there with our coalition.

Greg Dalton: Christine Pelosi, let's talk about the politics in Congress. There is something called the Climate Solutions Caucus where Republicans and Democrats are coming together. They call it the "Noah's Ark" it's led by a congressman from Southern Florida, which is slowly disappearing. Is there any hope for any deal, where can there be a deal in this Congress on some of these climate issues. Is it infrastructure, they can't name it climate but is it infrastructure, you know, are there deals that can be made?

Christine Pelosi: I think that there are deals that can be made when they put together the budget, not the president's current budget certainly not the solar tariffs that he just recently announced that the two of us opposed vehemently.

Debbie Dooley: Right.

Christine Pelosi: Yes. When we look at infrastructure really building and we have this conversation a year ago when we actually thought there was going to be an infrastructure bill. But you have to think of build, build, build. You want to build out with clean energy. You want to build out in a way that is good paying jobs. And you also want to build out in a way that is accessible to all particularly people with disabilities. Because if you're talking about building whether it's public housing, whether it's roads, whether it's public transit whatever the actual elements of the construction are,

it has to be inclusive for everyone. I think that's how you build the coalition because you have the Americans with Disabilities Act Coalition. You have the climate coalition you have a number of people who are very interested in public-private partnerships. But to be clear on that not where you're dealing in something like nuclear for example, which not only is not renewable, not only is still dangerous in my view and concerning, but also it's something for which utilities can't get insurance. So I'm thinking well if you can't go out into the marketplace and get insurance for what you want to build. Why do you want Debbie and I to be your --

Debbie Dooley: Right.

Christine Pelosi: -- be your insurers. Why is it that when you're talking about some of this new construction is contemplated in ways that are still dirty energy. So that's not going to work. You're gonna obviously have to have a balance you can't say you're not gonna have any. But if you move towards the goals of the Paris Accord, I mean again you can't call it the Paris Accords, you can't call it climate action among certain circles because Republicans won't vote for it because they feel that they can't because they'll be primaried by somebody --

Debbie Dooley: Right.

Christine Pelosi: -- who doesn't have the benefit of Debbie's coalition to help them. But the fact of the matter is when you look at somebody like the Koch brothers. They can invest with they said they would invest which is over \$400 million in House of Representatives races alone in 2018 because for them it's return on investment. If they look at oil shale reserves in the United States and they think we can make billions of dollars from extraction and fracking and all the rest. If they feel that they can make billions of dollars, then what's a half a billion dollars. It is worth the return on investment. And so that's what we're up against. It's not that we're up against the value of an idea. It's that we are up against two things. One, the fact that you have enormous amounts of money that's going to be spent to try to influence the debate and second of all, they just passed a tax bill that takes a lot of money out of the treasury that could have otherwise been used. So we're going to have to see members of the Republican Party believe that they can go to ribbon cuttings in their districts that represent the creation of jobs in their communities. And if you can make it a jobs bill, then I think it has a chance of getting passed.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley. Climate is your number one issue. Donald Trump is your man. And yet he has done a lot to revive fossil fuels and has been very detrimental on the climate issues. So help us understand your number one issue the person you back has a very different view than you do.

Debbie Dooley: Well, I looked at other issues as well and I also believe in the tax bill. I don't think solar was hurt if I'm not mistaken in the --

Greg Dalton: A lot of the green energy things made it through. People worried, they made it through because of Republican support in Congress and elsewhere.

