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Transcript: Chat with State Rep. John Loughlin

1:14 PM Fri, Apr 09, 2010 | [Permalink](#)

[Pamela Reinsel Cotter Email](#)

State Rep. [John J. Loughlin II](#), a candidate for the 1st Congressional District and a Tiverton Republican, chatted live on [projo.com](#) readers Friday at noon.

The following is a full transcript of that chat:

John Loughlin: Good afternoon! Thanks so much for joining me. I am really excited about this race and the opportunity to chart a new course for Rhode Island and for our country. This Congress has taken our country down the wrong path - from bank bailouts to health care reform that we can't afford, we're spending and taxing far too much. We need to create jobs and grow our economy by giving businesses incentives to expand rather than saddling them with mandates. My number one priority is to get Rhode Island back to work and my experience in the military, in the legislature and as a small businessman makes me the best candidate for the job. It's been a privilege to serve our state and our country and I respectfully ask for your vote in November so that I can serve as your Representative in Congress.



ES from NP: Rep. Loughlin, the President's so-called Stimulus Package has had seemingly little effect on our economy, or at least people's perception of the economy. If elected to Congress, what would you do to improve our nation's and our state's economic climate?

John Loughlin: Thanks for your question ES. We need to cut spending and lower taxes so that our private sector businesses can thrive and grow our economy. In Rhode Island companies are leaving and not coming back -- we need to reverse this trend.

Hope: Do you think a Republican can ever truly represent the people of Rhode Island in Congress when the state is so overwhelmingly Democratic?

John Loughlin: Thanks Hope! I believe that this election should be about good policy, not about party. I hope that by November voters believe that I have the best ideas to bring our state and our country back on the right track.

Steve M: What do you think is the biggest challenge facing our state and our country right now?

John Loughlin: Jobs. We need to put RI and American back to work and to do this Congress needs to make jobs the number one priority. Jobs -- and real growth come from the private sector - not growing government, so we need to focus on private sector job creation.

Andrea S: What environmental issues are you concerned about

John Loughlin: Rhode Island is a beautiful state and as state representative I have worked to conserve open space and was a driving force in getting a successful open space bond on the ballot. Most importantly, we need to setup up our federal efforts to fight the proposed LNG in-bay berthing facility that FERC has approved for Mount Hope Bay. It would be a devastating blow to our environment and our way of life. This proposal -- and FERC's approval -- is an unacceptable intrusion on Rhode Island's right to manage our most important natural resource -- our waterways.

Brian401: Rep. Loughlin, many people are concerned about the economy (rightfully so). It's easy to lose sight of other important issues, like national security. Recent news stories are giving me the impression that our President is underfunding the efforts of Homeland Security. If I vote to send you to Washington, what will you do to keep our country safe from threats, both foreign and domestic?

John Loughlin: Brian 401 - Thanks for your question. I share your concern. I believe that we have been lulled into a false sense of security because we have not had a catastrophic terror attack on US soil since 9/11/01. We must not forget that we are fighting three wars and have troops in harm's way all over the world. The men and women of our armed forces need to be given clear achievable objectives and the resources to accomplish them.

They deserve the support of the American people as well as the understanding of elected officials at every level. As a retired Lt. Colonel (USAR) I have the experience and perspective to shape policy that keep us vigilant at home while accomplishing our missions abroad.

RIisHome: Good afternoon Sir. Do you think that the police and fire unions are getting more of a bad rap than is deserved? It is my understanding that they are actively trying to help remedy the retirement system

John Loughlin: As a former volunteer fireman and EMT I have a tremendous amount of respect for the men and women willing to do this dangerous work. Clearly our current pension system is unsustainable and unless we take aggressive action, we risk not being able to meet any of our obligations. The fact that they recognize that changes must be made and are willing to come to the table is something they should be applauded for.

RIisHome: Thank you for taking the time to answer my question

Jake: Were you affected by last week's flooding? What can be done for homeowners and businesses who have lost so much?

John Loughlin: Jake -- I was fortunate to not have significant damage personally but I recognize the magnitude of the devastation around the state. Rep. Jon Brien (D) and I have introduced a bill that would give RIers who had more than \$10,000 in losses a special tax credit of up to \$2,000. While we can't replace what was lost I'm hoping that this credit will help ease the financial burden.

Alex: What kinds of things does RI need to do to attract more business owners?

