

Transcript of an interview with Dan Fleckner of *Stop Robbing Ohio* on 1-4-21

Bruce: Can you hear me okay?

Dan: OK yeah, I can hear you fine. Can you hear me? OK, yeah alright sounds good. You like this shirt don't you. (*Dan is wearing a black T-shirt with white uppercase letters spelling "Rob Portman Has No Spine"*)

Bruce: Yes, I do. \$25, aren't they?

Dan: Yeah, I believe so. I actually bought 2 of them. My feeling was I was going to be wearing this so often that I want one for the laundry and everything else. So yeah, this this is my standard zoom T shirt.

Bruce: That sounds good. This is my brewery behind me here. (*A Zoom background featuring wooden barrels on rows of racks*)

Dan: I love it actually. Although I don't drink anymore, I'm a huge Jack Daniels fan and believe it or not, I'm in Tennessee Squire, so I've been down to the distillery a couple of times and I mean, boy, it looks like barrelhouse number one right behind you there it is incredible.

Bruce: I had a tropical scene, but I figured that would be cruel.

Dan: Yeah, I think in January in Ohio it is pretty nasty. I mean, we're not allowed to go anywhere, and you have the tropics behind you.

Bruce: Oh well, so I read a little bit about what you're doing. I guess the 1st Question would be: How did you choose what type of PAC? 527 501C

Dan: So, it all ties into the original question, which is why I started pack in the 1st place. Yeah, what I noticed was that when Rob Portman campaigns, he spends a lot of time campaigning cleanly. He likes to be positive and he doesn't attack anybody, but I notice the Koch brothers in the NRA do that through their 527 Max and so as I was really looking at PACs, I realized there was never a pack in Ohio that's ever gone after Rob Portman. There are all sorts of fantastic 501 C's that are going on right between C3 and C4's with indivisible and all of the offshoots have been visible up in Cleveland. There is Crooked Lake River action. Down in Cincinnati there's you know, Glass City. It's amazing to me how many 501s there are in Ohio. And so, although I really, I believe advocacy is important, I believe we're starting to get a little diluted. So, it was important to me to really focus only on Rob Portman. So that's why I decided to go with the 527. You know it. The rules are a little stricter, but obviously the funding you know it's at 527 to what Rob Portman uses against his opponents. You know, I? I don't know if you saw one of my latest tweets when we walked into when Ted Strickland started campaigning against Rob Portman, he was a double-digit favorite and then Portman ended up winning by double digits.

So, for me it it really seems like Ohio needs somebody who's going to attack Rob Portman; just attack, attack, attack, and I mean the thing about Portman is Bruce: I think you understand this better than most. I don't need to attack all I have to do is show Ohio what his record really is. You know, Portman likes to say one thing and then do the exact opposite, so we're not going to spend a lot of time doing a lot of the attacks you know. Does Rob Portman like to fornicate with farm animals? Why can't we get him to deny that, you know, I see no reason for us to do that, right? Yeah, there are packs that do that that you know. Oh, why isn't he denying this? He must have. And we don't need that right? All I have to do is, say Rob Portman's voted against preexisting condition protections over 5 or sorry over 98 times in the decade he's been in office and so that's why I chose the 527. Yeah, I'm sorry that was a very long answer.

Bruce: No, that was a good answer, though it's lucky I'm recording all this, because I wouldn't.

Dan: Yeah, you can always go back, yes.

Bruce: And I can't read my own handwriting anyway.

Dan: Actually, I'll be honest with you. My problem with my handwriting is I write in all caps, so I write a little bit slower than most people do. So I can. Certainly, I never have a problem with reading my writing. But yeah, like you, I have a problem keeping up with what people are saying, yeah?

Bruce: Yes, you end up paraphrasing or misquoting someone? So, I guess the next question is why Rob Portman? But does it have anything to do with the fact that he's up for reelection in 2022?

Dan: Well, I'm not a political operative right, like you and I have spoken about via email. I'm just an Ohioan who can't stand the guy. For me, I'll be 100% honest, for me it personally started when Scalia passed away. Rob Portman has passed himself off as a fantastic moderate, a champion of bipartisan causes. What I saw with Scalia passing away was getting rid of a conservative for a moderate and, I'll be honest with you, there is the only thing I can use to describe Merrick Garland is he is he is a spectacular moderate. There is nothing liberal about Merrick Garland in any way, shape, or form, but I thought we could reshape the courts to get away from the partisanship. And so, I sent a very heartfelt letter to Portman about this. And this was before McConnell had announced or anything else, and I got a form letter back saying, you know, well, the Supreme Court is very important. We're going to wait until after the people decide. Right, and it didn't address anything that that I had brought up. So, although Portman had been on my radar up to that point, when Scalia passed away is when I really started focusing on him so.

And basically, I've been going after him since the last time he ran. I was banned from commenting on his Facebook page for over eight months during the election six years ago he posted a picture of his daughter at a campaign stop, and I made a comment. This was shortly after the Access Hollywood tape and I typed in a comment. 'You want to keep her away from your party's Presidential nominee because boy he'd consider her a ten and grab her by the pussy and I got banned from commenting on his page for over 8 months for that one comment. Yet, you know, Trump could obviously say that, but I couldn't stitch one.

