

## Gillibrand.mp3

**Jon Favreau:** [00:00:02] On the pod today we have right here in studio Senator Kirsten Gillibrand.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:00:06] Hello.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:00:07] Presidential candidate.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:00:08] Yes.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:00:10] Thanks for coming by.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:00:11] I'm delighted to be here.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:00:12] Congrats on the announcement.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:00:14] Thank you.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:00:15] Congrats on a great first trip to Iowa.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:00:17] It was amazing I had more fun than you can possibly imagine.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:00:20] Yes. Yeah we love Iowa. So I'm always fascinated by the process of making a decision as momentous as running for president. When did you first seriously consider running and why did you ultimately decide that this particular moment in history was the right moment for you to run.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:00:43] Well I've been feeling very called at this moment to do what is necessary to right the ship.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:00:51] I really believe in right versus wrong. And up until the last election wrong was winning. And I have been feeling that I need to fight for this country, for families for children as hard as I would fight for my own children. And it's why I believe we have to fight for the causes that so many of us have been fighting for - health care is a right. Better public schools making sure people could earn their way to the middle class and live the American dream. But I think it's going to take a kind of conviction and a courage that understands we have to take on the status quo in a way that perhaps we never have because Washington's run on corruption and special interests. Every legislation gets written in the dead of night and someone's making it sure that the corporate interests and the corporate greed is constantly protected. And that's what I feel I really have to challenge because you're never going to get any of that stuff done if you're unwilling to. And so over the last couple of months I really want to spend time with my family to talk to them personally. Is this a sacrifice you're willing to make? Are we willing as a family to do everything we can to change what's happening this country and restore in my mind what's been lost. And we just need a time together to really think about it and understand I have a 10 year old Yeah. Henry's going to give a lot to this country in the next year too. Yeah he's used to mommy you know making breakfast every morning, lunch, dinner every night picking him up from school.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:02:22] How does he feel about the decision?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:02:23] Spending weekends together. I think he was a little concerned but he also feels called to this moment in a way that I-I think any parent who's listening to this will understand, President Trump's create a lot of anxiety in the world and a lot of hate and division and

