

KNPR: The Corona Virus with Congressman Mark Amodei

On May 6 2020, Nevada Public Radio host Joe Schoenmann was joined by Congressman Mark Amodei to discuss some issues of the Corona Virus and how it has affected Nevada. Congressman Amodei represents Nevada's second congressional district which includes areas such as Reno and a lot of Nevada's rural communities. The conversation starts out with Schoenmann Schoenmann by saying that some people believe that politics are hindering the solutions to Covid-19. The bipartisan problem solvers caucus is made of forty-eight representatives of the House and is split equally between the two political parties; democrats and republicans. This has caused some tension as Schoenmann states that some republicans have made strong statements against democratic proposals. In response Congressman Amodei said that those statements are probably said in order to appeal to their party and future voters as congress has become more partisan over the past decade. As an older member, Representative Amodei is more focused on solving the actual issues which he believes makes a stronger statement when it comes to election time. It is important to address the bipartisanship within the House of Representatives and it's relationship with the leaders of the United States because the caucus is supposed to come up with solutions to solve pressing issues such as the Corona Virus and propose it to the leaders. However, if there is no respect between the caucus and the White House it is less likely things will be passed. On the other hand, Representative Amodei said that bills are being supported and that solutions are being made in regards to Covid-19.

The next issue discussed regarding Covid-19 was testing. Schoenmann asked if the federal government was doing anything to increase testing for Covid-19. In response Representative Amodei said that in the last bill there was \$25 billion for testing nationwide. Representative Amodei stresses the importance of testing as it tells trends for medical research and is important for the economy. Testing will provide statistical evidence for what areas will need more medical assistance and possibly more funding to support the fight against the virus. As for the economy, the testing data will give the government an

idea of when to start opening up more businesses. In regards to District Two, Northern Nevada, the congressman proudly reported that safety guidelines have been implemented to prevent the spread of the virus. He said that he has seen people wearing masks, the stores are regulating how many customers are allowed in at a time, and people are keeping their distance.

Recently Las Vegas Mayor Carolyn Goodman publicly stated that she wanted Las Vegas to open immediately and got a lot of backlash for it because people thought that it would be irresponsible to open so soon as the number of cases would only go up. In addition there has been a lot of political protest in the Reno area to open businesses now for the sake of the economy. A lot of the people protesting claim to be Trump supporters and Trump is known to want to open businesses as soon as possible. In this case the federal government has lifted the quarantine but a lot of state governments are requiring their citizens to remain at home. This has caused a split in society. In Representative Amodei's opinion there is no right answer and we will only know what we should have done after the fact. He wants to reenergize the tax space and he believes that the 117th congress will have to focus on economic recovery. Overall, he says that there will be a new normal which brought up the concept of executive orders. Executive orders in the past have been known to take away a few liberties of the people which comes into conflict with the Bill of Rights. This pandemic is a public health emergency and the health of the public is the government's responsibility. However, there is a fine line as to what restrictions are for safety and which ones take away too much of the people's rights.

The last issue discussed is the crisis of the country's federal budget. Covid-19 has taken a huge portion out of the budget and the country is struggling with funding. When asked what is the government doing to get more funding Representative Amodei said that there is no clear answer yet however, there has been more of a push to find out who is responsible for the origin and spread of the virus. It is believed that China is responsible but this is important to confirm it because the United States owes China a lot of money. Congressman Amodei said that there have been ideas of reprimations thrown around to help

alleviate some of the United States' debt to China. Overall there are still a lot of unknowns about the virus and our country's future.

Works Cited

Johnson, Bert. "Amodei On Coronavirus Response: 'I Don't Need Sayin', I Need Doin'." *KNPR's State of Nevada*, Nevada Public Radio, 6 May 2020.