

LB - EP 51 - RON DESANTIS

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0:00:00.0 Lisa Boothe: Guess what? I'm back, this is the second season of The Truth with Lisa Boothe and I have big news for you guys, we are moving to twice per week. Every Monday, every Thursday, every week, you can expect new episodes of The Truth with Lisa Boothe, and we are starting with a banger. He's the most talked about Governor in America, and he's also my Governor, Governor Ron DeSantis. He led Florida through COVID by rejecting Anthony Fauci, rejecting the CDC, showing the rest of the country that lockdowns don't work, and I don't wanna know what this country would look like if it wasn't for Florida, and Governor Ron DeSantis leading the way for freedom. Standing against the totalitarians. And now he's taking on woke culture, he's fighting the left, fighting the media and protecting children from indoctrination. And for this episode, I wanted to get into all those issues, and we do, but I also wanted to get into the Governor's thought process. How does he make decisions? Who is Governor Ron DeSantis? We talk about his family and his upbringing as well, and if you haven't checked out his bio, it's insane, the guy is a complete stud.

0:01:11.7 Lisa Boothe: He went to Yale University where he graduated with honors... For the captain of the varsity baseball team. He graduated with honors from Harvard Law School. There he earned a commission in the US Navy as a JAG officer, then during active duty service, he deployed to Iraq as an advisor to US Navy Commander and his military decorations include the Bronze Star Medal for Meritorious Service and the Iraq Campaign medal. This was also my first in-person interview, and I went to a press conference he gave about the Stop WOKE Act. We're gonna get into that and so much more. I hope you love this interview. I know I do. Here's my conversation with Governor Ron DeSantis.

[music]

0:01:54.2 Lisa Boothe: Alright, this is the first episode of my second season of The Truth with Lisa Boothe, and I am sitting next to the best Governor in America, who happens to be my Governor, 'cause I fled communist New York to come here. Governor, it's such an honor to have you on the show.

0:02:08.2 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, thanks for having me, and I think you... How long have you been in Florida now? Over a year?

0:02:11.7 Lisa Boothe: It's like a year and a half. You should put me on the Board of Tourism.

0:02:14.3 Gov. Ron DeSantis: There we go, there we go.

0:02:15.7 Lisa Boothe: I'm constantly selling the state.

0:02:17.2 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Most people who've moved, in fact, everyone that talks to me, none of them regret it, and I know you've really enjoyed it, so it means a lot to us.

0:02:24.5 Lisa Boothe: It's like living in paradise. Well, actually, if you're a conservative, come here, if you're not, stay home.

0:02:29.5 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I think that's what's happened. And I think we really... Because of what we've done, people are so sensitive, particularly with COVID about the type of state

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government they live under, and they know it can affect everything from their kids' education, to even being able to work and doing all these things, like we saw the crazy policies and so they are voting with their feet. And we have seen a huge shift towards Republican since I've been Governor.

0:02:50.2 Lisa Boothe: Well, and speaking of crazy policies, so you just held a press conference for the Stop WOKE Act. What is it? Why was it needed? Tell the audience about it.

0:03:00.7 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Woke in this context stands for Stop Wrongs Against Our Kids and Employees Act, and so part of it is giving parents the ability to hold school districts accountable who do critical race theory, which is not allowed in Florida schools. Part of it also is to give employees, particularly from these big companies of civil rights protection against having this oppressive woke ideology imposed on them for job trainings, people are having to be told that they have to confess their white privilege and all this other stuff, and honestly it's asinine. And so we really with this bill are doing more to battle wokeness and CRT than any state has done in the country.

0:03:37.5 Lisa Boothe: And Stop WOKE Act, did you come up with that on your own? That's good.

0:03:39.0 Gov. Ron DeSantis: That was my idea.

0:03:41.5 Lisa Boothe: That's good, I like it. So I wanted to sincerely thank you for providing me safe refuge, 'cause if it wasn't for you keeping Florida free, I might be in a Gulag somewhere for the unvaccinated. And I say that in jest, but also in sincerity. I don't know if you saw that Rasmussen poll from not too long ago where you looked at Biden supporters, of them, 51% favor the government putting the unvaccinated in designated facilities, 29% of Democrats more broadly supported taking children away from parents who aren't vaccinated. How far were we and how far are we from those kinds of scenarios taking fold?

