

JANET WU: Now I'd like to introduce the second candidate, Deval Patrick, [APPLAUSE].

DEVAL PATRICK: Janet, thank you and SkillWorks and everyone for being here and for having me today. I'm looking forward to the conversation. Some of you, I know here, I've met; many of you I haven't, so let me just say a word or two here about who I am and how I came to the race and why I think this conversation is so important, not just for the campaign but for the future of the Commonwealth.

I grew up on the South Side of Chicago, which is generally not known as the garden spot. I lived there with my mother, my sister, and my grandparents in a two-bedroom tenement, shared a bunk bed with my mother and my sister, so you go from the top bunk to the bottom bunk to the floor, every third night on the floor. But it was a time when every child was under the jurisdiction of every single adult on the block. So if you messed up down the street in front of Ms. Jones's, she would treat you as if you were hers. People treated us like they had a stake in us. I came here to Massachusetts when I was 14 years old in 1970, and I have had a series of remarkable chances, but I know chance comes to the well-prepared. And we need to talk about how we get well-prepared this evening, and right through my two terms of Governor of Massachusetts. [APPLAUSE]

JANET WU: First question. Mr. Patrick, how would you make workforce development, including job training, adult basic education, ESOL and other essential training, into integral parts of your jobs and economic development strategy?

DEVAL PATRICK: Janet, thanks for the question. First of all, I think this is something that we have studied enough and with all the studies, there still seems to be an extraordinary lack of coordination and frustration about that. I mean, I look at things like the health care industry, which is broad and important here, but not enough nurses, or a biotech industry, which is growing and important, but not enough technicians. I think what we need is leadership, and that's what I intend to provide.

I want to make workforce development—meaning preparing people for opportunities—a central feature of the administration. I think that means that it includes having workforce development as a part of the portfolio of the secretary of commonwealth development. I think it means that every sector is planned around workforce development, so, in other words, if you think about developing particular industries, what is the plan for assuring that those industries will have the people they need with the skills those people need in order for that industry to thrive? And so I think that means better coordination among the leaders of public education, including public higher education, around transitional assistance, and also the involvement of business. And we'll have to be part of a conversation on how it is we plan for the skills we need.

As we think ahead, am I running out of time, am I OK on time? As we think ahead.

JANET WU: I'll let you know.

DEVAL PATRICK: I have a feeling you will. As we think ahead and plan for the next thing economically, I think part of that has got to be a plan for the people. And I think the next thing, economically for us here in Massachusetts is alternative renewable energy. We may affect industry, those technologies and products and services, if we build them and create a center, globally, the whole world is our customer, and there are all kinds of job opportunities that flow from that.

JANET WU: Thank you very much. The second question. In your first budget as governor, will you provide a public match that will support a workforce competitiveness trust fund, available to all workers and job seekers, that equals the \$21 million workforce training fund that employers now support through a surcharge on unemployment taxes. And I also asked the lieutenant governor about the governor's veto. We'd like to hear from you as well about what you thought of Governor Romney's veto.

DEVAL PATRICK: Well, to answer the second question first, not much. But I understand that the veto is or will be overridden, and it should be. I think, though, that the answer to the question about the \$21 million public match is maybe. And I say maybe because, while I support the workforce training fund and the workforce competitiveness trust fund and the extended care career ladder initiative, various of the initiatives we have, I do think we have to ask ourselves the question whether we're getting the most out of the money we're spending. Because I'm frankly just not convinced that we have the coordination, that we have delivered on the promise of one-stop shopping, for example, whether the competition among the agencies, public and partly public, that take a role in workforce development, is in every case as productive or as constructive as I would like. So the answer is, yes, I'm committed to spending what we need, but I don't know yet, frankly and honestly, whether \$21 million is the right number.

JANET WU: Do you have a number in mind?

DEVAL PATRICK: I don't.

JANET WU: Do you think we should reorganize everything that we've talked about?

DEVAL PATRICK: No, I don't. I'm committed to adequate funding, and I'm committed to getting to that fast, and I hope within the first year or two of my administration. But I'm just not sure as I stand here right now whether it's \$21 million or some larger number, frankly, isn't the right number.