So, Portman has been on my radar, you know, for six years. And then as I started paying attention to him, I've realized that he's able to get away with things that other politicians aren't, you know, I, I think most of the people in Hancock County, most of the people across Ohio, which they Rob Portman is in favor of gay marriage. And yet I have yet to see Rob Portman ever vote in favor of gay marriage. I haven't seen him ever support a candidate for a judicial position who is in favor of gay marriage. I have seen him vote many, many, many times for judicial nominees who are opposed to gay marriage. And yet, Rob Portman is able to get away with saying, oh, I'm in favor of it, and yet he has a record that shows he is wholly, utterly opposed to it. So, it's not that it's because he's running for election. It's because I think this guy is getting away with murder. And I saw a hole, so it was time to stop it. And this is, you know, this is what I saw. I sincerely hope that I can move on to other things and sort of get out of politics in two years that we can get rid of him and be done with this and that. You know I don't have to do more of this again as you and I have discussed via email. It's interesting running a PAC, right? I mean the, excuse me, the FEC paperwork alone. Now that Portman's election cycle is begun. I got a lot of donations right after the election, and so I now have to log all those for the January 15 filing. And yeah, I don't want to spend the rest of my life filling out FEC paperwork, so I'm hoping we can get rid of Portman in two years and. And this is this, and, you know, I can move on to bigger and better.

Bruce: Perfect yeah. Not part of the interviews by the way, but personally it was Jim Jordan that motivated me.

Dan: And by the way, yeah, I mean he is. Yeah, I'm all about getting rid of him. This Presidential Medal of Freedom that he's about to receive. I just. I'm disgusted, I'm appalled, right? I mean, all I can think of is Rosa Parks Martin, you know, sorry Martin Luther King never got it because when he was

assassinated. But you know, I mean some of the greatest Americans ever have gotten this and Jim Jordan, Rush Limbaugh have sort of sullied the whole thing, you know. But yeah, I Janet.

Bruce: I think he's doing it to both of the Georgia candidates, too.

Dan: That's so nice of him. When he goes down there. Yeah, well for the rally today. Yeah.

Bruce: But the problem is I kind of jumped in and I was concerned. You know, like in the case of 527s. If I'm correct, you have to list your donors.

Dan: Yes, I have to list my donors, but again, I mean 527s are certainly what the Koch brothers use and other things. And so, I I do have to list my donors, but I can't accept dark money, right? So, if I want to accept money from a shell Corporation and list that Shell Corporation as the donor, that's certainly within, you know, within the boundaries of 527s. I personally don't know if that's a loophole I wish to exploit as you know, we're all grassroots. We're all very volunteer. A as a couple of advisors have pointed out to me, once we start accepting dark money, we sort of walked down at an interesting path. My response, obviously though, is you know Portman uses a lot of dark money to attack his candidates. Right, I mean, that's why you know we know about Ted Strickland in the Rainy-Day Fund. That's why we know about Lee Fisher and driving with suspended license is because of dark money. An important is using dark money to win. Then I I'm sad to say we're going to have to use it to, you know, get another candidate in there to make him lose. So, it's a decision that that I'm still sort of on the fence about. We'll see how fund raising goes. Listen if I can get enough money from Ohioans, then obviously I won't accept dark money the other. The other problem that I have and the other thing that I don't like is is that I I really think Stacey Abrams has taught us the importance of grassroots messaging and that any message that we come up with to get rid of Rob Portman needs to come from Ohio. Not from a study group in Washington DC and I worry that dark money comes with strings and I there are certain strings I'm not willing to accept an and so that's, you know something else I'll look into.

Sure, you have to list all the donors, but you know again, it also makes a powerful statement. I have another advisor who's saying you know we should send out a fund-raising letter with the names of everybody who's donated so far to see if maybe some people want to donate just to spite their neighbors. So, there are pluses and minuses of listing everybody. It's definitely a little more work too. But I you know, I I, it's something I'm willing to do because the expenditures are the ones that I really want to make. Obviously, we're going to spend the whole-time targeting Portman, you know, the other thing is it really ties my hands? Because we're recording, I will make sure that I follow all FEC laws. I would love to name our senior senator a lot more often than I do. But you know, FEC laws constrain me from using basically any name outside of Rob Portman. I hope there is nothing on your list about candidates who are going to run to replace him, because you know, that's something I can't say that's something I can't discuss. That's you know I can't coordinate with any candidate or their committee, and I take that seriously. So you know, yes, we were follow the rules. But you know, I I saw more pluses than minuses to being a 527 over a 501.

Bruce: I really wanted it the other way to 501C4, so it' was a SuperPAC. Actually, didn't work out very well but my concern was if people had an objection to seeing their name on Open Secrets.

Dan: Well, I you know, I mean it, some people do and some people don't right? I mean it's an. And by the way, anybody who's going to donate to Portman's opponent, will you know their name shows up anyway? So, it's I, I think opposition to Rob Portman. Nobody is scared to mention that they're opposed to Rob Portman. Again, that's true. Yeah, right? This isn't a Donald Trump type of guy. This isn't a guy who demands love at all times, so you know, I mean, the opposition department is large. You know the other thing you said in your email, and I've been very fortunate about is, I found some great volunteers very early on, you know, and yeah, if I had to do all this alone, I agree with you about you know how

much money I'd be out. You know right now I have it listed as debits that the PAC owes. But yeah, I mean you know web hosting and little things like that certainly add up, yes?