I think people are feeling that this is the moment they have to do whatever it takes. And even Henry who's 10 feels no mom you might be the only one who could beat him you should do this. My 15 year old same - you know mom I think you should do it. He's terrible is you know doing all these terrible things around the country in the world and you should do this. And so I just needed time with them. So over the last few months I made the decision to actually do this. And I just feel like all of us have to just use whatever time, talent, courage passion we have to change what's happening.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:03:15] So it's shaping up to be a very crowded field.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:03:19] Mm hmm.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:03:21] There's a lot of talent there's a lot of diversity there's a lot of experience. There's also a lot of consensus around sort of a very big, bold, progressive policy agenda. What makes you different? How do you stand out in the field of Democratic candidates?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:03:40] Well we all have our own stories of course and I am a mother with young kids. And what drives me to public service is that I do want to fight for other people's kids as hard as I fight for my own. And I have been working over the last 12 years in public service to bring people together to find solutions for really hard problems. And I do that by listening to all my constituents whether they're in red parts or blue parts or purple parts of my state. I serve all of them and because I listen and then find common ground and build for their I get a lot done. I passed the 9/11 health bill twice for first responders all across this country people who ran up the towers on 9/11 when everybody else was coming down. And unfortunately because they've been breathing and all these toxins for now you know decades it... It's... It's... They're dying. And so I had to lift up their voices and carry their stories with the 9/11 responders knocking on doors with me all those senators and got it passed. I also was able to bring people together on Don't Ask Don't Tell repeal. Even Democrats at the time and advocates at the time were saying, "look you can't do this and this is not a convenient time or this is the right strategy." And I just was very clear that when is civil rights convenient? You have to fight for it for the right reasons because you have to fight for it because It's necessary. These are many women who will die for this country and they're being denied the ability to serve based on who they love. And then transparency and accountability I passed the STOCK Act telling members of Congress they can't engage in insider trading. Surprise, surprise and doing things about transparency and accountability. You know posting my schedule my way back when we had earmarks my taxes online. So I get things done and I bring people together. And last. I fight. I do not back down from a fight especially if it's the right fight for the right reasons. And it doesn't matter if it's hard. I will fight especially if it's hard and I've shown that I could do that by taking on the generals in the Pentagon over sexual harassment in the military... Being willing to take on special interests on on all hosts of ideas and making sure that we do the right thing even when it's hard and especially when it's hard.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:05:53] So one of the most difficult decisions that a president makes is how to prioritize keeping all the different campaign promises.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:06:00] Right.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:06:00] Right. So you remember this, Obama comes into office and spends much of the first two years so from trying to fix the financial crisis passing the Affordable Care Act and that meant that some big ticket priorities like immigration reform voting rights reform sort of, took a, took a back seat. You've proposed quite a few very big bold progressive policies - Medicare for all, universal paid family leave, publicly funded elections, a federal job guarantee. Which of those do you tackle first as president?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:06:34] Well the thing that I hear most about to be perfectly honest no matter where I've traveled over the last year for the candidates because I was working really hard to flip the house of course and hold our Senate seats and the victories in Nevada and Arizona are amazing. I talk to voters everywhere and the number one thing still on their minds is health care. And I can't explain to you why - how important this is because if you don't have access to health care you can't afford it or because you're being denied because of an insurer you might not think you'll survive to be able to provide for your kids. You might think my child has a pre-existing condition and he'll die if I can't get the treatment or the medicine that he needs so this is an issue of life or death. So I would really like to bring people together and focus on health care is a right not a privilege. I think Medicare for all is the right solution. I campaigned on Medicare for All in 2006 in my two-to-one Republican district and I made it really simple for folks back then they just said, "Our insurers charge us too much money, co-pays are too high, deductibles are too high. It keeps going up." I said, "Well how would you feel if you could just buy into Medicare at a percentage of your income something like 5 percent? Would that be something you're interested in?" And they said, "Of course!" Because they knew no one creates competition because you're having a not-for-profit public option that will drive competition with the for profit insurers. And number two, they knew Medicare's good. It covers most things - the things they want. And even after this last presidential election I would talk to voters in upstate New York and the thing I'd hear is "I'm angry that my my neighbor and five thousand dollars less than me and he gets access to Medicaid and I don't and it's unfair." So, folks want access to basic health care. So I would really focus on that. I would focus on education making sure our public schools aren't crumbling and people actually have a chance to get a good education and have a hope for a future. And I would focus on the economy, particularly jobs, making sure we can get anyone who wants to work full-time, who wants to work hard, the training they need to get a job and get this country to full employment. Those are the kinds of commonsense things I think you can bring people together on those issues. So they feel like this is certainly about them and their community no matter where they live.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:08:40] So it's interesting, in your reference to your 2006 campaign and you were for Medicare buy in there and Medicare is a public option that was, let you buy into Medicare. You've recently signed on to Bernie Sanders Medicare for All bill which is much more sweeping right sort of transition out of private insurance altogether. What made you decide that, that, Bernie's Bill was a better bet than just a Medicare buy in? Which some other senators are offering as well.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:09:08] So the part of the Senator Sanders bill that I got to write was the transition which is the part that I think is really important for people to understand. It's a four year transition where anybody can buy in at 4 percent of their income to create competition in the market and let people begin to choose what works for you. I promise you, if you've a choice of paying your insurers endless amounts of money and not great coverage and actually buy into Medicare people are going to choose that because it is affordable medicine, affordable health care, quality service, and I want people to look at this as something that is theirs that, they, like an earned benefit because what we have is Social Security it's really clear. You buy in across your lifetime at 6 percent of your income up to a certain amount, I would blow that cap by the way as a way to have more people invest into our social safety net through all incomes, And then let people buy at 4 percent. So, if you bought it at 4 percent and for your earned benefit of health care people can understand that if you're you're committing 10 percent of your income overall to make sure that you have access to health care as a right not a privilege, to make sure that you will not die in poverty, that you'll have a safety net when you're a senior. I think that's the kind of thing that makes sense to people. So that's the part of the bill I wrote that I really like and that's how you get to single payer. That's how you get to true Medicare for all because you're letting people participate in a way that makes sense to them.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:10:31] Are you worried at all that even with the transition period you know