0:04:16.3 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, I think if Florida had not stood up against that and many other bad policies, I think that those would have taken hold of the whole country. We'd look more like Canada right now. We were the first State over a year ago, we banned vaccine passports, and when we did it, the left had a conniption, but even some of these "Libertarians," like, "Oh, you're banning passports with a private business," and I'm like, "Yeah, I am because your rights should not be circumscribed in terms of just participating in society based on this COVID shot. It's a private matter, and if one business does it, then people are gonna say Florida has passports and we don't allow them. The result of that was we had the biggest domestic tourism here in 2021, than we had in the history of the state, and we had more foreign visitors to Florida than New York City did. New York City has led for the last 20 years. They wouldn't be coming here if they had to show paperwork to go get a hamburger. What we did was good for the individual, but it was also good for our state, and I think if you look at what we did to ban school districts from forcing the kids to get the COVID vax very, very early on, that gave so many parents a good peace of mind. We have had families move to Florida just because of that issue. I don't know how it went from, make it available to people, particularly senior citizens, to all of a sudden being...

0:05:32.9 Gov. Ron DeSantis: You're not gonna even be able to leave your home, some people have

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said, if you don't get this COVID shot. And oh, by the way, the COVID, say what you want about it, it does not prevent you from spreading it or getting infected anyways, and so I thought it was a huge, huge threat to freedom. I think we held the line, and I think because we held the line, I think other states follow. In fact, it's been reported in some of these liberal publications that Fauci and some of these people in Biden's White House wanted him to do more draconian restrictions particularly with Interstate travel and vax passes. And some of his political guys said, "You know, if you do that, Governor DeSantis is gonna light you up," and I would have.

0:06:11.2 Lisa Boothe: And good for you for that. I mean, I think that's why conservatives are just loving hearing what you're doing, seeing what you're doing here in Florida, really holding the line and going on the offense. And right now, we're sort of seeing these diverging viewpoints in the Republican party, particularly when you look at what's going on with Disney, and there's one school of thought where Republicans were based to sort of see those numbers that I mentioned with Rasmussen, and understand that there's some on the left that would put you away or take your kids away for your beliefs. And then there's this other side of the Republican party who thinks you can reason with people who hold those thoughts. For instance, on Disney, Charles Cook with the National Review said there was no need for you and the Florida Legislature to salt the earth, take revenge or make Florida's policies worse. How should we approach today's left?

0:06:55.9 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, look, all I would say is, if you think one California-based company having their own government and having separate rules from everybody else in Florida is good policy, I'd like to know how you're coming to that conclusion. The fact of the matter is, this was an aberration when it was done in the '60s to draw them in, and maybe it was the right thing then, I don't know. But now it is just not justifiable at all, and so the question is, is not that, "Oh, you're doing it for 'revenge.'" The issue is, is Disney really damaged its political standing in Florida, the legislature would never have considered doing this even six months ago, but because Disney is coming out and supporting transgender ideology in young kids, kids education, you saw the Zoom calls where these higher-ups and Disney are talking about we have this agenda to really get into kids programming. There's not a lot of defenders of Disney right now, so you're able to look at this with a fresh set of eyes and say, You know what? Is this really the partnership that the State of Florida wants? And I didn't think it was...

0:07:56.8 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I would have signed this bill if they had passed it two years ago, just on substance, but particularly now when their corporate culture is dedicated to that, and they also came out saying they're gonna make it a mission to repeal parents rights in Florida. So yes, we signed the bill, we "won politically," whatever that means, but they said they're coming to really do damage in Florida, and so we've gotta take that seriously.

0:08:21.0 Lisa Boothe: Why would corporations need to be involved in the first place in Florida politics or politics of the state?

0:08:26.4 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, I think what I've always said is these businesses have every right, it's a free country, you have a right. But if you get into the political thicket, then just understand, we're gonna tussle, we're gonna fight back, and we're gonna expose what you do. When Disney criticizes Florida, they don't say a word about the Communist Party in China, they don't say a word about the Uyghurs, they don't say a word about a lot of the places they do business in, who

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actually execute homosexuals. And so saying that they're somehow this big LGBTQ, not when it affects their bottom line, they're willing to do business in a lot of very bad places, and so to single Florida out just by saying that you shouldn't have this transgender ideology in young kids' classrooms was really weird. But I think that what's happening in corporate America is some of the executives are woke and they think that they have this... I think most of it though, is there's cabals of employees who are very radical, and I don't think they represent the kind of the overall viewpoint of the employees, but I think most of these other employees are scared to speak out, 'cause if you speak out against this stuff...