Debbie Dooley: They did. And that was good but I disagree pulling out of the, you know, the Paris Accord. Donald Trump can say whatever he wants to and push coal. The bottom line is that boat has sailed it will never be the king that it once was and that's because the grassroots elected officials listened many times to the grassroots. And if we speak loudly enough, we can have a bigger influence than like the Koch brothers and their money. And I've been involved in battles and, you know, especially in Georgia and then in Florida. And we were against a lot of deep-pocketed special interest when it comes to solar and guess what, we won. Because the people wanted it the people spoke out forcefully enough. So I think that with the solar tariffs I strongly opposed that but I saw

Donald Trump give a press conference where he talked about well, we're putting, you know, going after China. And then he started praising solar manufacturers in the United States that he wanted to bring them back. So I think he will eventually get the message. It doesn't matter, I mean he could go out and pronounce that hey, coal is at the level it once will, we're gonna get it back? No, you're not, okay. Just like I said, that ship has sailed it will never be king because people want individual freedom. They want clean energy. I have heard from so many people and I can tell you something else. I heard from a man when I posted a New York Times story on Twitter. I think his Twitter handle was "magadon" for Donald Trump. He said "I love clean energy and I want clean energy. But it's so high I can't afford it." And that's the thing we need to put money invested and innovation and research. Because it's a climate issue but for me moving to a decentralized grid structure is a national security issue. Rooftop solar is a national security issue. There is nothing more centralized in our nation, nor more vulnerable to a terrorist attack, than our power grid. There was a report that was released it was the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that found that terrorist could take down none of the key substations that are more than 54,000 and it would cause a blackout from coast to coast. So rooftop solar helps keep us safe. I envision in America where everybody can afford rooftop solar where we are self-sufficient. Imagine how millions of millions of homes with rooftop solar would reduce our carbon footprint. That's the America I envisioned.

Christine Pelosi: Well said.

Debbie Dooley: Thank you.

Greg Dalton: If you're just joining us we're talking with Debbie Dooley, cofounder of the Green Tea Coalition and Christine Pelosi, an Executive Committeewoman of the DNC. I'm Greg Dalton. This is Climate One from the Commonwealth Club. We're gonna go to our lightning round in which we ask quick questions and quick answers. The first one for Debbie Dooley and Christine Pelosi. I'll just mention a phrase and you'll gonna say the first person that comes to mind. So first one for Debbie Dooley. A liberal you'd like to go out drinking with.

Debbie Dooley: Al Gore.

Greg Dalton: Okay.

Debbie Dooley: I mean actually know, Al Gore, I met him at an event. He's ain't cool.

Greg Dalton: Christine Pelosi, a conservative you'd like to go out drinking with?

Christine Pelosi: Debbie Dooley.

[Laughter]

Debbie Dooley: Can I change my answer to Christine?

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, a liberal you'd like to take sport shooting at a firing range.

Debbie Dooley: Probably Bernie Sanders.

[Laughter]

Greg Dalton: He's, yeah, gun state, Vermont. Christine Pelosi, a conservative you'd like to introduce to dreamers in their home.

Christine Pelosi: Well, provided that ICE wasn't far behind. I don't know if they'd like to meet him

but Mike Pence.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, a Muslim country you'd like to visit.

Debbie Dooley: Well, Saudi Arabia I couldn't, because I don't bow to any man or walk behind me. I think God created man and look and said, I can do better, he created a woman.

[Laughter]

So I would say more of a country probably Turkey.

Greg Dalton: Okay. Christine Pelosi, an elected conservative you respect.

Christine Pelosi: Melissa Melendez assemblywoman from Southern California who just authored the we said enough whistleblower bill. And she authored it five years ago, it finally got passed.

Greg Dalton: It's about sexual harassment in the California state legislature.

Christine Pelosi: Yes it provides whistleblower protections for state capital employees to report incidents of sexual harassment or be witnesses. We worked together a little bit on the bill. And she's a very strong leader and remember the name because she'll be a very strong leader on that issue going forward. Because on the military where unfortunately she has had experience with.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, other than renewable energy, major policy or cultural issue on which you have changed your mind after learning more about it.

Debbie Dooley: I used to be a pretty much a hawk in defense, I'm not anymore. I'm very supportive of -- there was this joint piece of legislation that Mike Lee and Bernie Sanders are introducing that demands, you know, of vote on being involved in Saudi Arabia and the war between Saudi Arabia and Yemen. And I'm fully supportive of that is I mean they should've gone to Congress for it. I don't view Saudi Arabia as an ally but defense, I used to be pretty much a defense hawk and I'm like why are we spending all this money in war when it's really not U.S. interest at stake. So I would say the past few years, I've done an about-face when it comes to defense.