there's going to be people who say... Because we know there's a lot of people in this country who like the insurance they have, they like getting their employer sponsored insurance.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:10:41] I think you've got to try. You know it's the only way we're going to get there because if you just keep fixing the current system the current system's built on for-profit insurance industry like it's built on a for-profit industry that has obligations to their shareholders and they pay their CEOs millions of dollars. So if you're putting all that fat into another industry it's not going directly to the doctors and the nurses and the hospitals that are doing the work. And so I want our money, my money, your money, to go for the things we want to buy which is better health care. And so I don't want my money to go to an insurance company. They don't, you don't need to have insurance to have health care in this country. Let's just buy into health care. So it's an unnecessary layer of fat that I would like to remove and that's why if you explain to the American people this is going to be your earned benefit - benefit the same way that Social Security is. I think they're going to vote for it. I think they're actually going to say this is something. And again when I ran in 2006 and a two-to-one Republican district this was my solution for health care. People liked it. They felt comfortable with it and they voted for me for those reasons.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:11:48] No, I've talked to Obama-Trump voters who look like "I love Medicare for all" and you're like you voted for Donald Trump?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:11:55] Well he ran on, if you remember, "We need universal health care that's cheaper and better." Well that's Medicare for all.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:12:00] Didn't really happen.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:12:00] And it's not going to happen because he didn't mean it. He never meant it.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:12:04] Do you support a Green New Deal?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:12:06] I do. I think they're, the, platform. It's...there's not a lot of new details yet behind the Green New Deal. But the platform of it is really exciting because it recognizes and in the way I see a green economy is this I think we need a moonshot. We need to tell the American people we are going to have a green economy in the next 10 years not, because it's easy but, because it's hard. Because it's a measure of our innovation and effectiveness. Like that JFK moment where he says "This is what we're gonna do in 10 years not because it's easy but because it is hard." And I think if you lay out a large agenda that really transforms the economy in a lot of places and I'll explain the places where I've been working for a long time which are very much part of that platform. So, the simple thing. Jobs. We, you can create more economic growth if you invest in entrepreneurialism innovation. If you actually invest in wind turbines, in solar panels, in geothermal, in hydro power, in biofuels. If you use our ability to innovate and invent you will solve the problem of moving into a green energy economy. And by doing that you're going to create a lot of jobs. You also can use the investment of investing in efficiencies. So there's a school in upstate New York where they teach green energy and it's what they do. And so the kids learn how to build a home that's LEED certified. They learn how to install solar panels, and wind, and wind turbines and they learned how to do energy efficient appliances everything. And what I was told when I toured that school they said 98 percent of our graduating seniors have three or more job offers before graduation. Well now that's a true statistic. That's pretty amazing. But that's what, that's what the green economy can look like. You're just actually creating the vision for how to create a faster growing economy. And we've made a mistake in the last 10 years because you know Congress always, hems and haws, and doesn't provide these tax benefits for innovation. We've let the tax credits lapse and expire. And so industries that would normally be investing over and over again

chose not to. And you know what happened? All that innovation all that manufacturing went to China. So now China is in a better position to innovate than America is because they took on the goal of making green energy a real part of their economy. So make it a real part of the economy. Let me just add two more things.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:14:26] Yeah, no, no go ahead.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:14:27] Your platform is so big. There's a lot of stuff I've been working on for a long time.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:14:29] And it's very complicated.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:14:30] So the other part of the platform, that I've been working on for the last 10 years is clean air, clean water because clean air and clean water should be a right and not a privilege. It should be a right for every community. And so... You take any part of this country. They have brownfield sites they have dirty water from eras of pollution by different manufacturers. New York State with the largest Superfund site called the Hudson River because of PCB's. The county I live in Rensselaer County has been polluted by companies that have been manufacturing with plastics. And so now we have PFOA in our water. So, you need to focus on clean air and clean water as a major goal for addressing global climate change and for addressing a green economy. Because if you don't have it the communities can't thrive or survive. It's really important. I think you should put a price on carbon if you really want to attack global climate change effectively. You should put a price on carbon because what you're doing is you're incentivizing good behavior you're saying "If you want to be a polluter - fair enough, but you're going to pay a lot more because you're harming the rest of us and we're going to have to pay all those hospital bills." That's going to come to the taxpayer eventually. So you don't get the benefit of being a big polluter unless you're gonna pay for it. But if you're going to be the inventor and the innovator who's going to create the new energy efficient processes you get the benefit. And so I love putting a price on carbon as well.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:15:59] Do you worry that you know some folks on the left who said that a carbon tax is regressive? Obviously Macron had some problems with that in France to say the least. There was you know a referendum in Washington State that Jay Inslee tried that a carbon tax didn't pass. Obviously I think everyone agrees like on the polluter - the polluter should pay. But sometimes goes down to-