Bruce: Yeah, those things do add up, but yeah. I guess you know that there is better to way to start. Your logic as far as starting it is 527, makes sense because you're targeting a candidate, right? And I think you know that should not be part of the interview, but that's what I did wrong. I was really going to go after Jim Jordan, but I made it as a situation where I couldn't write about him. I had to do an issue.

Dan: You know, right, right? An advocacy yes yeah. You know and by the way, that's the other thing. And I do want this included in, you know, whatever you write is the other perk of being a 527 is I can donate to 501s. So, if there are advocacy groups that are getting the word out and we're going to get into this, we still have ample time. If I see advocacy groups that are getting the word out in a way that I like, I'm happy to donate some of our funds to them. You know, I again, we can't really knock on doors. We can't really do postcards. So, I'm happy to contribute and support organizations that are going to be doing that. And again, that's what I mean. So, its pluses and minuses. Totally yes, yeah.

Bruce: So, you had a lot of advice setting this up then.

Dan: I OK, so I majored in political science in college, so politics has always been a passion of mine. It's never been something that I've ever actually followed through with. I'm a food and beverage guy. I've worked it. You name a food and beverage situation. I've worked in that country clubs, college dining, Meijer for a while. I have literally, you know if there's food. I've been a manager. There's some way somehow. Over the years, obviously, I volunteered for all sorts of campaigns and things like that, so I certainly had some friends that I knew to reach out to, but again, this was me sort of seeing what we needed, doing the research on my own, trying to figure out on my own. The difference between 5:27 and 5:01's. You know the difference between a 501C3 and C4 is huge. So, so there was a lot of that, but again, you know I. I think I'm a more well-rounded person now you know, because I had to learn all that. Certainly, before I initially filed September 2019, I did make a couple of personal requests to some people and just, you know, sort of verify. I was on the right track and ask for a little bit of direction and guidance.

Dan: And by the way, Janet Garrett, who runs the Jordan Watch PAC, is one of the people who I spoke to. et Janet's been a fantastic resource during all of this, yeah.

Bruce: Yeah, I should have known but she was busy running when I set that up, so yes.

Dan: Yes, and yeah, she finally decided not to. She's actually talking about helping me out quite a bit, you know there's 2022 and so she is thinking that she may fold up the Jordan Watch, and give me some assistance. You know, with the statewide and the Portman stuff, but she's still not 100% sure. Obviously, this Presidential Medal of Freedom is really going to drive us crazy. There's also a lot of talk about Jordan, either primarying Portman or primarying DeWine that that will have a major effect on the pack. Obviously, I do not want Jim Jordan to become the nominee in as much as I really don't want Rob Portman to ever have another public service job again, Jim Jordan would be like 5 times worse. But the one thing I say about Jim Jordan: and Ted Cruz and I have said this, you know I called Portman's office almost every day. I have a rapport with a couple of staff members, and I have said to staff members. I would almost prefer a Jim Jordan: or Ted Cruz to Rob Portman because at least with a Jim Jordan or Ted Cruz, we know where we stand every single day. They don't say one thing and then do the other. They don't, you know, they don't claim to believe in something and then vote against it. They don't wait until the last possible second to release a statement. You know they don't avoid cameras. Yeah, there's so many things that I can list that Portman does that that really just make him awful for the job that he currently has, yes.

Bruce: And that's another point on finances. He found a tolerance that has a lot to do with his own son I believe.

Dan: By the way, if you don't know who's.

Bruce: Motivation for any father.

Dan: Well and by the way, this is something that we will use. Votes for Brett Kavanaugh and Amy COVID Barrett. Yes, I know, that's not really her middle name, but that's my nickname. She was a super spreader? Really show that that he's not willing to protect his own son that he is willing to use his own son to exploit for political purposes. But when it comes right down to protecting his own son's right to marriage, he's not willing to vote for that. And that is something that I'm going to wait. That's one of our closing messages because I truly honestly believe if he doesn't care enough to protect his son, how can he care enough to protect you is going to be a very winning, convincing final argument. So, we are going to sort of leave that on the back burner, but it's there, it's already on the To Do List. I'll tell you. Personally, I don't know if you know this. His son is moved to Canada, his son. Things are so bad for the gay son, right? The straight son and the daughter still live here in America. But yes, things are so bad for homosexuals here in America.

That the gay son was able to find a job in Canada. He lives there with his mate. They've lived there a couple of years and He's my ultimate goal. If there was anybody who is on the height of wish lists of people who would ever record a video for me, Will Portman is number one and I will try for the next 2 years. I don't think I'll ever be able to get him, but I think the most convincing ad quit robbing Ohio could ever run would feature Portman's own son I, you know, I I just that's like you know that that would be the big winner for me. The big bingo. But yeah, no. I mean is so. So, again it's interesting, right? He's happy to exploit the son for political purposes, but he's not willing to do what it takes an that's, you know. And that's another reason why he is ill suited for the position that he has, right? I mean, I, no matter what and Ohioans party affiliation. When they hear a guy won't defend his own son, that's going to make them listen. You know that that's believe it or not, I may have found the one issue that's more important than abortion to the Republicans, and that is not protecting your own family. I really think that that that is an issue that will reverberate with Republicans.