John Loughlin: Alex -- thanks for your question! I think the most important thing we need to do in Rhode Island is to create a more business-friendly environment. From the endless taxes and fees to the burdensome regulatory requirements, we have the least business friendly state in the country. So, the short answer is, cut taxes, cut fees and recruit businesses from states with higher taxes. We need more taxpayers, not more taxes!

chris12: Good Luck John. Your sign will be on my front lawn

SurgeonGeneral: Rep Loughlin: What are your concerns about President Obama's announcement that he will seek to reduce the US nuclear arsenal, as well as narrow the circumstances in which we may employ a nuclear strike?

John Loughlin: SurgeonGeneral - thanks for your question. I am concerned about President Obama's announcement - more because he has taken the use of nuclear weapons off the table. While we never want to use nuclear weapons, our strategic arsenal has provided an effective deterrent -- the very reason why we have not had a nuclear war. As a Cold Warrior, I believe that by weakening our stance on deterrence, we could invite attacks from rogue nations like North Korea and Iran.

SurgeonGeneral: Thank you, sir. Good Luck!

kerganian: I am concerned about your comments on Health Care reform. My 73 year old husband has medicare and a supplement plan, he pays \$80. more a month because of a "Preexisting condition" that is no longer a concern. If we had Health Care Reform this would not had happened. I am concerned that your comments on Health Care is not in line with reality for the middle class. I am 58 and since I have been unemployed over a year I do not have health care and qualify for no program in RI and there are no clinics or any type of program that would help. I am concerned that you are not in touch with the middle class when it comes to Health Care or Taxation.

John Loughlin: Kerganian - thanks so much for your question. The health care reform package includes deep cuts to Medicare that affect the policy you and your husband have. Medicare Advantage programs -- like the supplemental policy you have -- have been decimated. While the expansion of health care won't be implemented until 2014, your coverage will suffer affects much sooner. The job-killing taxes and regulatory requirements will also be implemented sooner.

Dan O'Connor: If we are going to cut taxes for small buisnesses in the state in order to attract out of state buisnesses with a more friendly tax environemnt is there any statictical data that these new "taxpayers" will be able to make up the shortfall for the taxes that have been cut

John Loughlin: Dan O'Connor -- thanks for your question. There is data to support this -- it's called dynamic scoring. Simply put, tax cuts spur additional economic activity and an

overall expansion in the economy. We have seen this repeatedly that when you cut taxes - more revenue, not less -- flows into the general treasury.

Uno02809: With all the recent emphasis on domestic issues, I'm concerned about national security and issues in the Middle East. How would you approach this issue as a member of Congress?

John Loughlin: Uno02809 - thank you for your question. I am deeply concerned about our policies in the Middle East, particularly in light of the chill in US-Israel relations. Israel is the only stable democracy in the region and she is threatened on a daily basis. We cannot afford to lose our only friend in the region and I believe we can do more to enhance Israel's security. Meanwhile, little has been done to counter the threat posed by a nuclear Iran.

No LNG in Mt Hope Bay: John, will you pledge to do all in your power to prevent Hess from building an LNG terminal in Mount Hope Bay?

John Loughlin: To NO LNG in Mount Hope Bay The simple answer is YES! I'll introduce relevant legislation and work across party lines to ensure that this project never comes to fruition. Again, it's an unacceptable federal infringement on our rights and would hurt our most precious resource.

Uno02809: Good luck in November!

No LNG in Mt Hope Bay: Thank you SIR! You would have my vote if I lived in RI rather than in Assonet, MA ;)

TomWat72: John, to follow up, how do you think you will be able to build the kind of consensus it will take to win as a Republican in RI? In other words, what are the Democrats missing that you can deliver?

John Loughlin: TomWat72 - thanks for joining. As one of just a few republicans in the House, I've been able to have an influence on legislation important to my constituents by reaching across party lines, so I have a good record of bipartisanship that should appeal to democrats (like my Mom), republicans and unaffiliated voters. Don't forget that this district was well represented by Congressman Rob Machtley from 1989-1995, so it's not as "blue" as some might think. Senator Scott Brown has shown that voters want better ideas and better policies and are not blinded by party labels. Rhode Islanders "get it" and I'm confident that my message will resonate with all voters.

John Loughlin: Thanks so much for all of your questions -- I wish I could have answered more. Please feel free to send your questions to info@johnloughlin.org and we will follow up.

John Loughlin: Thanks to ProJo.com for this opportunity. I look forward to seeing everyone on the campaign trail!

Pam: Thanks to everyone for taking part in our projo.com chat, especially John Loughlin. The chat is now ended. We will be posting the transcript shortly on projo.com

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