

Governor Christie On The Opioid Crisis: We Have Got To Stop This Pain

Thursday, May 25, 2017

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Transcript:

Governor Christie: I met with a group in New Jersey called City of Angels in Hamilton New Jersey, outside Trenton. They are a group of parents who lost their children to drug overdose. I don't think I've been in a room in my life with more pain, with more palpable pain and guilt and anger and a feeling of loss. And for each and every one of those parents, they believe if they had only done more that their child would still be alive. In their building, they have an entire wall of their pictures of their children who have died. And before I left that day after spending about two hours with them, they said to me, I was getting ready because I was already like 45 minutes late for my next meeting but I couldn't leave. I had to listen to every one of those stories. They needed to have me hear them and I needed to hear them to provide the leadership I need to provide in meaningful way for this challenge. So I finally said, I really have to go. So I need to go now and I got up and they said, don't leave yet. On your way out please look at every one of those pictures. And one of the fathers grabbed me by the arm as I went over to that wall and he grabbed me and he said, Governor, you have to look at this picture. And he showed me the picture of his son. And he said to me, you have to understand, this was my son. And he started to cry and he said to me, I don't know how this happened. We got to stop this pain, everybody. We know in our hearts, everyone in this room who's a parent, we know in our hearts that there is nothing more unthinkable in our lives than burying one of our children. Unthinkable. It's happening every day, every day. And some of these parents are so ashamed that they won't even put the cause of death in the obituary. Read, go to the newspapers you have every day and see if I'm not right, read the obituaries of the people under 30 and see if you can find a cause of death. I guarantee you in 75 percent of them you can't and when you don't, be willing to bet why. This task that the President has asked me to undertake is about America's families. Some people want to make it about crime, yeah it's about crime. Some people want to make it about our educational system that isn't up to where it needs to be, it's something about that too. But in the end at the bottom when the funerals happen

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they're not talking about crime, and they're not talking about a lack of education. They're talking about how they failed their children and then weeks later they get to how we failed them. And so that's unacceptable, it's unacceptable to me.

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