0:09:24.7 Gov. Ron DeSantis: People will attack you, they'll come after you. For example, with the women's sports, we were very strong in saying what they did in that 500-yard freestyle, to have a male swimmer who swam for three years on the men's team, then switch to women, and you say that's the women's champion, you're depriving these other women of fair opportunities, and one of the second place finisher "should have won the championship." She was from Florida. So we put out a proclamation. And people would tell me, "Governor, thanks for standing up for this, we're too scared to speak out 'cause we're worried about the consequences." So I think what's happened in these companies is they just have a lot of momentum, there's really nobody that's pushing back against them, and so they end up having an outsized influence, but I do not think that woke impulse represents a majority of employees, even in Disney in California, certainly not Disney in Orlando. When they did the big day protest, they had one employee protest in Orlando. I think most of those employees... Yeah, I think most of those employees either supported the bill or just didn't think Disney should get involved with it, and so...

0:10:24.5 Gov. Ron DeSantis: But I do think this is gonna increasingly be an issue. And so what do we do as conservatives? Do we allow massive corporate power to get behind a very pernicious ideology and impose that on society? And what, we just say free market and don't do anything while everything is getting steam rolled? I don't think you can do that. So I think you get in the arena and you fight back, and that's what we're doing.

0:10:46.1 Lisa Boothe: Do you think corporations will think twice before weighing in on some of this stuff now?

0:10:50.2 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I think they will in Florida.

0:10:51.7 Lisa Boothe: Yeah, I think so too. You know, I wanted to ask you, so the Florida Department of Health has issued guidelines for treating gender dysphoria, recommending against gender transition, puberty blockers and hormones, but would you support a state law banning any of those medical interventions for children?

0:11:05.6 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I would ban the... Yeah, I would ban the sexchange... The operations. I think that it's something that you can't get a tattoo if you're 12 years old. When they say gender-affirming care, what they mean a lot of times is you are really... You're castrating a young boy, you're sterilizing a young girl, you're doing mastectomies for these very young girls. And here's the thing, what our guidance pointed to, and the Surgeon General did a great job, for these young kids, 80% of the cases resolve themselves as they grow up. And so you're doing things that are permanently altering them, and then they're not gonna be able to reverse that, and so I don't think

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it's appropriate for kids at all. I think the guidance is right, but I think that there should be additional protections. 'Cause you're growing up, there are things that... It's an awkward time, and it seems like there's a concerted effort in society to push these kids in to do some type of medical intervention, and in our judgment, that's not healthy.

0:12:00.0 Lisa Boothe: Well, I was gonna ask you, why do you think the left is digging their heels in so hard on some of these issues? There's literally a Netflix series right now called He's expecting, which I wasn't aware that's possible. And obviously, they have attacked you for the parental rights bill, they've stood behind men playing in women's sports, so why are they digging their heels in on this?

0:12:20.7 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I can't explain it. I just think they have a very militant leftist ideology, I think their view is they wanna salt the earth of society and upend all these different conventions. The House of Representatives under Pelosi, at the beginning of this current Congress, they voted to ban using the words on the House floor: Mother, sister, daughter, things like that, they said it was not inclusive enough. And I think most people see that and they're like, "This is nuts," when they see that picture of the swim champion versus... And then you have the other three girls hugging off to the side, they're looking at that, they're like, "Come on, when you tell me that a man can get pregnant, I'm not down with that." I know that that's not true. So I think it's been very damaging to them politically, because the more the left is fairly tagged with those views, I think it's important to a lot of folks, and I think that's part of the reason why you see so many particularly working-class constituencies fleeing the left and gonna probably vote Republican this year.

0:13:17.2 Lisa Boothe: Quick commercial break, and then back with Governor Ron DeSantis. I think if you're out there having to explain why you're not a groomer, you might be losing the debate.

0:13:29.0 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Yeah, and I think it's interesting 'cause the parents rights in education, we did the Stop WOKE Act was one of my big initiatives. And we also did curriculum transparency. Every parent has the right to know what curriculum is being used in the schools. You'd think that would be common sense? The left fights you on that. They believe when your kid goes to school, they get their hooks into the kids and you as a parent should butt out, and that's a seminal battle that we're fighting. Parents rights in education, when they were doing it, it wasn't necessarily something that I was terribly involved with because I didn't realize the extent to which this was happening in these young kids. But you see the curriculum, they have the gender unicorn which says, Oh, you can do this or that, the gender bread man they have, that clearly is all geared towards very, very young kids, these kids that are in first and second, third grade. And I was like, when the media started making a big deal about it, it was going through the legislative process, I had my staff pull the language and I read it, I'm like, "Are you kidding me? Are they really gonna fight this battle? Saying that we need to have sexuality and transgender in grades K through 3? It's like, I can't believe that that would be a winning issue, and so I started speaking out and we made sure it...

