

Marco Rubio Says He Can Do This Without New Taxes

With the Republican presidential candidates preparing to debate Thursday evening on FOX Business, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) has shifted his message from national security to another topic important to many voters.

During an “economic town hall” event held Monday afternoon in Sarasota, Florida, he said America’s identity as a special nation—an identity that has “long been tied to the belief that here, anything is possible”—is at stake in this election. He said the American Dream—that you don’t have to come from wealth or privilege to provide a comfortable life for your family, and that anyone who works hard can leave their children better off than themselves—is dying:

“It’s not dying because our people have changed. They haven’t. It’s dying because both parties in Washington have let us down.

“It’s dying because Barack Obama has abandoned the economic principles that made us the most prosperous nation in the world. It’s dying because Congress has spent us into unprecedented debt. And it’s dying because, while our economy is pushing the boundaries of the 21st century, our leaders are stuck in the 20th.”

Rubio then laid out his plan for revitalizing the American economy without raising new taxes. His plan involves addressing the nation’s debt crisis by reforming entitlements, passing a balanced budget amendment, reforming regulations and reforming the tax code.

His speech included a sobering fact: When the next president assumes office, the U.S. will be \$20 trillion in debt:

“It’s difficult to even fathom how much that is. So think about it this way: If you were to count 20 trillion dollars by hand, at one dollar per second without stopping, it wouldn’t take a year or a decade or even a century to finish counting. It would take you over 600,000 years.

“That’s how much money we will owe when Barack Obama leaves the White House. The debt will have almost doubled since he took office. Much of it we’ll owe to China. And make no mistake: if we change nothing, we are going to have a debt crisis in this country. It is going to destroy jobs. It is going to disrupt the function of our government. It is going to threaten our national security.”

He called the nation’s debt crisis “predictable” and noted that under President Obama, the debt has doubled, and under the last three presidents, Congress has raised the “debt ceiling” 20 times. He said he would address this by reining in “irresponsible spending” and reform Social Security and Medicare.

Rubio then repeated his call for an Article V convention of states to address constitutional amendments. Those amendments should deal with limiting the size and scope of government, requiring a balanced budget, and imposing term limits on Congress and the Supreme Court:

“As president, I can promote such a convention, but I cannot make it happen without the American people. That’s why I’m asking for your help today. To any American worried about the debt we’re leaving our children: Join me in this effort. Press your state representatives to convene a convention of states.”

Rubio said that Democrat candidate Hillary Clinton; her “avowed socialist” opponent, U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.); and several Republican candidates were advocating for more

taxes or bureaucratic regulations. He then accused “some candidates”—a reference to U.S. Sens. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Rand Paul (R-Ky.)—of supporting a Value Added Tax, or VAT, which “works by taxing businesses at each stage of the production process.”

Most experts agree that the Cruz and Paul tax plans call for VATs, although not necessarily by name. Rubio called this “sneaky,” and that it hits squarely on business’ profits and wages by “punishing” businesses that earn money or hand out raises to employees.

“It attempts to trick people into believing their taxes are being lowered, when in reality they’re simply being shifted to employers—meaning everyday Americans would feel its impact through higher prices and lower wages. This would be especially harmful to the poor and senior citizens with fixed incomes.

“The VAT makes for a dangerous expansion of Washington’s power, especially when stacked on top of an income tax. In most European countries where a VAT has been implemented, government has grown in size. It’s no wonder that fans of the VAT include Nancy Pelosi and Barack Obama, who called it a ‘novel idea.’

“And opponents included Ronald Reagan, who said the Value Added Tax, quote, ‘gives a government a chance to blindfold the people and grow in stature and size.’ And he was right. No candidate who supports this tax can claim to be in favor of abolishing the IRS. Reagan’s Treasury Department estimated it would need 20,000 new agents just to administer a VAT.”

Rubio also railed against Republicans who support an online sales tax, and reiterated he does not support any new taxes. He then discussed his own tax plan, which he said would simplify and reduce taxes on individuals and businesses alike, which he called “pro-growth” and “pro-family”:

- **Lower the corporate tax rate:** “It will level the playing field between big businesses and small ones, and it will make it easier for your boss to give you a raise.”
- **Allow families to keep more of what they earn:** “I will raise the per-child tax credit so parents can keep more of their money to spend on food, clothing, school supplies and all the other daily costs of raising children.”
- **End the ‘marriage penalty’ on income taxes:** “Nothing has the ability to improve a child’s future more than being raised in a loving two-parent home, and it’s time our tax code recognizes that.”
- **Strengthen family leave policy:** “Instead of raising taxes and growing government to solve this problem, as Hillary Clinton just proposed last week, I will solve it by cutting taxes for all businesses that offer between four and 12 weeks of paid leave.”

Rubio said these “free-market reforms” will result in a tax code that improves the overall job market and job creation. He added it isn’t “rich people”—which every nation has—that makes America great:

“What makes America great is that we have millions of people who are not necessarily rich, but who have a job that pays a comfortable wage, that enables them to do the activities they enjoy with the people they love, to retire with dignity and ultimately to leave their children better off than themselves. That has been possible in America because of the choices generations before us have made.”

Rubio said almost every other country in the world has chosen to have an economy dominated by its government. He said past generations of Americans, however, have chosen individual liberty, limited government and free enterprise but that the past seven years under President Obama has been entirely different:

“His ideas have sent the message to our people that becoming better off requires someone else becoming worse off—that the only way to climb up the economic ladder is to pull someone else down—that government is the best hope for those in search of a better life.

“But his big government ideas have failed us. Our people hear him talk about how well the economy is doing, but they don’t feel it in their lives. And as a result, we are now at risk of seeing an entire generation of Americans lose hope in the fundamental promise of our country: the promise that hard work and perseverance will lead to a better life.

“Seven years of Barack Obama have left us a nation in decline. But we can still pull out of the dive. Because we are not a weak country, we just have a weak President.”

But the time to act is now, Rubio added. He said American could not afford another four years under Hillary Clinton like the eight before them under Obama. And, he said, the election isn’t just a choice between two parties:

“It is a generational choice about our identity as a nation. We did not become an exceptional nation by accident. For over two centuries, each generation before us did what they needed to do to make this the greatest nation on earth. And now, the time has come for us to do our part.”

If elected president, Rubio pledged to “return to the principles that made America great.” He said the country would put the “false promise of big government” aside and embrace “the power of a free people in a free economy” to regain prosperity.

In doing so, he added, the American Dream can not only be saved, but shared with even more Americans.