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Gov. Christie On Prisoner Re-Entry Programs: We Are Being Asked To Give People Another Chance

Friday, April 29, 2016

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Gov. Christie On Prisoner Re-Entry Programs: We Are Being Aske...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QyrZTX7bnNA>

Transcript:

Governor Christie: Stronger families populated by better mothers and fathers, better sons and daughters, better sisters and brothers, better husbands and wives, help to make our society a stronger and better place. That is something government can help to do but only these gentlemen behind me can complete the job. We can give them the tools to start, but in the end government cannot build strong families. It is the men and women who populate those families that will determine whether those families are strong and vital and productive and nurturing and create a next generation of children of New Jersey, better than the generation that we have today. They are going to determine that, not me. And so these programs are about building a better, safer, happier, society. In closing, I will just tell you this: I try to remind people all the time and I did this when I was traveling around the country as well, that lots of people talk about what makes our country an extraordinary place and a different place, I always go back to the Declaration of Independence, the forming document philosophically for America. And they say our inalienable rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. There is no other country in the history of the world who made one of its three founding principles the pursuit of happiness. Many have said that life is precious and many have said that liberty is God given, many societies have said that. We are unique in the world, that Americans from the very beginning, in 1776 in Philadelphia said that the pursuit of happiness, not defining what that is, but that the pursuit of it is an inalienable right of anyone who lives in this nation. That makes us very special and very different. And happiness cannot be accomplished living in a jail cell. Happiness cannot be accomplished when your life has no hope. And so I believe that what we are doing through these re-entry programs is fulfilling the mission that Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin

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Franklin and John Adams, the authors of the Declaration of Independence, laid out for us as a challenge in July of 1776 and they were willing to put their lives on the line to achieve it. We are not being asked to put our lives on the line to achieve it. We are just being asked to care about each other and to give people another chance. That is amongst both the greatest challenges and the greatest opportunities that I have as Governor. And I am going to continue to work at this to make sure that I do my small part to fulfill the challenge that Jefferson and Franklin and Adams laid before me as being fortunate enough to be an American citizen. And I hope that all of you feel the same way.

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