0:14:36.9 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Got across the finish line, we signed a legislation, but I do think that there is a school of thought that is, you gotta get this ideology into them when they're young, if you don't, the parents are gonna raise them differently and then it's gonna be harder to kind of change

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their do... So I think it's... I don't think it's necessarily from a sexual perspective, I think what it is, is an ideological perspective, they're trying to groom people to be more ideological in their viewpoints, and they think starting younger is gonna get them there.

0:15:06.6 Lisa Boothe: It's indoctrination.

0:15:08.3 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Yeah, of course, 100%. And that's, in Florida, that's the bright line we draw. We want quality education, we have no tolerance for indoctrination in our schools, that's why we're doing the Critical Race Theory, that's why we're doing stuff with the curriculum transparency, that's why we're making sure that all the textbooks meet state standards in Florida, and we are gonna be vigorous in enforcing that distinction between education and indoctrination.

0:15:33.4 Lisa Boothe: It seems like people were sort of very submissive and taking a lot with COVID, and then once they started seeing some of the stuff their kids were being taught with Critical Race Theory, it sort of woke a sleeping beast. We saw with Virginia, parents really rising up, going to school boards, getting more involved and really just speaking out in a way that they weren't, about some of these COVID issues. Where do you think this goes with... Now they're pushing against parental rights on this transgender stuff, where does this all go?

0:16:00.1 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, I think what they've done is they have really changed the political landscape to where now some of the most important elections for voters are the school board races. If you go back even four years ago, no one really cared about the school board. I mean, some did, but they were not hot button issues, they were not high-profile. These are... In Florida, they're gonna be some of the most high-profile races, part of the reason is our school board races are non-partisan, so you'll have these kind of deep red counties that will elect somebody who is running kind of as a fake conservative, but really backed by the union and the left, they get in and they force-mask kids, they have the indoctrination and all that stuff. So now parents are on high alert about this, and I think you're gonna see particularly Republicans, they're gonna come out with a vengeance and they are going to want to make sure they hold some of these bad school board members accountable for what they did over the last two years.

0:16:53.6 Lisa Boothe: But I think it's a beautiful thing 'cause your parents should be involved in their kids' life, they should be involved in what their kids are being taught. Transparency is a good thing. And speaking of fatherhood, so you recently signed a bill addressing the decline of fatherhood, you have three adorable children, why do you think we've had this decline of fatherhood and a decline in recognizing the importance of it?

0:17:16.5 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, I think if you look back, you go back to the 1950s, the family was very strong across the board, and I think you've seen increasingly fewer and fewer kids have fathers in the home. People will point to how that's happened in the black community, and it has, but it's happened in all communities to a certain extent, and so I think it's a problem that's not just confined to the inner city, I think it's something that is... We've really seen society wide. The fact of the matter is, when you have a father in the home, the kid's chance of dropping out of school declines, the kid's chance to get in trouble with the law declines, the chances they will do drugs declines. And these are just very, very powerful metrics that are repeated across every community, every state and every country. And so our view is, is we wanna make sure that we're promoting this

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as something that parents understand, fathers understand this is their responsibility, they need to be involved, but also providing the type of resources that would help some of these guys get back into their kid's life. So for example, one of the things the bill does is it allows some of these non-profit groups to apply for grants.

0:18:20.5 Gov. Ron DeSantis: So we had Tony Dungy who was the former coach of the Colts and the Bucs, great guy, he has an All-Pro Dads group, and so we've worked with them since I've been Governor, they do a great job, and he told the story of why he founded that, because he went to a prison with one of the ministers in the Tampa Bay Area when he was the coach of the Bucs, and he looked at everybody who had gotten in trouble and he noticed that... In his words, he's like, It wasn't because they were poor or because of their race, or because of their religion, the reason they ended up in prison was 'cause they did not have a father in the home. That was the one thing that was there. And so their organization really works to help some of these dads play a more meaningful role in their life. And so there's a lot we talk about in politics and public policy, if you could snap your fingers and just guarantee that every kid had a loving father in the home, you would see huge benefits and all these other metrics in society. It's not that simple to do, what we did... It's not like what we did is gonna wholly solve the problem, but that basic reality about whether the father's present and involved or not, is gonna tell you a lot about that kid's prospects in life.

0:19:23.0 Lisa Boothe: I was kind of a handful growing up, if people can imagine. I was very fortunate to have two parents who supported me and kept steering me in a better direction.

0:19:31.3 Lisa Boothe: Quick break back with my Governor and the Governor of Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis.

0:19:37.2 Lisa Boothe: What's your favorite thing about being a father?