And by the way, I think that's an issue that will reverberate around Hancock County. I want to make sure that I get this in where we're 20 minutes into the interview. We haven't discussed this yet. One of the other things that's very important about this PAC is getting outside of Hamilton, Franklin in Cuyahoga County's I know very well that we're going to run up the numbers there, and sadly as I look at past elections, the only way we can win is by getting out of those three counties. And I'm going to say this very frankly, and I'm hoping it changes because we'll see a new party chair on January 14th. But I think they were hired. Democratic Party has done a terrible job of getting out into rural areas. And so, my one of my biggest goals with this pack is to spread a message that is outside of those three counties. don't get me wrong, my message can be heard in those three counties. I've got all sorts of followers in those three counties. People in those three counties despise Rob Portman. I'm not worried about my message getting there. I'm worried about my message getting to Hancock County in Williams County and Round County and all these places in Ohio that Democrats have been ignoring for a while. That Republicans have also been ignoring for a while. But Republicans are doing a better job at messaging, saying they care when they don't care.

And it's time, it's time to take a page out of the Republicans playbook and just keep repeating the same thing over and over and over again. And then his Republicans just don't care about you guys. They're telling you that Democrats care, but the Republicans have shown that they have done nothing to show that they care about you either. All they all they care about is telling you how terrible the Democrats are. They're not, they don't care about making your life better, they don't care about doing anything for your part of the state. They only care about telling you how bad the Democrats are for you and you know. And that's you know. We have agreed to quit robbing Ohio that the overriding message for the

next 2 years that they're the Republican reverberation that we plan on doing is. Rob Portman doesn't care about you, so the word care will come up an awful lot over the next two years. And that matters to rural Ohio a lot more than a lot of these other things that we've been talking about matter. And so that's why I was the final say on this. I was the decider, but care is really where we're going where we're going to put this, and Rob Portman doesn't care about rural Ohio in any way, shape, or form.

Bruce: Yeah, you got it. One thing Republicans have been really good at is getting people to vote against their own interests.

Dan: Yes, and one of the things that we've noticed is the way they do it is by repeating the same thing over and over and over again. So, when I say Democrats, the first thing you think of is open borders and defund the police and socialism. Even though none of those are things that that Democrats want, you know. But Republicans just repeat the same thing so many times. That's what every single human being, regardless of party, is going to automatically first assume. So, we're going to. We're going to take a page out of their book, and we're simply going to repeat. Rob Portman doesn't care about. Blah blah blah blah blah, right? I mean today it's Rob Portman doesn't care about democracy tomorrow. It'll probably be Rob Portman doesn't care about defending the country. Yeah, I think already in this conversation. I'm pointing out that Rob Portman doesn't care about protecting his son. I think care is the overriding message that that really, we can use to wake up people to realize that you know they're voting against their own interests, right? This? This is a guy who doesn't care and stop voting against your own interest.

Bruce: You know, maybe the Republicans took it from Joseph Goebbels playbook too, you know.

Dan: Well, I you know, I mean they

Bruce: Say it often enough it becomes true.

Dan: If they take it, you know, and that's the other thing, right? That's the part that I mean, just you and me talking a little bit. That's the part that amazes me is. They keep saying that socialism is such a bad thing when it's authoritarianism that's really terrible, and they're the ones who support the authoritarian. And you know, it's just. It amazes me that that you know, they're able to do it. But yes, they are. I mean, they're taking pages from all sorts of authoritarian playbooks over the years, you know, harp on religion, harp on laws, but don't follow him. You know it, it's everything, right? I mean it is not just verbal. But now You know the art of war, and I mean there are just so many, and God bless us. the Democrats just want to make the country better so they don't care about playing those games and they need to start because we can't make the country better until we get back in power. Sadly, and unfortunately you know we're in the age of social media now and then you know the two second sound bite is more important, you know? So yeah, I would.

I mean everybody keeps talking to me about message discipline. Janet, it can't be more than 5 words. You know you, you're. You know what you're talking about you. You have the background, but nobody's listening anymore because they only listen to the first 5 words. And you know, people are, I mean, for the most part, right? A1 on one conversation like this? I, you know I can understand your skepticism, but you know, in general when it when it comes to, you know, making a tweet or a blog post or a Facebook post you know. Brevity is my friend and I do a ***** job of it. Excuse my French, OK?

Bruce: No, it's OK.

Dan: I normally if somebody cusses in front of me and says that to me, I normally say to them, oh I speak French too, it's OK.

Bruce: I do more than I should, yes?

Dan: I think we all do Saturday.

Bruce: And that in fact I didn't do so much. I do it in situations where I shouldn't. But yeah. That's what I. Just said no.

Dan: I, I'm assuming you are a assuming you are a parent and a grandparent. Yes, until you teach the grandkids the F word, you're still doing OK. You know if you say it and then they start saying it after you've said it, then you use it too much.

Bruce: Yeah, I found the secret to that when they say it don't make a big deal about it, right? Right, I mean, especially when the real little. Then it just goes. You know they don't get a reaction, they quit repeating it.