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:16:19] No, No, it doesn't have to be regressive. That's a different tax that's like putting a price on gasoline. That's a different approach. Putting a price on carbon is much more about incentivizing good behavior and disincentives bad behavior.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:16:35] Right, It's all how you structure it, right?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:16:35] It's a market. Yes, It's a market. And it works, it's worked in other places. There's been places where it didn't work because of fraud and corruption. But it is it is using market dynamics to help you. So I think it's a good thing that we should be talking about as well. And I just believe that global climate change is one of the greatest threats to humanity. It is a life or death threat that we have to face right now. And it's been a life or death threat for a long time across this country. I mean we lost so many lives during superstorm Sandy and tropical storm Lee - Irene and Lee. It really, I mean, I met parents who lost their babies because when a mom got out of a car to get her kids to safety the water swelled to 10 feet and literally took them out of her arms. People die... And you cannot turn a blind eye. And anybody who does. I don't think should be in public service because it's not they're not making the differences that need to be made.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:17:29] Do you think that a federal job guarantee should be part of a Green New Deal? It's in some of the drafts of the plan. I know you've been for a federal job guarantee separately.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:17:38] So I believe in full employment and I think you should get to a full employment. And the way you do that. In my mind, is you make sure that anybody who wants to be working full time can get whatever job training it takes to get a full time job. And we've been doing that in New York and a couple places effectively and the way I think you could do it is you partner with community colleges and the state schools and the apprenticeship programs and the not-for-profits that do this today. Do the really good hands on job training to get the skills you need for the job that is available. In upstate New York. One of our local manufacturers bombarded a needed advanced welders and so they said "We couldn't find any being 500 mile radius of our manufacturing plant." So they went to the community college and said "Will you offer this coursework? We'll hire every-one it's a \$70,000 are your job." Sure enough it works perfectly. So now they have all the welders they need. A great not for profit I just toured in the Bronx called Per Scholas and it's a not-for-profit, it's fully funded. It's free training for anybody who wants to learn something in cyber or in computer technology. So they've taught young adults how to code, how to build computers, how to fix computers, how to do cybersecurity. And they've already paired 800 students directly into the employment market by giving the right job training for the jobs that are available. So, my vision for full employment is making job training really accessible and funding that because that's what our community colleges and state schools and these not for profits do so well. They're already doing it. So amplify their work investing in that directly. So you know if you're underemployed or unemployed and you want... You want a better job or higher wages you have someplace you can go and know that there's a path for you.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:19:25] But should government be an employer of last resort?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:19:28] Sure can be, particularly public service. And that's another idea I have. So I believe that public service is life changing for people. I believe that if you give someone a chance to put others before themselves it changes their hearts. It changes who they are. Changes what they care about and I think you've you told every young person in America if you do a year of public service we're going to give you two years of community college free. And if you do two years of public service we'll give you four years free for a community college your state schools or any not-for-profit training program. And so I would combine that so with your full employment goal so that young people can also get good training. And then encouraging them in those public service jobs, you know to go into health care for a year. We just have candy stripers in upstate New York. I don't know if you ever had them where you are but you could go work in a hospital just as an intern to help you could create a not-for-profit training for people in health care. Because our baby boomers are retiring. We're going to have an onslaught of Alzheimer's like you've never seen before. We don't have enough home health aides to meet that need. And so really giving young people go into health care go into first responders. You know if you want to be a firefighter, police officer, military, education amplify what we're already doing in Teach for America extend that. One of the things that Ted Kennedy did right when I was first part of the Senate was trying to create more slots for public service. I was very excited about that bill. I think it was still only maybe 50,000. But imagine if any kid could say I'm going to dedicate at least a year or two of my life to public service before they decide what they want to be. You know I think you would change everything. I'd combine those things together to get to full employment.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:21:13] So at best, you as president would have a Democratic majority in the House and a narrow Senate majority certainly not 60 votes, right? After this election. So there are no Senate Republicans in favor of Medicare for all. Probably very few in favor of a big program like the Green New Deal or something like that. As president would you push, hopefully Majority