Greg Dalton: Christine Pelosi, major issue you've changed your mind on.

Christine Pelosi: Well I wouldn't call it changing my mind but I would say the more work that I've done with veterans and military families, the more of appreciation I have for that. Experienced my cousin was active-duty in the first Gulf War and had resigned his commission in Intel to go work for the State Department. But I would say having not grown up in an active duty family, but doing a lot of work with military families on a variety of issues has really broadened my views in terms of what the local consequences are. We grew up in San Francisco in the height of the opposition to the Vietnam War. And so when you look out on the street here and we try to deal with our homeless problem. When you look at some of the homeless veterans and you look at some of the programs like Swords to Plowshares and what they're trying to do. I think I it's been a big part of my career over the past dozen years to try to not only recruit veterans to run for office, but also to make sure that all candidates running for office have a veterans and military families advisory committee to their campaigns. And frankly that's something I probably would've occurred to me when I started in politics 25 years ago.

Debbie Dooley: That's a good thing.

Greg Dalton: True or false. Part of our lightning round. This is for Christine Pelosi. In the 1990s,

Democrats blocked progress on gender equity in American workplaces by diminishing President Clinton's misuse of power over intern Monica Lewinsky?

Christine Pelosi: False. Inappropriate behavior called out, censure him and move on but I don't think that that blocked progress in the workplace.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, evangelicals are giving a pass to a serial philanderer who's boasted about his sexual conquests.

Debbie Dooley: I agree.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley. Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell should release the names of members of Congress who have used taxpayer dollars to pay settlements for sexual harassment.

Debbie Dooley: I absolutely believe that and advocate strongly for that.

Greg Dalton: Christine Pelosi, Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell should release the names of members of Congress who've used taxpayer dollars.

Christine Pelosi: Absolutely.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, the Republican Party true or false is suffering from moral rot?

Debbie Dooley: I think both political parties are.

[Applause]

Greg Dalton: Christine?

Christine Pelosi: I think something is happening to coarsen our culture. I think the entire country has a danger of being coarsened and having that. But I also think there's a great time of renewal as well. I think that one of the things that we've learned is that we're actually not a monolith and they're probably three or four Republican parties and three or four Democratic parties, kind of bound into two. And there really isn't a strong way to run a national independent unless you're a billionaire you can't afford to get on the ballot in all 50 states. So the fight is really to build these trends partisan coalitions around issues and then try to get something done. But I don't think that there's necessarily a moral rot so much as there is a sense of anger and frustration and helplessness that a lot of people here feel. And then they say I'm gonna channel that, I'm gonna refuse to give in to that and I'm gonna try to do something better.

Announcer: You're listening to a conversation about the bridging partisan divide. This is Climate One. Coming up, Greg Dalton will ask about other ways to bring people together on climate and clean energy.

Debbie Dooley: If you go into a conservative or Tea Party meeting and you make the big corporations or the electric monopolies, the bad guy instead of the Kentucky coal miner the bad guy, you're gonna have a much more receptive audience.

Announcer: That's up next, when Climate One continues.

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Here's Greg.

Greg Dalton: So Debbie Dooley, I wanna ask you. You used to be on the board of the Tea Party Patriots, you're not now. Hearing you talk the way you are, how does the Tea Party view you now? Do you get blowback from some of your Tea Party friends?

Debbie Dooley: No. I mean, you know, to be honest no. But I can remember during, I think it was President Obama's last State of the Union address. He kind of referred to me, you know, when he said, "Hey, in Georgia, Tea Party members agree with me on energy." And he talked about green eyeshade, and I had a text message on my phone "President Obama just was talking about you in his State of the Union address" no because when you stop and think about it the key is education. When people find out the facts, oh they're totally on board. They don't like electric monopolies. If you go into a conservative or Tea Party meeting and you make the big corporations or the electric monopolies, the bad guy instead of the Kentucky coal miner the bad guy. You're gonna have a much more receptive audience. I'm having great success among Tea Party activists.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, one group formed recently Students for Carbon Dividends. Maybe not the most exciting title, but they do have 23 college Republican groups out there supporting a plan put forward by elders of the Republican Party, George Shultz and James Baker. Where do you see, you know, the use of this movement which you're talking about Republican support on college campuses for green energy?