0:19:42.1 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I think it's just being able to watch them have new experiences, I think you take them to go to a baseball game and their eyes light up, you take them to... We take them to like the fairs in Florida, so we took them to the Florida State Fair, the Strawberry Festival Plant city, Clay County, you name it. And they get so happy. So we're fortunate, on the one hand, unique family situation, five, four and two, are our kids, their whole real recollections are all since I've been governor, my daughter had just turned two right after I had gotten elected. And so this is kind of their frame of reference. And I also often think about like, how is that gonna work as they grow up? We wanna make sure that they're grounded and know that that's kind of not a normal experience, it's certainly not. I was a blue-collar kid growing up, and it was the farthest thing that I would have thought of, so we think about that. So that's a challenge, but the good thing is, is we're able to do a lot of different stuff just by going around the state and showing them, I'll bring my oldest daughter to press conferences, she will just stand right next to the podium...

0:20:43.7 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Behaves very well. I do, I do, the questions, other people, and then I'll take her to grab ice-scream or whatever, then we go back. And so they're able to get these experiences and then to see how they react about it, and to see what they really like and what makes them happy is something that I just get a lot of gratification about, but it's a big responsibility, and it's something that my wife and I take serious. We had our first daughter right before my third term in Congress, and so the first two years, you go up three nights of the week, you come back and

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whatever, you spend probably more time in your home district, and not that that was ideal, but the minute we had Madison, I'm in DC and I'm like, What the hell am I doing here? Like honestly, it's like talking on Zoom, just... Or talking on the facetime just doesn't work, and so I was like, Alright. That was one of, quite frankly, the reasons I ran for governor, it's more family-friendly, I can go out and we're here in Miami together in Miami area, I can be back home and I have an engagement tonight, it just so happens. But normally, I'm home...

0:21:36.8 Lisa Boothe: It worked for me, so...

0:21:38.9 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I'm home doing a lot of different stuff, even having a full day around the state, and you could not do that in Congress, and so... But it's something that we really work hard to make sure that we're spending time.

0:21:50.6 Lisa Boothe: You'd mentioned you grew up in a blue collar family. Talk a little bit about that. Talk a little bit about your childhood.

0:21:56.2 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Yeah, so I grew up in Dunedin, Florida, which is in Pinellas County, the Tampa St. Pete area. I was born in Jacksonville, my mother was a nurse. My father worked for Nielsen TV ratings, and so back then, the Nielsen family, you had to put a box on their TV in any given area to be able to rate what they were watching, so that was what he did, and so that job took us from Jacksonville to Orlando, and then when I was in first grade, we ended up in Dunedin in the Tampa Bay area. And so I grew up there, was a great place to grow up in the sense I love baseball, and it was a great baseball town, and we did well in little league, going to the Little League World Series, I had a good program in high school, it ended up sending me to play baseball at Yale, but I never had anything handed to me, I had to work hard, I never expected anything to be handed to me, and I think I was able to develop that work ethic as a young age, and that really propelled me as I got into college, beyond the military, and then even as a candidate for office, really having to earn it.

0:22:54.7 Lisa Boothe: That mentality's kind of changed though, you look at a lot of these younger generations, they sort of think that things should be handed to them.

0:23:00.9 Gov. Ron DeSantis: And here's the thing too, and it kind of plays into the CRT, so they will tell certain kids based on your race, you're oppressed, and they will say how bad the country is. Well, if I'm a young kid and you're telling me I have no chance, why would I wanna work hard then? The reason I worked hard is 'cause I believe if I worked hard, I would be able to make things happen. I'd be able to open doors, I'd be able to have more opportunities. And so what we're doing here today, what I said at the event is, Do not let anybody tell you you can't succeed in Florida, you can succeed, and the most important thing to your success is what you do as an individual. Are you gonna work hard? Are you gonna make sure you don't waste the talent that God gave you, are you gonna get everything out of what you got? And if you do, and if you make that decision and you follow through, you will find success. You may not find success immediately, you may have some doors closed in your face, but eventually you will get through the door. That has got to be the message.

0:23:53.6 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Look, if the kid... Honestly, kids honestly don't believe they have a

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chance, that our country is bad or all this other stuff, then I can understand why they wouldn't wanna put in a lot of effort, 'cause it wasn't easy. I mean, I did all kinds of low-paying jobs as a 18, 19, 20-year-old kid, and I had to do it to make my way in the world, and I would never have done that if I thought there was no reason to do it.

0:24:12.7 Lisa Boothe: Yeah, I started off as a staff assistant, I always like to say I was saving the world one flag request at a time. It's sort of a thankless job, but it got me to where I am now, so it was fun. So that mentality has probably, as you said, prepared you for the job you have, 'cause you face a lot of criticism, so you've got... Some of your critics, Nicki Fried called you a dictator. The Democratic Governor of Colorado called you a socialist, how would you define your governing philosophy?