JANET WU: And how long do you suspect that it would take you to reorganize and try to make more productive all these various agencies that are spread across the government?

DEVAL PATRICK: Well, frankly, Janet, I think a lot of that work has to be done before I take office. I mean, that's a big part of the transition work. I don't want to presume too much, but that's a big part of the time that gets spent between Election Day and inauguration time.

JANET WU: Is this one of your top priorities before you take office.

DEVAL PATRICK: Gotta be. Gotta be.

JANET WU: Okay.

DEVAL PATRICK: And I expect the folks in this room to help.

JANET WU: And, finally, last question, tens of thousands of people in Massachusetts are on waiting lists for basic education, ESOL, and skills training. Will you propose an \$8 million increase in adult basic education in your first budget as governor, and support increasing it further in subsequent years based on state revenues? This increase will help thousands of people to get basic education and English proficiency needed to get better paying jobs and become the skilled workers that we know that employers need desperately.

DEVAL PATRICK: Yeah, the answer to that question is yes, but with only 6 percent of the known in need being served with current resources, I think we all ought to ask ourselves whether \$8 million is the magic number or whether it's going to be something else over time. I will tell you that it was an ABE program that made it possible for my mother to get her GED when I was a kid, and through that GED to get a job that got us off public assistance. She also got a job in the post office, so I understand how transforming access to ABE and ESOL programs can be for people. I understand that from my own life. But I do think that with, what are there, 400,000 people waiting today for opportunities to get their GEDs and to get skills training for job opportunities, then it is a fair question to ask whether \$8 million is enough, is the right number, and how we build to the right number over time.

JANET WU: And so you are not sure whether that is too much, because of the bureaucracy, or not enough, is that what you're saying?

DEVAL PATRICK: My suspicion is that it's not enough. I'm happy to commit to the \$8 million because that's the question you asked. But the numbers of people waiting and that representing about 6 percent of the known need, leaving aside the fact that there are people who would take advantage of an ABE program, for example, if they knew that there was an ABE program. I'm just not sure that \$8 million is ultimately going to be enough.

JANET WU: And where do you suspect that you will find this money to put into these programs.

DEVAL PATRICK: Well, I've put out a plan to capture greater efficiencies in the current administration, things we're doing that we don't have to do. There are things that we do that we should do that we don't do, for example, like better enforcement of Medicaid fraud and enforcement of the wage and hour laws, which cost us hundreds of millions of

dollars a year. I also believe that we ought to take the surplus in the current budget and wait before we roll back the income tax to 5 percent and fund some of these unmet needs. And ABE and ESOL is one of them.

JANET WU: Thank you very much, Mr. Patrick, and now you have two minutes for your closing remarks.

DEVAL PATRICK: Well thank you, Janet, and thanks to all the sponsors and all the participants for being part of this today. You're very efficient with the timing [LAUGHTER].

There really are three points that I want to get across. The first is the importance of better alignment between our economic development initiatives and the workforce development initiatives. That is, as we think about and focus on the sectors that we want to build and can build and play to our strengths here in Massachusetts, I think alternative renewable energy technology is one of them and an example of them. We need to build into that how it is we create the opportunities for people, our people, to be ready for those jobs, and that is all about how you bring together business and sector focus with the folks who are doing workforce development.

I think we can better leverage the resources we have. We need to change the funding formula, for example, for community colleges, so that when they provide a certificate, or so that they can provide certificates for workforce development training without being penalized or facing financial disincentives to do so.

And I do believe it's important to support ABE and ESOL opportunities because that makes opportunity real for people, and I know that from my own life. Like I said, chance comes to the well prepared. That's not my line. That was the line of Louis Pasteur. And I've had some wonderful, wonderful chances in my own life, but I have been prepared for those chances through opportunities through education, through opportunities through work, summer job opportunities, opportunities to get to know people and understand how they live their lives and what their work lives are like, so I can begin to expand my imagination about what's possible. And this is something we have to do, not just for kids from the South Side of Chicago who get that odd break, that unusual break, to come to a place like Milton Academy, but for all of us. Everybody has a stake and everybody counts. I'm glad to be with you. [APPLAUSE]