Debbie Dooley: Well, I was involved when I got involved with the Florida referendum. I was active in Florida. I went to young Republican event and at that time this was in 2015. And so when I spoke at young Republican event, I just talked about energy choice and freedom and this is, I just stayed away from mentioning anything about the environment. I had several young Republicans come up to me after the meeting and they said, hey it's okay to mention climate change to us. They said millennials believe in climate change. So it's okay when you're in this group to mention that to us.

Greg Dalton: On the impacts of fossil fuels. You grew up in Louisiana, Deepwater Horizon. Tell us, you know, what's happened. Louisiana is feeling a lot of impacts with coastal erosion, sea level rise. The move has the news has moved on from the Gulf Coast from 2010, but its impact still being felt there with the people you know?

Debbie Dooley: Well just recently just within the past year there was a bipartisan group of elected officials in Louisiana that are suing the big oil companies over erosion of the marshlands. And the reason marshlands are important in Louisiana is because when a hurricane comes slamming in from the gulf, you know, the marshlands are a buffer they kind of help slow the hurricane down. So people are deeply concerned because there is if you look at the map satellite images you can't say that the marshland and coastlines aren't evaporating. So, you know, people are waking up, it's taking them time but conservatives are waking up when it comes to that.

Greg Dalton: And some of the people most affected contributed least to it because they are the low income domestically, or overseas and they're least equipped to deal with it. So Christine Pelosi, how is this country gonna adapt to climate change and make sure the people who work at a disadvantage in the brown energy economy are helped in the green energy economy because the people who are least equipped, contributed least are suffering first and worst.

Christine Pelosi: I think that's exactly right. And where I started with my story about the cookies and the farmworkers because it all goes back to that if you look at the people in the poorest communities that's where the power plants are. That's where the fracking is. That's where the, you know, that's where they're gonna drill that's where the extraction is happening and without

compensation to the people. It's a real public health hazard whether you're talking about dirty water, whether you're talking about filthy air whether you're talking about even the people that are hired to go in and do the cleanup who aren't given the protective gear to go in and do the work and then end up with environmental illnesses that for which they don't have healthcare. So I think that there are a couple of things that we have to do. Number one, I know Tea Party isn't a fan of this but you really do have to expand Medicare for all. You really do have to have universal healthcare as a right and not a privilege and make sure people have access to it. You've got to have this community health centers that are going to be present there. You have to have treatment for diabetes and asthma and the other conditions that people have in these very poor communities. You also going to have to talk about climate equity and climate justice and make sure that when you're talking about the renewal going back to that potential hopefully not ephemeral infrastructure plan that actually creates jobs. That it is jobs where people are not only good paying jobs with health care with the protective gear but also that you're building out sustainable neighborhoods and affordable housing so that once you renew a place that people can afford to live there. One quick story. We went to -- the DNC went to New Orleans six months after Katrina. And when you go downtown in New Orleans six months after Katrina, the French Quarter it looked beautiful. You could barely tell that something had happened. A few small businesses shuttered but other than that it looked like the French Quarter. On the other hand, we went to the 9th Ward and it was if it happened yesterday. Cars still twirled up into trees, you know, homes and because people didn't have the resources to rebuild, the government wasn't providing the resources to rebuild. And not only that but families were very, very concerned about the rebuilding because here you had largely African-American families, so there's certainly racist policy involved. But also rather than being a renters community these were homes that house two or three generations of families all within the same home the only source of wealth for the family and the only source of housing for many generations of the family.