0:24:39.7 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, first, I would just say how ridiculous some of these criticisms are, and you can tell if you're over the target and they're lobbying these phony criticisms, then they must not have substance to critique you on. The idea that taking away special rights for one favorite corporation is socialist, it's the opposite of that. It's making them live under the same laws as everybody else. She'll say... When you have people say like, I'm dictating just because I'm leading and winning, because I'm getting things through the legislature, I have a good relationship with them. We put big win after big win on the board, and they will say that I'm dictating the outcomes, when no, I'm going through the constitutional process to be able to enact really significant legislation. And that's what you should wanna do. So when I became governor, I sat down in the desk the first day, and I said... I looked around, I said, You know, whatever SOB succeeds me, they ain't gonna have very much to do 'cause I'm gonna take every meat there is off the bone. I'm gonna get involved and do all the issues I can, I'm gonna make the most.

0:25:37.2 Gov. Ron DeSantis: In Florida, you have at most eight years, two four-year terms, and there's a term limit, so I'm gonna make sure we get all that we can get out of this, and that means leading on issues and not sitting around and waiting to see how it develops politically. For example, I have never taken a poll since I've been governor, I just don't. I believe what I believe, I have confidence that if you set the vision and you execute, that people will support that if it's the right thing to do. If I sat around and waited on poll results all day, I'd be paralyzed, I wouldn't be able to go out. When I see things that need action, yeah, we debate and we're deliberative about the type of policy we want, we make sure we formulate good policy, but, man, I'm out there and I'm leading. And that's the thing, when you're leading and the left's attacking you, that is good feedback because it means you're over the target. If some of these left-wing outlets like MSNBC, if they're ignoring me, then that must mean I'm not getting very much done. If they're constantly attacking me, well, they're attacking me for a reason because they know I'm winning, and they know Florida is really setting the standard across the country.

0:26:40.4 Lisa Boothe: Well, and what's hilarious is you were called Death Santis, and then originally with COVID, 'cause you were taking positions that were contrary, that's the word, to the group think narrative and what other states were doing, particularly left wing states and this left wing administration, but then everyone came around to where you were originally.

0:26:58.0 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, I think it became a cottage industry, whether it was schools, whether it was making sure businesses were open, whether it was making sure that seniors were

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prioritized for medication, whether it was banning vax mandates. We would do something, there'd be a spasm in the media and amongst the left, and then six to 12 months later, everybody else would end up doing what Florida was doing all along, and that was something that was pretty much... They became a cottage industry throughout the last two years.

0:27:26.4 Lisa Boothe: Like how annoying was that though, seeing all the criticism and then knowing that Andrew Cuomo literally sent elderly people to their death?

0:27:34.0 Gov. Ron DeSantis: It doesn't bother me because a lot of these legacy outlets, they're not trustworthy. I don't consume any of it, and that would be true if I wasn't Governor. Why would I want to do that when I know what they're doing is trying to concoct narratives? They're not interested in telling the truth, so you knew what they were doing by trying to elevate Cuomo, but if you think about the two people they tried to elevate the most, Cuomo and Fauci, not the best judge of who to try to elevate during this, because obviously, Cuomo... COVID is something you can't, "just stop it." It was a highly contagious respiratory Virus, but if you are taking somebody and you're sending a sick person into the most vulnerable population, nursing home residents, that's on the governor. When you have somebody like Fauci who's agitating for school closures, who's attacking me in Florida for having businesses open, knowing that if I followed him, we would add hundreds of thousands of people that would still be out of work today, that is on him and the destruction that's happened for people that have followed his policies.

0:28:32.8 Lisa Boothe: No, he's the worst. Would you ever run for president? Would you ever wanna be president?

0:28:36.7 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I've never been asked that question before. It's funny... [laughter]

0:28:39.7 Lisa Boothe: I'm very creative. [laughter]

0:28:44.4 Gov. Ron DeSantis: No, so the interesting thing is, is I'm running for '22, so you'll be a Florida voter this time...

0:28:49.6 Lisa Boothe: You only have one more term.

0:28:50.3 Gov. Ron DeSantis: No, no, obviously, I'm one... It's my last election for that...

0:28:51.0 Lisa Boothe: I'm your biggest fan.