Dan: Right, that's you know they want the laugh. They want the attention, so you know. But it's a difficult thing to do right. I mean, because you know it's; I saw Facebook meeting the other day. You know I'm trying to teach my son that vagina is an OK word to use but not acceptable to name the hamster. It's I mean so. So again, right? I mean, there's sort of standards, right? Yes, it's sure that's an acceptable word. You know? We use that in the English language, but no, maybe it's not an acceptable word, you know. But again, right. A kid uses it. Somebody laughs. And oh, let's name the hamster that so we get that, you know, yeah, so yes, I definitely understand that.

Bruce: Yeah, I don't have a whole lot more really. I. I think you've done a better job of explaining. It's fine, then I've been asking some.

Dan: But you know, I, I've been at this since September 2019. I really my goal in life was to not be at this until November of 2020. I really wanted to have started this a month and a half ago. But Rob Portman, has been so detestable to me that you know I've been doing this for, you know, a year and a half now almost, and so it's gotten easier for me to answer all the questions, right? I think I've given you The Who the what, the, why, the you know, it just within a general conversation because I know what people are sort of wanting to here and. Enough for the newsletter and make sure that you know you have a fair feeling of where I'm coming from, but I you know, and I also understood by the email that you were not going to have a standard set of questions going into it. So many interviews that I've done. People are like, OK, here are questions ahead of time so you can be well prepared. But yeah, I mean I have certainly covered the topics I had hoped to cover. Yeah, you know, with the rural Ohio and the why and you know, those are all important to me.

Bruce: That's the important part of this thing, so yeah, that's what I what I want to get in the newsletter is your thoughts and. also, you know. Definitely include link to your page and where to donate.

Dan: Please please, yes that's fantastic. I will tell you. My concern is Twitter today.

Bruce: Yeah.

Dan: We're actually we're upgrading the website tomorrow, and so I probably within the week when you sign up on the website we will. That will link us to constant contact, so we will be able to gauge your volunteer interest and for people who do want to volunteer will be able to get back to them. I will tell you. We have a guerrilla marketing campaign that I had planned for February. It. It's a pretty simple campaign in the grand scheme of things. I want to print up for sale signs literally for sale with his picture. That's about it. Obviously because of FEC rules will be a block at the bottom saying paid for by quick robbing, Ohio yadda yadda yadda. But I I want to make those I want to produce those I want to email them across the state, and I would like volunteers across the state. To place them very publicly on court boards in grocery stores, coffee shops, libraries. Local universities, whatever it is, I I think it would be. You know, again that it's going to be very light on details, but I just want people to sort of see it as they're passing it right? I just want it to be like a 2 second little thing that registers in their mind that Rob Portman's for sale. And again, this is where we're starting to get the message beyond. You know that that the bubble that I live in in social media you know which is the other reason why I'm doing this. But you know, again, we're going to have to talk to Republicans. I don't know how we do that in COVID, so I've got this great guerrilla marketing scheme that I'm coming up with. We're also going to take that same banner that we're using that we're going to do that. People can print out and post

wherever they want. We're going to do a digital ad on and somebody else suggested some yard signs. In some very public places, in some of the smaller cities I you know, all I can think of the circle, though I don't know if you've ever been to Circle Ville, but as you drive into the main area of Circle Ville, it's about 3 blocks long. But well, if we could put a sign when you're driving into that main drag and put a sign when you're driving out of that main drag that you know just so people see it really quick as they're going by so I can plant that seed. Dan: That we can work on later on. So yes, volunteers are very, very important to us. We are Ohio. Out on both Twitter. Facebook and Instagram. I keep forgetting Instagram because I just added it, but we have the same handle on all three. Certainly, the websites are fantastic place I. Oh, getting back to my point. I'm sorry Rob Portman has two Twitter accounts. He has his official Senator Rob Portman account and then he has his personal Rob Portman account on the personal Rob Portman account today. He has put up a link to donate to his reelection campaign. So today on both Facebook and Twitter, I ask people to donate to me. I use that exact post that he had. I said Rob's asking for money, so I guess I need to ask for money. So certainly if you could ask people to donate that would be very. I would be very appreciative of that person.

Bruce: Definitely being there. Yes, thank you, it is very worthwhile. Thank you, I wish I had your knack for it, because I wasn't focused on any one thing.

Dan: Well, I you know I think not only the focus, but I think having the volunteers as I've said to Tom, my volunteer Webmaster without his dedication, I I probably would have, you know I would have petered out a little bit. And then I met Lori, my video editor. If you've been on the website, we have over 30 videos on the website now in the video page. And those have all been made by a volunteer. I haven't paid a single penny for any of those videos and you know, it's things like that. Those conversations when we're talking about what's going to be on the next video that really keep me energized and really remind me that this isn't just you know me and five people who you know or are shooting at windmills. That that really statewide that that there is an appetite for this. There just has never been. You know nobody's ever taken this on, so I, you know, I, I mean, certainly my goal is to make sure that Rob Portman is, you know, unelectable is even dog catcher by the time I'm done. But again, if he wins reelection while he was going to win reelection, going into this, at least I feel like I've accomplished everything that I possibly can, you know. The one bad part about it is maybe I've been a little more focused on Portman lately, and maybe I should have done a little more against Trump or a little more to switch the Ohio Statehouse because that Larry Householder stuff is awful, and yet it still and I get it all gerrymandering, but you know the fact that the State House is still red after the householder stuff. It's just embarrassing to me it is, you know so I do feel bad about that. I've only been focused on Portman for so long, but darn it, somebody's got to do it and you know nobody else seems to be stepping up. So, let's get it done. Let's get this guy out of here. You know Ohio has proven between Jennifer Bruner and Sherrod Brown that Ohio is willing to vote for people who actually do care about us. So, you know, let's get rid of the guys who don't care about us.