Leader Chuck Schumer, to get rid of the filibuster so you can pass something like Medicare for all or a Green New Deal?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:21:45] Well the filibuster is mostly gone now so it barely exists. No I think.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:21:52] Well yeah that's why I'm sort of thinking like-.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:21:54] It barely exists. It barely exists for pretty much a 51 vote threshold now for everything. The only part we had left in place was for Supreme Court justices. And Mitch just took that away. So I think it's useful to bring people together and I don't mind that you have to get 60 votes for cloture because you're trying to get people to a point where, and that's a - that's a term of art for your listeners, it just means that you're done with debate. And so you will urge people to have at least 60 votes to say we're done with debate. That's not an unreasonable goal because if people don't feel like you're done with debate and that they haven't been heard enough maybe you should debate a little more. And I think government only works when people who care deeply stand up and fight for what they believe in and, and know how important their voices are. And so if you are now able to get 60 votes on something it just means you haven't worked hard enough, talking to enough people and trying to listen to their concerns and then coming up with the solution that they can support. So I'm not afraid of it one way or the other.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:23:01] But you'd be open - you'd be open to getting rid of it for something big like Medicare for all?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:23:04] I don't think we should have gotten rid of it for the Supreme Court justices because they're lifetime appointments. And I do think you should be able to earn at least 60 votes. Yeah but you know I'll think about it. I you know I can I believe I can work well under either system because if you don't have 60 votes yet it just means you haven't done enough advocacy and you need to work a lot harder.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:23:22] OK. So another potential impediment to your agenda would be a fairly conservative fairly partisan Supreme Court. Some folks on the left are saying you know what? After what McConnell did to Garland after ramming through Kavanaugh who was openly partisan at his hearings the next Democratic president needs to consider reforming the Supreme Court potentially adding seats potentially instituting term limits. What do you think of those ideas? Either of those appealing to you?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:23:51] Well they're interesting ideas that I would need to think more about. But I do think what President Trump has done with the judiciary is, is shocking and is so destructive. I thought both Kavanaugh and Gorsuch were... Disqualified in my mind because of their records because of their previous statements because their belief that money is speech and that corporations have same free speech rights as you and I think that's outrageous. I think we need to get money out of politics. I think that the special interests, the moneyed interests, the the levers of power that exist in Washington are so powerful they don't need more power. They need far less and we need to restore direct democracy. We need to actually put the power of this country back in the hands of the people. And so you need to undermine those special interests and these two justices they just want to glorify those special interests.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:24:46] Do you think the Supreme Court needs reform? Do you think it's broken?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:24:49] It does. Well I can give you one example that I desperately believe. The fact that a Supreme Court justice can be wined and dined by special interests have no junkets

paid for where they can be lobbied incessantly by special interests by the wealthy special interests. I think we have to make that illegal. I think it is absolutely essential that we take away the ability for them to be wined and dined. We need transparency and accountability. It's something I've been working on since I was first elected in 2006. We need to make sure that the public knows what's happening and how it's happening. And I don't think we should have a system where legislation is written in the dead of night by the most powerful people in the land. We really have to restore that to the people so I'd be very interested in looking at a very significant transparency agenda for the Supreme Court because I do not think they are held accountable and I think you know way back when we used to say oh they're above the partisanship. Well I have not believed that since Bush v. Gore when I saw extreme partisanship come out of our justices and certainly with Judge Kavanaugh or now Justice Kavanaugh in the way he spoke in his last hearing creating a screed saying "This was some conspiracy of the Clintons and a screed against Democrats" and it was so inappropriate for a justice of the Supreme Court that I do believe we need a full transparency agenda put in place for them because they are no longer public servants in the way that we have always imagined them to be.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:26:22] Let's talk about immigration, which is seemingly Trump's only political issue and one that where you're thinking has evolved over the years.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:26:29] But I will just say one thing. That stuff that I just talked about here is why we're not taking corporate PAC money is my campaign. It's also why we're not taking federal lobbyist money. It's also why I don't think individuals should have super PACs because if you have to start somewhere and if you are unwilling to take on the special interests in a way that shows I value your voice as an individual more than a corporate interest or a billionaire's interest or people who can manipulate politics with their money you will never get to health care is a right not a privilege because you can't. Then you need to take on the insurance companies the drug manufacturers. You will never get to any of the issues. You will never end gun violence if you won't take on the NRA. So, this is the stuff that's necessary in this moment we're in. You really need a direct democracy and you need to restore that power back to the hands of the people not the, not the powerful interests that just control everything.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:27:24] Yes, so on immigration you're in favor of a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. You've talked about splitting ICE Immigrations and Customs Enforcement into two agencies one that handles crime and terrorism one that handles immigration. What would enforcement look like under a Gillibrand presidency? What would you do about immigrants who come across the border or overstay their visas?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:27:48] Right. So let me answer the first part of your question first and the second part second. So Democrats believe in border security. Democrats believe in national security and the initial mission of ICE was to do anti-terrorism. That was, it was founded in 2003 to do anti-terrorism. So we need to fund anti-terrorism. And unfortunately under this president he's taken a lot of the money that would normally go for anti-human trafficking, anti-drug trafficking, anti-gun trafficking and to end... Cross-border terrorism and taking all that to put moms and babies in for-profit prisons and pay for those for-profit prisons. So it gets me so angry.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:28:26] Yeah it's bad, it's bad.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:28:28] So I believe that we should be funding the anti-terrorism work keeping our country safe making sure people know that law enforcement have the tools they need and the support they need to do hard work of arresting criminals and finding terrorists and arresting terrorists. That has to continue. Immigration in our country has always been a strength. We thrive on our diversity. Our diversity has always been a strength. It helps to increase the economy it helps



