

Speaker Ryan: We have an opportunity to help people reach the American Dream

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In Interview w/ S.E. Cupp, Paul Ryan Outlines How Conservative Policies Can Combat Poverty

CHICAGO, IL — In an [interview](#) conducted after addressing the Jack Kemp Foundation's "Forum on Expanding Opportunity," House Speaker Paul Ryan spoke with S.E. Cupp on HLN's "S.E. Cupp Unfiltered," about how free enterprise ideas, like opportunity zones and social impact bonds, can lift people up and help positively impact distressed communities across the country.

See the interview transcript:

S.E. CUPP: I might have gotten a preview of what that midterm messaging will sound like. In a word: results. On Friday, I spoke with House Speaker Paul Ryan, who joined me from the Jack Kemp Foundation's "Kemp Forum," for a substantive conversation on an issue we both agree on: it's the economy, stupid.

CUPP: So, for those of us familiar with Jack Kemp, it's no surprise that you are a perfect fit to address this forum. You were also a staffer for Kemp when you first came to Washington. I know he means a lot to you, but why now are his views, his vision for America in 2018, more important than ever?

SPEAKER PAUL RYAN: Well, they're more important than ever because we have a lot of people hurting in this country. We have a lot of division in this country. We have a lot of stubborn problems like poverty that need to be addressed, and Jack Kemp –

Jack was my mentor – Jack preached an inclusive, aspirational type of conservatism, which is focused on solutions and what worked in a free enterprise, limited government way, that actually brought people together to try and solve really stubborn problems like persistent poverty. We have an economy that’s doing really well. We have great opportunities out there, but we still have big pockets in America, in rural America and in urban America, all across the country, of people that are just slipping through the cracks, that have not met their version of the American Dream or the American Idea. And so of all the times when we want to take that Jack Kemp philosophy, one that I believe in, and apply it to these problems of distressed communities and poverty, this is a time to do it because I think we can get a really good outcome for it right now.

CUPP: Well, you and I have talked before about how conservative ideas, both fiscal and philosophical, are the better pathway to solving poverty and increasing upward mobility. So, for anyone out there who thinks ‘Republicans don’t care about poor people,’ tell them why they’re wrong.

SPEAKER RYAN: Well, first of all, yes of course they’re wrong. We want to make sure – we believe in this beautiful philosophy that each of us has these special rights, before government, that allows us to pursue happiness, and make the most of our lives. We believe in the American Idea that the condition of your birth doesn’t determine the outcome of your life. As Jack used to say, the most powerful weapon in the war on poverty is free enterprise. And so what we want to do is make sure that we can connect the people in this country that are hurting, the least among us, with the opportunity that is out there so that they can make the most of their lives, determine their lives, get on the escalator of life. And so we have lots of ideas, by the way, we’ve achieved many of these things just this past year. Lots of ideas, this is part of our Republican ‘Better Way’ agenda. The final installation of our ‘Better Way’ agenda that we ran on in 2016, was to fight poverty effectively, restore upward mobility, and close the skills gap so that we can get people from welfare to work, we can get people out of poverty, into the workforce, and into the middle class. And so that is basically what our agenda is all about, and we have ideas that we believe whose time have come that will help do this, and that’s what we’re here talking about: the policies, and the principles, the philosophy, and the outcomes that we’re trying to achieve, and that’s what we’re here talking about at the Kemp Foundation Forum.

In addition to serving as House Speaker, Paul Ryan represents Wisconsin’s First Congressional District. For more information, please visit www.speakerryan.com.