Bruce: That's another point. Don't mean to discourage you as far as Hancock County, but Sherrod Brown loses by 20 to 30 points here.

Dan: Oh, I have a numbers guy. I have a volunteer data analyst I I'm very well aware of what I'm up against. I I don't know if Nancy shared the email that I sent to her originally when I was trying to introduce quit robbing Ohio to everybody, but it says on the bottom. You know, given the results of the 2020 election, I understand I have a very uphill battle. I know what's red, I know what's very, very red. But you know my attitude is it's not going to flip in one day but flipping 20, flipping 20 votes in Hancock County is almost as important as mobilizing another 100,000 in Franklin County and 20 votes here and there on. You know if I. I mean there are 88 counties. If I can flip 20 votes in every County, I think I've done a pretty darn good job. You know, I get it. We're all very tribal right now. And Republicans aren't

listening to Democrats and Democrats aren't listening to Republicans. So, if I can change some hearts and minds, you know, and a new Ohio Democratic Party chair, can you know they focus a little bit more? I, think we can make some inroads, inroads I you know. The other thing is, is an and this happened 15 minutes before you and I got on here, so I don't know if you know yet. Portman just released the statement as to how he's going to vote on January 6th, and he's really pissing off all the Trump supporters because he's voting for democracy. He's going to uphold his oath of office. He is going to vote for the Constitution, and he is going to vote against the challenge. The Electoral College. And that's going to piss off an awful lot of Trump supporters, and I love it. And Portman also voted against funding for the Wall, which the Trump supporters have never forgotten. And so, I think it's easier to talk to some of the red voters in Hancock County about Portman. Then it will be about some of the other people. You know, I mean.

Well, but DeWine during COVID also I think Republicans are going to cannibalize their own in the 2022 election. You know? It's because I don't see the statewide Republicans catering to the trumpkin's and so I think there's going to be a little bit of a reckoning now I also. I am maybe I'm just hoping here, but I still think the SDNY is going to arrest Trump before 2022, and I think that Trump is really arrested. I I think that may change some of the people here in Ohio's opinion of Trump, I could be wrong. They could be saying, well, he's a martyr. This is a, you know, deep State political set up, but I think there are just some law-and-order people who are going to say if there was enough to arrest the guy. I mean look at everything we tried to do to impeach Obama with our eight Benghazi investigations. If we couldn't get anything to stick to Obama and they can get shit to stick to Trump, then maybe there's something to it. You know, I just I, I hope. I could be wrong though, right? I you know, at some point the toxic personality is going to blow up on those who have been supporting it, but.

Bruce: I think that, giving you a heads up on the next newsletter, there's a I'm doing an article called the new Confederacy, which would be the 120. You know, essentially that's what they're doing. I wish they would actually secede, you know, and give up their seats and show the real moral courage. But you know.

Dan: Exactly. Yes, I agree with you, but I am. I am still not wholly unconvinced that we haven't seen the start of the second Civil War that you know, after the Electoral College votes, that the people on the right really do take up the arms that they've been threatening to do over the last four years. I am sad to say that I do not think that the FBI has been honest with us on the reasons for the Nashville bombing. And that I think that there are hiding the reasons for political reasons and that that the first basically explosion of the second civil War has already happened and it happened in Nashville, TN. I, you know, I could be wrong. I just this administration seems to politicize everything, and I no longer feel that the FBI is not politicized. And you know, I think why they've suddenly started talking about Lizard Kings is because the guy was a member of the proud boys. But again, I could be wrong. This could be about 5 G. And you know, I, I boy, I hope I'm wrong, right? I will tell you when it comes to the second Civil War. I hope I am very, very wrong and I hope you know everything is fine on January 6, but I have a lot of concerns.

Bruce: I like that the former Defense Secretaries are telling the military not to get involved.

Dan: Even Dick Cheney, right? I mean it, you know it. I've always said there, there, you know when. What is it? I don't know if you've ever seen the HBO thing, The Game Changer, right? This Sarah Palin thing, but towards the end of it when they say, 'when Dick Cheney has the moral high ground, you know there's something wrong with the world', and literally Dick Cheney has the moral high ground right now and I agree with him on this issue. And you know, that's something. By the way, I, wish the Republicans would recognize because they always accuse us of saying. Oh well, you just oppose us because of our party. Listen when you guys have successful ideas, I'm happy to agree with them. I am agreeing with

Dick Cheney right now. What is wrong with this world? You know, and yet I've never seen a Republican ever say, you know? Well, we agree with the Democrats on this. No, Democrats can't have this when we you know, even though we agree, we'd never, you know agree to agree.