to create entrepreneurialism and innovation. It's the American story. The Statue of Liberty stands in New York Harbor with a beacon of light and hope saying to the world come we will help you. You know for anyone the huddled masses yearning to breathe free. We are here that beacon of light. We've never been afraid of refugees. We've never been afraid of immigration. We've always seen it as something that is part of our story. And so we need to build that. And it should be under the Department of Justice. It should be part of a humanitarian issue certainly for asylum seekers. And as a humanitarian issues and immigration is an issue of families making sure families who desperately want to be reunited can be reunited and those communities can be strong and economic and making sure that we ultimately rightsize immigration. And so that's why you need a comprehensive immigration approach. And you're going to do all of it so you're not going to sacrifice national security and anti-terrorism work. There needs to be fully funded as part of Homeland Security. But immigration is about so much more. It's not a criminal issue it's not a national security issue. It's about who we are as a nation and what makes us strong. And immigration is going to be part of that. And so you've got to make it work. You have to have a pathway to citizenship for the 11 or 12 million folks that are here. You have to let people who are here start buying into Social Security and buying into, paying their taxes and making sure they're investing in our schools. So you have to create a pathway for that to happen. And then you have to look at asylum very differently because we have a lot of reasons why asylum seekers are coming here. You've got things happening in South America and Central America that frankly we're turning a blind eye to that we should be actually addressing working with the international community with political solutions and diplomatic solutions to try to end the gun violence gang violence and terrorism that's happening these communities that are making mothers send their young boys to travel by themselves to America. So they just don't get recruited into a gang. Think about the problem that these people were facing. How many women are, are seeking refuge because of gang violence and rape and and being treated so horribly that they can't survive. So if you don't start with the human story about what's actually happening in these families you're not going to create the right solution. I promise you. Locking them up in a for-profit prison or sticking lots of young boys in a Wal-Mart with no windows is not the solution to the horror their lives are facing or our immigration challenges. And so I would do comprehensive and I would try to solve each problem based on what is the actual problem and and get at it from the root.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:31:36] I guess yeah I guess my question is. So, say say we do comprehensive right? And we provide a path to citizenship, citizenship for all the undocumented immigrants who are here. And then we know Democrats beef up border security. Not like I went out with the wall but maybe the border security we have. You're still gonna have people who come across the border you're still going to have after that people that overstay-

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:31:54] But you can still deal with them humanely.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:31:56] You have, we have visa overstays which happens all the time. And those folks are coming from countries that we have visas with. These are people we have coming as as tourist visas. So I think you just have to have a more humane system created so people know there's a real process so they don't feel like they have to go around the law because the law is fair and just make it feel like they can work with the law and that is possible we've done that for many decades in this country had a proper immigration process that worked for people it's when it when it's what it lacks compassion and when it lacks empathy and when it lacks justice that people feel they can't trust the system. So let's build a system that they can trust and do it in the way that's healthy for our economy our country our families and our communities with the recognition that this only makes us stronger.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:32:43] So you've spent your career as a senator working to reduce sexual assault in the workplace,, in the military in Congress. You've been called the political face of the "Me Too"