0:28:54.1 Gov. Ron DeSantis: And so we do it, but the interesting thing is, you know, people will have paraphernalia about me in the future, people always bring it up to me and stuff, but you know, I have never done anything along those lines, I've basically just done my job. And so I think what it shows is, is that people just wanna see people that are willing to lead and willing to fight for the people, knowing you're gonna face arrows, knowing you're gonna be able to have to be in the kitchen when it gets hot, but who's gonna stand there and lead us out of this morass? And so we just do what we can do to help Florida, but it really has had implications beyond the country, and really I get people that write in to Florida from other countries saying, we look to Florida as kind of the beacon. And that's not something that I've tried to do, I'm just trying to do my job here, but it has

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had a resonance and it's something quite frankly is surprising to me, because when I got elected governor, I wasn't even that well known, and then as I was governor before COVID, I was known, but I was not known the way I've become since COVID and all the other issues that we've taken on.

0:29:54.4 Lisa Boothe: Yeah, yeah, you've...

0:29:54.5 Gov. Ron DeSantis: That's a great answer to your question.

0:29:58.1 Lisa Boothe: Come on, governor, let's make... Come on, give me something.

0:30:00.8 Gov. Ron DeSantis: That was a great answer.

0:30:02.8 Lisa Boothe: You're avoiding it. Any desire at any point?

0:30:06.5 Gov. Ron DeSantis: So I've done nothing to do anything other than just do my job here. This is a good job. I think if you look at political jobs, I don't know that there'd be very many that have been better, especially at this point in time in the state's history where we're really doing things that the state has never done. There's a lot of excitement. I think that after the election, my goal would be, if we win the election really big, people like you who analyze these things are gonna say, the days of Florida being a swing state are over. Florida is a red state, and I think that's because of a lot of what we've done.

0:30:36.6 Lisa Boothe: I hope so because I moved down here, so... I'm not a Floridian, so I wanna keep living.

0:30:41.2 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, here's what I'll tell you, since COVID, we've led the nation in migration. If you look at all 49 other states and who has come from those states to Florida, each one of the 49 states has had more Republicans move to Florida than Democrats. New York, California, Illinois, you name it. The result since I've been governor, we were down 300,000 registrations to the Democrats when I got elected, now we're up 120,000 registrations, that's a 400,000 registration shift in favor of Republicans since I've been governor. At this pace, we're probably gonna be over 500,000 by the election. So that is a huge sea change. So that's telling me the people like you who came for a reason are the norm, and some of the people who would come from these blue state dumpster fires and then still vote the same way when they come here, that they are indefinitely the distinct minority, which is a good thing.

0:31:32.4 Lisa Boothe: That's a very good thing. So I wanted to ask you, how's your wife doing? I know she recently had a cancer battle, now she is cancer free. How's she doing?

0:31:40.1 Gov. Ron DeSantis: So she's doing well, so she had to go through a lot of the treatments and all that, she was declared cancer free, but they still do the radiation stuff, and so she's in the process of finishing that. So basically, at this time next week, she's gonna be done with everything. She'll still have to go in and get periodic tests and scans, but it's not an easy thing to go through, but from a prognosis perspective, I think it's gone about as well as we could have hoped, but I think one thing I would just say to women out there, having gone through this with her is, this is something that you can beat. You get that diagnosis, it changes your world. It's something that's very scary for

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a lot of women, of course, but just know that they do very well with this, and it's not gonna be easy to go through, but you're gonna get through it, and I think my wife has really been an inspiration for a lot of people in the state. The hospitals we'll go to, will say some of the ladies that have come in since she went public with it have said, You know, the first lady's got it, she's battling it, I gotta battle it too. And so I'm proud of her for the way she's handled it. It's a private matter, but at the same time, she thought that she could help publicly to talk about her situation, and I think it's had a very positive impact throughout the State.

0:32:51.1 Lisa Boothe: 100%, I've had the pleasure of meeting her, she's just an incredibly kind and lovely woman, which is obviously why you married her. So I heard that she is actually your closest political advisor. Is that true?

0:33:02.5 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, here's the thing, she's got a very good nose for BS, and she's kind of like middle America type of voter that we need. She's conservative, of course, but she really sees through a lot of the BS, and so there'll be times when she'll... Something will happen, she'll like, You gotta be kidding me that they're doing this, and she go, good. But I think people say that because I'm not a consultant-driven Governor, I'm a principal-driven Governor, conviction-driven. That's what's driving me. I'm not calling political consultants, saying, Hey, what do I need to do? What do I need to do? How do I need to handle this? I just handle it and I do what I need to do. And so, but she is a great kind of sounding board for what happens. It's funny, because there'll be times when we go out there, if we really do some good zingers, I'll walk home and she'll give me a high five, but she gets fired up at some of the stuff, 'cause she believes in... A lot of the stuff that we're doing, she really believes in, and the Disney stuff really, she's a huge, huge Disney fan her whole life, and then to see kinda them do all this, you know, it's like, it stinks, but I know that's probably true for a lot of families throughout the country, having to see this and just wondering, what happened there?