Bruce: Yeah, well we will get rid of it before we do that.

Dan: Yes, yes yes, I mean. And by the way, bringing it back to our topic here, a prime example of that is Rob Portman. I will tell you that in 2014 there was a fantastic parks-bill that President Obama had introduced that had the support of the Democratic Senate that Rob Portman had even worked on. To actually get passed the bill failed. Rob Portman voted against it. He said something about the debt deficit and wouldn't vote for it or anything else. But literally, I mean, we all know that Rob Portman ignored COVID because he had this parks bill that he had to do literally. Rob Portman voted against the exact same bill, not three years earlier because he wanted to deprive Democrats of a win. How many Ohioans died of Corona virus while he was talking about a bill that had previously passed and had no opposition. I think that does a fantastic job of summing up where Rob Portman's priorities are. What he really cares about, which are cheap legislative victories. Then saving lives again. It just goes to show that Rob Portman doesn't care about us. You know, and I mean, again, I have all sorts of examples that I can use. You know, we're what 40 minutes in, so OK. But yeah, I mean this is certainly although it is a pet project. It's something I've given a lot of focus on. It's something I paid a lot of attention to. As you can see, you know I haven't looked down at any notes, so this is all stuff that I've really been tracking with him for a while and I'm very passionate about, so this is no flash in the pan. I'm not doing this to, you know, like the Trump's. Try to make \$1,000,000 off of the people I want to get Rob Portman out of office, and I want to do whatever it takes. I see this as the best way. I'm hoping that I can clear path through whomever to candidate is. Again, I will not work with them or coordinate with them. But if I can attack Rob Portman and the other and the candidate running against him doesn't have to, and they can be perceived by the Ohio people as being above the fray, then that's fine. I'll wallow in the mud for a while. I don't really mind. I, you know, I got the receipts to wallow. So, I'm happy to pull them out and prove them and we'll use them. And yes, I would encourage everybody to go to our website and you know the blog posts we have and the videos we have, and I will keep showing receipts.

Bruce: Sounds good. You know it would also be kind of historic. I don't know if I when was the last time Ohio had two Democrat senators.

Dan: Well, uh John Glenn and he ran Howard Metzenbaum. I can't tell you the year I could tell you the name. So, when was that? Late 80s? Early 90s?

Bruce: Was it that late?

Dan: Yeah, yeah, I mean, Metzenbaum was in there for quite some time and so yeah, I you know. But both of them were Democrats and again. And by the way, that may be something, and again, we can't do that because it would involve mentioning names, although both the past. So maybe I could get away with it. You know, that's when Ohio was really doing well was when we had two Democratic senators. You know now that Ohio sort of falling and everything else is, you know. Obviously, because I'm sorry because we are so red, we are failing it at. You know our education is shot down and everything else, but you know that it. Yeah, that's something that will now reverberate in my head for a while. Bruce, thanks for bringing that up right, how were we under John Glenn, Metzenbaum versus. You know what Portman has done to sort of prevent us from getting what we really need?

Dan: Yeah. By the way, are you impressed? I was able to pull up those two names so quick to again.

Bruce: I was very impressed. I can tell your political science major.

Dan: So yeah, that that the one thing that I am not able to pull up. The one thing that I do have to count on my notes for and I don't even have them here. So Full disclosure, in 1952 my paternal Grand Father, Oscar Louis Fleckner senior who at the time was the liquor Commissioner, ran for the

Democratic nomination for governor of the State of Ohio. He only got about 28,000 votes. If I had my notes, I could tell you the exact number that number I can't remember. But yeah, I mean Ohio politics has always been in my blood. You know, like I say, Grandpa Oscar ran for governor, my grandmother, his wife, my Grandma Ann was a delegate to Chicago in 68 and she was a delegate to Minneapolis and 72 as well. But when she was alive, her stories about Chicago, she and I were in total disagreement. How about that? Well, we'll leave it at that. I was a young, radical and you know, I believed in the people outside the building and she was inside the building. Had a totally different story to tell. And I believe it's the only time I ever really disagreed with my paternal grandmother was when she told me about Mayor Daley. Yeah, call him in protect us. I thought I was going to die. Yeah, no she literally said that.

Bruce: Wow

Dan: So yes, Ohio politics has been in my blood for a long time, but I've never been motivated enough to do it. And again, I just, you know, I see what's going on in this country right now and I just can't sit by quietly, you know. Everybody said this and I'll say it as well. I loved politics when we could sit around and debate what the best interest rate was to, you know, put on which bracket and what percentage falls in that bracket. But now that we're talking about life and death, we're no longer talking about politics and I can't just sit quietly by, you know, I know what's going on. I paid attention to what's going on and we're again. We're talking about life and death. So, you know once we get back to, which bracket we should tax what and you know what the rates are. Then fine, I'll go back to the sidelines. I'd love to go back to the sidelines. There are other things I can do, you know. the Buckeyes are playing in the National championship game next week. I'd love to be focused on Ohio State and Alabama right now, so you know, there are certainly other things.

Bruce: Yeah, but well then you look at it this way; we can thank Rob Portman for that.