movement. You tweeted about how the future is female and intersectional. I saw that tweet. I thought that is a brave thing to tweet just from a political perspective. Someone's going to run for president saying that I could also hear some you know cynical D.C. consultant. Probably a guy in my head saying "Ok that's a great thing to tweet for a presidential primary Democratic primary." How do you how do you deliver that message? Can you deliver that message in some of these redder states the Trump won that we know we need to win back?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:33:24] I definitely can and I have been because in my state most people look at New York and say "oh it's a blue state and New York City." But what they don't realize is upstate New York is a lot of, of red. It's a lot of, it's a rural area. There's a lot of agriculture. There's a lot of manufacturing. There is a lot of the rural challenges we have in other parts of the country. The manufacturing tradition is a lot like Michigan, it's a lot like Ohio, it's a lot like Wisconsin. Agriculture is a lot like Wisconsin and Michigan too. So there's just a lot of similarities with the rest of the country. Our suburbs in Westchester and in Long Island are purple. There's lot of those, you know, white middle class moms who didn't vote with Democrats last time they are in my state. And I do well with all of them talking about what I believe in and not everybody necessarily knows what the tweet meant but I certainly can explain it to them.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:34:16] How would you, how would you explain it to people who don't know?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:34:17] When you say the future is female. I'm not saying the futures only female. I'm saying please include the ladies in the future because we have a lot to offer which is why I created "off the sidelines" it was a political action committee I created seven years ago - a call to action asking America's women to vote to become advocates, to participate, to run, to find a woman candidate to support because we want 51 percent of women the table. Why would you exclude half of our U.S. population from the decision making table? And that that's going to resonate in any community because they know that their mom or their sister or their aunt or their daughter have important things to say that they listen to in their own families. And so when you elevate men and women at the same table you're going to have a diversity of opinion about what are the biggest problems but also what are the best solutions and the diversity of that really works. I'll give you one example. So when I first got elected in 2006 I was put on the Armed Services Committee and I'm sitting next to Gabby Giffords and a bunch of new freshmen women and we were having a hearing on military readiness and you know a lot of the men were talking about equipment they wanted to know how many guns how many ships how many aircraft it was all about you know the the the function of military readiness from, an equipment perspective, you know from what are we gonna buy and what we gonna build? But the women just instinctively were looking at other data and saying well why is the divorce rate as high as it is right now? Why is the suicide rate as high as it is? Domestic violence rate as high as it is? And we realize that military readiness also has to do with the troops and, and the service members to to say each one of these service members they're being pulled to the thinnest they're not having rotations at home their deployment times are longer than they've been in other conflicts. And there's no rest time and no dwell time and they're struggling. And so the military readiness that we're talking about is both equipment and personnel. And so for that for America that was a better answer for them because the combination of our voices was strong. And so what I see the future is female I'm talking about the fact that 120 women just ran for Congress and won. And what allowed them to win was all these women who came out and were activists and voted. And have been marching since President Trump got elected to say we do agree with you. We don't agree with your vision for this country we don't agree with how you talk about people. We don't agree with the hatred and we see a different future. And so it's a call to action saying we want to all be part of this discussion. And so-

**Jon Favreau:** [00:36:39] What about intersectionality?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:36:41] Let me finish and I'll go to intersectionality, it's a longer question so. So I've been talking about this for seven years in New York state about why I want more women's voices at the table. I have the highest vote margin in the history of the state is 72 percent vote margin. And the reason why the highest vote margin in the history of state against anyone who's ever run statewide including the presidential is outperforming President Obama, outperforming Secretary Clinton because when I'm talking to folks in red and purple places I have time to tell them what I'm for and why. They can see my heart and they understand it. And they also know how important women leadership is. So that's all it takes. You just have to talk to people about their lives and what they care about and tell them why you care and why you want more women, more female leadership. So I've never had that and I talk about all the time and people are ok with that and they know when I'm trying to get rid of sexual harassment, sexual assault on a college campus or in the military or in Congress itself I bring people together on those issues. My co-sponsor in working on sexual harassment in Congress was Ted Cruz. My co-sponsor ending sexual harassment or sexual assault in the military was Rand Paul and Ted Cruz. Marco Rubio worked with me on sexual assault on college campuses. So you can cross party lines you can talk to people from red and purple places if you just care about. If you talk about what you care about and why and I've done it. So I know that I can talk to people in all parts of the country about what they care about because I listen first, I find where the common ground is, and then I build from there and that's how I bring people together. That's how I pass laws it's how I get things done. And it's how New Yorkers see me. So I'd like to introduce that to everyone. So intersectionality what that means to me is that if you are discriminated against in more than one way it's intersectional. And for example if you are a woman you're going to be discriminated against because of gender bias and sexism. If you're a black woman you might be discriminated against because of racism and the burden on that black woman is so much harder because she has to deal with racism and sexism at the very same time. And if you explain that to someone who might not know what that word means they're going to say "That's right. That that is right." And then you give them a few facts like well you know if you're a black woman in New York City and you went to go have a baby you are 12 times more likely to die in childbirth because of institutional racism. If you explain to someone law enforcement really isn't that fair. And if you are black or brown man in my in my city of New York City and in the country you are 10 times more likely to be arrested than a white man in New York City and four times more likely then rest the country for marijuana possession. So that's why I'm for decriminalization because how it is, how people are treated is unacceptable. It isn't. And when someone's been arrested and put in jail for possession of marijuana you know how their lives change? They might have missed work that day. They might be fired. They might have just lost the one job it took them a really long time to get if their mom lives in one of the housing authorities in New York City and they wish... Well they want to go visit her on Thanksgiving. They can't. If that somehow gets in their record and they go for a job interview and this employer says "have ever been arrested?" And he has to say "Well yeah when I was 18 I-" the job interviews over. And so criminal justice has to be important. And in the economy. Like you'll see one of the issues you guys have talked about is postal banking. 30% of our country doesn't have access to a savings account. Do you know what? It's very expensive to be poor in this country. It means that you have to wire some money to your your mother who is in Puerto Rico, they're gonna charge you maybe 20 percent of what you just sent her or if you want to buy a couch for your house well your only option is layaway and the predatory lending aspect of that you're going to pay \$500 dollars for a couch that was \$200 because you had to, you couldn't pay it all in one go. So I think as a white woman it is my responsibility to take on these, these issues of institutional racism as if they were my own because that's my job and it is not, should not be left as a burden for black and brown people to fight these, their own on their own. It should be me who can lift up their voices can can make sure their voices are heard. And so that we could end it. And so those are my responsibilities as a woman who seeks to serve. So and so I will talk about that in red, purple, and blue places and I promise you if I told any mom in America that if you're a black lady and you go, to get, to have a baby you're going to more likely die they're going to be as mad as I am because it's not OK. It's not, it's not OK. So you