0:34:14.3 Lisa Boothe: Well, and that's sort of like a lot of things in the country. Again, Netflix has a series called He's Expecting... We sort of live in this clown world a little bit, sometimes it's hard to imagine that these things are going on.

0:34:27.9 Gov. Ron DeSantis: The thing about it though... And I think what we've done has shown this. There's a desire for truth, people know something is off kilter, they know that they're lied to by a lot of the powers that be in the media, and in the bureaucracy and all this, they know that. And so when you come through and speak the truth, you can cut through the clutter because it is powerful when you're living in an age where so much of what's true is they try to suppress and they try to impose these fake narratives on us, and I think that's one of the reasons why we've been able to do good, just 'cause we're telling the truth and people are responding to it.

0:35:01.9 Lisa Boothe: I mean, governor, I feel like you are on the truth with Lisa Boothe, it's the reason why I named the podcast and the whole purpose of this podcast is trying to get to that truth and this insane environment we live in. One more question I wanna... I feel like conservative media should put more folk, Florida is really sort of the epicenter of the Republican Party right now, and less of an emphasis on DC or New York, Florida is where it's at.

0:35:23.8 Gov. Ron DeSantis: I think if you look at what's going on in the state, we've done more

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legislatively in Florida than almost all these other red states combined... Some of them have done well, like Tennessee, Georgia. They've done some good stuff, but we are leading on issue after issue here, which starts in Florida, usually other states will then follow the mantle, and it's not we didn't ask for that responsibility, but that's basically what's happened. And so I think this is ground zero in terms of conservative political movements, part of it was that built on... It was when COVID was here, these political groups, this is the only place they could have meetings, and so all these major groups, they're having their conferences in Florida, 2020/2021, we were happy to host those, but... Yes, I think Florida is where it's at, and a lot of people have... A lot of people in your profession have gravitated here who are involved in politics and commentary, and we're proud of that, and so we encourage more people to take an interest in what's going on in Tallahassee and throughout the state.

0:36:25.5 Lisa Boothe: I'm a Virginian by birth, which has gotten better with Youngkin but Floridian by choice, sir, I know you've got a really busy day. You've got a lot going on. Anything else you wanna leave my listeners with before we go.

0:36:35.8 Gov. Ron DeSantis: Well, look, I think we've got a lot of problems in the country, I think you look at some of these big institutions, we see with corporate America, big tech censorship, we see our bureaucracy totally out of control. Obviously, Brandon in the White House is a total disaster. It's tough to be on the side of truth right now because you got a lot of people who will come down on you, they'll attack you, you gotta face smears and flaming arrows and all this stuff, but we're really called upon right now to... Yes, stand for the right things, but show courage, show backbone and not back down from these people, if we back down, they're gonna steam-roll us. So when I look for candidates who are... Could be promising, that's one of the things I look for. Yeah, you can tell me these things, but everyone says those things, who's running as a Republican, when the clegg lights get hot, are you gonna stand strong and you're gonna fold up your tent, and we need people that will stand strong, and I think in Florida, we've been willing to stand time after time, when it gets hot, when we're facing the fire and we do not back down.

0:37:37.9 Lisa Boothe: I mean, I feel like we should end it with a Let's go Brandon.

0:37:39.6 Gov. Ron DeSantis: You know, it's funny, the media doesn't like that when you say Brandon, but what I tell them is, as long as he's treating my state the way he is, stiffing seniors of relief from disasters, not doing anything to lower gas prices, allowing all these illegals across the border, as long as he's doing that, he's Brandon to me.

0:37:58.7 Lisa Boothe: Let's go, Brandon. Governor, it's an honor. Such a fan of yours. And thank you for being such an amazing governor, and thank you for your time. It's an honor.

0:38:05.4 Gov. Ron DeSantis: And thanks for being a Floridian.

0:38:07.0 Lisa Boothe: Oh, you're welcome. Thank you.

[music]

0:38:18.3 Lisa Boothe: Hey guys, I hope you enjoyed the interview, I found it fascinating.

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Governor Ron DeSantis is brilliant. I was so impressed by him, so engaged during the interview. I hope you were too. And this Thursday, we have Steve Bannon, another amazing interview, another amazing conversation for you. I think you guys are going to love it. I wanted to thank you for listening at home, if you haven't already, please subscribe to the podcast anywhere you find your podcasts, you can subscribe. Also, I wanna thank John Cassio, producer, you're my boy blue. Thank you to everyone at home. Thanks again for listening. And tune in to the Steve Bannon interview coming up on Thursday.

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