Dan: Because Rob Portman doesn't care about us. You know, which, again goes back to the original. You know, you will certainly hear me tie that, you know, basically everything can certainly go back to that. Yes. And yes, I truly honestly believe that that where we are, you know. Rob Portman is certainly responsible for where we currently are. You know, again, with Scalia and there's nothing in the Constitution. There's nothing in his oath. There's nothing anywhere that says one party gets to do one thing, and another party gets to another. So obviously when we lost RBG and he did the exact opposite, I was, you know, and I was already ready, right? I mean, I was going and I knew it was coming. But still I was, you know I was floored. So, yes.

Bruce: Lindsey Graham said we didn't hold him to his word like he wanted us to.

Dan: I you know and not only that right or after that, after the impeachment, he said, why did he vote against documents and witnesses? Well, I believe the American people deserve to have a say in this. OK, so the American people had a say in it. Now you know everybody in your party wants to undo that and, you're not saying enough to silence them. You know, it's as I said to his staff today; four years ago, when we were saying that the election was fixed and that the results weren't right and that there should be a Commission, he called the sore losers. He said we were destroying democracy. He said that, you know, there was no reason for a Commission. Now that the exact same number of people are saying the exact same thing, but they're on the other side of the aisle he suddenly went to Commission. All this needs to be looked into. You know? Of course, they're you know what they're saying it make sense and should be listened to and we shouldn't just dismiss them. But you know, again, no problem dismissing us. Four years ago, and I mean, I could just go on and on and on and on. (laughs)

Bruce: I got one little funny anecdote to finish up on regarding my efforts. Yes, I actually got Jim Jordan's office to help me speed up the tax-exempt process for a PAC that was against him.

Dan: (laughs) I do like that yeah, I mean I'll admit I had a problem with the Post office a couple of months ago. And obviously, I unlike you, you know, well, like you, I live in a gerrymandered district. But

unlike you, my gerrymandered district is blue. So, I called up Congresswoman Beatty and I had an aide within an hour. She gave me 2 phone numbers. You know we had the problem solved, but I also did call Portman's office and I will tell you; they were very quick to respond. They certainly didn't mess around. They were able to address my issue to the fullest. Obviously, it's because I feel it's because they knew who I was, right? I don't feel that they give that service to every constituent, but because I called and by the way the person in charge of constituent concerns is the guy that I speak to for over an hour at least once a year. So, he and I obviously have a very special rapport as well. So, you know, but yes, I am sort of amazed that you know at some of the things that they've been able to help with. And whereas a lot of them they won't. But I, you know. Bruce, God bless you because I have to say that that Jordan getting this Presidential Medal of Freedom is driving me crazy and I don't live in his district. I don't know how you people who live in his district can handle that.

Bruce: I'm in silent Bob's district now.

Dan: Oh well good for you. Bob Latta yeah. (laughs)

Bruce: Yeah, at least we had a good candidate against him, but he lost badly.

Dan: I do like silent Bob. Um, well, I think Nick's running again right from everything I've seen. I thought Nick made a commitment to run twice, so I do think that that you know, and I think.

I think Ohio fielded some fantastic candidates this year for US Congress. Not only Nick, but Shannon Freshour, who ran against Jim, Hillary O'Connor Murray, Doctor Enoch, who ran down, you know, ran in one against Steve Chabot (I think he meant in eight against Warren Davidson), Alaina Shearer, who ran up here against Troy Balderson. I there were some fantastic candidates, and you know, it's sad that gerrymandering had predetermined the outcome of the races before they had even started. I really would have liked to have seen at least one of those seats flip, you know, and maybe we'll have better luck when they reach our lives in 22.

Bruce: Hopefully yeah. Well, yeah, it won't make a difference to the Senate, but maybe we'll have.

Dan: It you know and it's funny. Yeah, a lot of people bring up gerrymandering to me and I keep saying, you know, it's certainly a problem, but it wouldn't change Portman support. Yeah, he runs for statewide position, so gerrymandering is not a huge concern for quick running Ohio, it's a huge concern for Ohio in general, so it's something I bring up a lot, yes.

Bruce: Well, thank you for your time.

Dan: Bruce, thank you. Yeah, I it sounds like I've given you enough. If you need anything else, you do have my email address. Certainly, I'm happy to answer anything else you know, but yes, thank you and I look forward to reading about it. And I've got a Zoom coming up with Hancock County as well and then Nancy moved another Zoom, so we'll see what happens with that one. If I can attend that but Yeah, I'm looking forward to seeing you guys while I've got you on here, I will tell you let's make sure it's in the calendar properly. Hang on. A week from today, you're down for a week from today. The 11.

Bruce: 7:30 it's always the second Monday of every month.

Dan: Which is nice because most of the groups want to meet Wednesdays, Thursdays. Most of my Wednesdays and Thursday evenings are very booked. And so when you offered me a Monday, I was very happy to take it. Because yeah, I get very few Monday requests there are very few groups that meet Monday.

Bruce:

Yeah, we're all his oddballs up here.

Dan: Listen, I don't mind it. I love it. You know, that's what we need more of. That's what makes Ohio great.

Bruce: OK thanks, Dan.

Dan: Alright, Bruce thank you. You have a great day and I'm logging off now. Alright You know, essentially that's what they're doing. Take care.