So rebuilding the neighborhood meant rezoning them out of everything that they had. And there's no way you can compensate for that. So I think when we talk about renewal we talk about affordable housing and green housing and all that. It has to include people who are poor and it has to include living wages with healthcare for people.

Greg Dalton: We're talking with Debbie Dooley and Christine Pelosi at Climate One at the Commonwealth Club. We're gonna go to our audience questions. Welcome.

Male Participant: Thank you. How do we reduce and eventually eliminate the influence big money has in our political system?

Greg Dalton: Christine Pelosi. You've taken a swing at this. You've made a couple of dents at it.

Christine Pelosi: I have. I think the first thing that we have to do is ask each candidate to take the pledge individually as a person. You have people right now running for Senate and Governor and Congress and other positions of influence and power. So ask them what's your platform and then ask them to not take money that conflicts with their platform. So I think that individuals doing it is important. It's also important to press your party committees to make sure that they're drawing these lines. Third, work with groups like the California Clean Money Coalition as I do. We passed something called AB-249. So Debbie all those initiatives you're talking about in California you have to list the top three donors of those initiatives. So you can't just be Californians for sunshine now it's like, oh paid for by Chevron and PG&E all that. So I think having disclosure does force a conversation about big money into the conversation. And finally I do think that a significant piece of campaign finance reform we need to pass around the country is to pass a law that outlaws utilities from being able to use ratepayer dollars campaign contributions.

Greg Dalton: Let's go to our next question. Welcome to Climate One.

Female Participant: Thank you. Holly Kaufman. Debbie, you've talked a lot about how facts have changed your mind and changed the mind of other people that you work with. How come facts about the science climate change aren't changing people's minds and we have to dance around with legitimate words like energy choice and freedom. Why can't we talk about the facts and why aren't those facts changing people's minds?

Debbie Dooley: Because conservatives have been told for years that man's not damaging the environment. And as far as I'm concerned most people, this is a key I think it was Jay Faison released a poll a few years ago. And it asked the question, "Do you believe in climate change?" And you know big majority said no, this is Republicans. But he turned around and asked the question, "Do you believe climate change is always been, you know, in cycles, but man's making it worse?" Double the response agreed with that. And for me, I don't wanna get caught up on why you're working and why you support renewables. I just care about the results and I just, you know, if you want to put solar panels and push solar panels because you think they look good on your house, and you know and you're willing to work to advance them, that's all I care about.

Greg Dalton: Let's go to our next question. Welcome to Climate One.

Male Participant: Thank you. The U.S. government gives billions of dollars to subsidize the extractive industry. And you talk about investing money in researching for clean energy. How competitive would clean energy be if the government stops upsizing the extractive industry?

Debbie Dooley: Can I answer that? Because as a conservative when I first got involved with the solar fight I mean the anti-renewable folks within the conservative movement must all share brain because they're also predictable. And no doubt it's coming talking points furnished by Koch brothers. But fossil fuel has been heavily subsidized since 1932. During the first 10 years of nuclear public innovation and research money from the federal government, federal tax dollars for R&D amounted to 1% of the federal budget. During the first 10 years of solar, it accounted for 1/10 of 1% of the federal budget. Nuclear can't exist without subsidies. If I had my way, I would say cut out all energy subsidies both direct and indirect and let the market decide what energy is best because there is no doubt in my mind, it would be solar and wind and renewable energy with wind. But make no mistake, I point out the subsidies that fossil fuel and nuclear have been receiving over the years. And I think, you know, if you're gonna cut out one energy subsidy, cut them all out. Don't pick winners and losers. Don't go after renewables.

Greg Dalton: Something like half a trillion dollars worldwide every year on energy subsidies. We're talking about powering America's future with Christine Pelosi and Debbie Dooley. I'm Greg Dalton. Let's go to our next question. Welcome to Climate One.

Female Participant: Hello my name is Mary Selkirk . I'm with Citizens' Climate Lobby, which is an international organization. We have close to hundred thousand citizen lobbyists here in the United States working with their members of Congress to level the playing field for clean energy. And I was very happy I just wanted to thank you, this is a question for Debbie Dooley. First of all thank you for all your tremendous efforts --

Debbie Dooley: Thank you.