just have to take time.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:41:15] Well, Well somewhat related to that. I mean you know, you've talked about, last question, you talked about working with Republicans and you obviously have this record in the Senate where you were able to reach out to the other side and get stuff done. You talked about bringing people together. You know there's some people on the left who often say like it's naive to think we're going to go after those Trump voters. It's a waste of our time and energy. We should be only going after nonvoters because you know these Trump voters even if, even if they themselves aren't racist they have supported this man that you know you yourself have called a racist a misogynist. Are they wrong or are those Democrats wrong?

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:41:52] Yes I do. I think you should ask everyone for their vote. And I think you should ask Americans to put this country first and our values first. We despite all our flaws have always believed in a more perfect union. We have fought as a nation to end discrimination over and over again whether you're trying to abolish slavery or fighting for suffrage or fighting for basic civil rights for black Americans or fighting for LGBTQ equality or clean air and clean water so that if you're poor you're not being poisoned to death. These are issues that we have chosen as a country to bring people together towards a more perfect union despite all our flaws and we do it because we believe that we should care about one another. This country believes in the golden rule that we should treat others the way we want to be treated. We should protect and fight for the least among us. We have to remind America that's who we are. We have to heal this division and this hatred in this darkness that President Trump has created. I believe that only light can defeat darkness. We just had MLK Day. We're reminded of his amazing statements and amazing preaching and everything he's ever said. We celebrate his legacy once a year for that reason. And he's not wrong. So only light can drive out darkness. And that is what I'm called to do to be able to bring and fight for what's right what's good against what's bad and what's harmful in all forms. And so I want to inspire all voters and not enough. Last election we lost for a lot of reasons. But you need to inspire all voters need to inspire folks in red places, blue places, and purple places. And you're only going to do that if your vision actually reaches the people who you intend to serve. And you should intend to serve everyone and you'll bring them with you. It doesn't mean you're going to, I don't think triangulating and running as a conservative is the way to go. Run as the person you are. Run on the values that you want. You will bring people along. When I started running my two-to-one Republican district in upstate I ran on getting out of Iraq which would have been perceived by some as a very liberal issue. But I explained to folks listen we need to defeat terrorism and we are not going to do that effectively with troops in Iraq if the Iraqis themselves won't put more push out terrorists. We will, there is not enough military might in the world to defeat terrorism in a country that won't fight for it for themselves. I said we should redeploy out, we should invest in other anti-terrorism methods. But being in Iraq is the wrong way to keep us safe. By Election Day from 30 percent it went to 70 percent were for getting out of Iraq. So I would just urge Democrats speak your truth, speak your values, be for what you're for. If everyone doesn't agree with you on day one you can bring them along. We don't have to accept the racism and division and the hatred that President Trump has created. I believe you can call on people to be better than that to, to actually care about one another and speak to their better angels not their worst demons.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:44:47] KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND Thank you so much for joining us.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:44:49] Thank you.

**Jon Favreau:** [00:44:49] And come back again and good luck on the campaign.

**Kirsten Gillibrand:** [00:44:52] Thank you.