Female Participant: And the question is what your view is on carbon pricing and whether you would support a fully rebated tax on carbon?

Debbie Dooley: I don't think you would get that passed if you call it a carbon tax because the Republicans not gonna likely to vote for a tax increase. But I would be supportive of some form of

that. Yes I would.

Greg Dalton: Seems like a big opportunity was just missed on that in front with tax reform to have some carbon tax and give money back to the people. Let's go to our next question.

Female Participant: Hi there. I write for hundreds of millions of Walmart shoppers and I am here tonight because I found you, Debbie Dooley, on the Internet. And I thought my God, here it is a way to present a message. And I am looking for that way and I'm wondering if you have any knowledge to share beyond just a couple of clips I've been able to find.

Debbie Dooley: You can email me debbie, D-E-B-B-I-E, @energyfreedomusa.org.

Debbie@energyfreedomusa.org. And you can contact Greg he'll know how to get in touch with me too.

Greg Dalton: Thank you. Let's go our last question. Welcome to Climate One young man.

Male Participant: Hi. So as a kid, I've been told that I'm gonna be leading or our generation is gonna be leading the country soon. But our political stance on climate change and solar energy doesn't seem to be moving much. Where do you hope to see that your parties go in the next let's just say 20 years when I'm gonna be grown up and doing something. Where do you hope to see your party stance in renewable fuels and how we change climate for the better of our country and future generations?

Greg Dalton: Thank you. Christine Pelosi, it's often thought that these are not voting issues. It's one thing to say I'm for this, but when people go to the ballot box it's not driving their decision.

Christine Pelosi: I would say two things. First of all there's a lot you can do now. When I was growing up, mine was Generation X. So my generation we did more recycling than registering to vote. Looking back, that was perhaps a mistake.

[Laughter]

So I think that one thing that you can do now is get involved now. I mean there are things that you can do now to make sure that you push if you go to school or you're active in a club or an organization. Ask how, you know, how climate friendly they are with the carbon footprint at your school with the carbon footprint of a club or an organization that you're a part of. What can you do to act locally that has a global impact but also has an impact on the adults in your community, your caregivers, your guardians who are voters. So I would say don't wait because if we wait 20 years if you're just recycling now and then registering to vote later like my generation, we're gonna be further behind. So do what mine didn't and get involved now and push people now on where you want them to go. JFK famously said to govern is to choose. So people need to make a choice now about what's gonna affect your future. So whether it's your school, whether it's your organization, whether it's your community, you should go and ask your elected officials what they're doing right now. You can write your representatives and you should and say hey I want a future that's hundred percent renewable and you as my leader need to vote for that and not only vote for it but push for it. And also finally, I would say if you are part of any group or class. I remember when I my daughter Bella's kindergarten class wrote to their congresswomen about, they were very concerned about water pollution and wanted to know what she was going to do about it. Nancy Pelosi wrote them back and told the things that she was doing to try to affect their lives. But the fact is, it's important to have that accountability. So don't wait, hold us accountable now.

Greg Dalton: Debbie Dooley, quickly we're getting to the, Debbie Dooley.

Debbie Dooley: Quickly, I see clean energy future just like I said, I envision that solar and renewables are going to be cool because the people are demanding it.

Announcer: Greg Dalton has been talking about bridging the partisan divide on climate with Debbie Dooley, founder of the Green Tea Coalition and President of Conservatives for Energy Freedom, and Christine Pelosi, Executive Committeewoman of the Democratic National Committee.

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[Applause]

Greg Dalton: Climate One is a special project of The Commonwealth Club of California. Kelli Pennington directs our audience engagement. Carlos Manuel and Tyler Reed are the producers. The audio engineer is Mark Kirschner. Anny Celsi and Devon Strolovitch edit the show. The Commonwealth Club CEO is Dr. Gloria Duffy.

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