

Presidential Hopeful Carly Fiorina Doesn't Mince Words With Christian Pastors

Carly Fiorina, former CEO of tech giant Hewlett Packard and 2016 GOP Presidential primary contender, minced few words on a conference call with members of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference on Friday.

"We need more than Supreme Court justices who profess fealty for conservative traditional values, we need justices who stand up in the face of pressure," Fiorina, whose late father was a judge on the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, said.

She said America "must redouble our efforts to protect religious liberty in this country. It is stunning that the Supreme Court has to hear a case where federal government is trying to impose its values on a religious order, the Little Sisters of the Poor. ... We have reached a dangerous place."

The nearly one-hour call placed Fiorina, currently averaging 3.2 percent support in national polls, down from 6.3 percent in mid-August, in front of evangelical pastors representing one of the church's fastest-growing communities. Hispanics, NHCLC President Rev. Sam Rodriguez pointed out, have a thriving and growing middle class that is threatened by increased taxation and regulation.

Fiorina agreed, noting, "We have a 73,000-page tax code, a regulatory thicket that is impenetrable. When I talk about government crushing the small and the powerless, government is indeed crushing entrepreneurs. If there is not enough job creation, we cannot lift people out of poverty."

Fiorina stressed the need for teachers and school

administrators to recognize “the God-given gifts, dignity and value of every child. While that may seem obvious, there are some (educators) who aren’t quite sure of that.” She supported downsizing the federal Department of Education, and said “to give parents choices, we need to empower families,” which she said included giving them options for “parochial schooling, homeschooling and charter schools.”

While not directly addressing the status of an estimated 12 million undocumented aliens currently in the United States, Fiorina decried harsh rhetoric from some GOP contenders on the question of immigration and border security. Although his name wasn’t mentioned, it was clear she was referring chiefly to Donald J. Trump, who pledged to deport the undocumented and build a “wall” on the southern border of the United States.

“Unhelpful rhetoric divides our nation, and it plays on the fears of people,” Fiorina said. “Fear is not redemptive, it is one of the tools of the devil.”

She added that “immigration has been the source of our vitality and growth” as a nation, and pledged to fix the system for legal immigration to the U.S.

On the controversial issue of abortion, Fiorina, who blasted Planned Parenthood for reportedly selling parts of aborted fetuses for medical research, said the question was a personal one for her.

“My husband’s mother was told to abort him. ... We have been together 34 years and I have thought often how different my life would be if she had made a different choice,” Fiorina said, noting that she was unable to have children of her own, “so I know at a very personal level how precious a gift life is.”

She added that the Planned Parenthood case means “we can finally touch the hearts of so many Americans who might not have wanted to think about this issue. ... [And] as we make

progress with Americans, even those who don't know they agree with us, we are going to win this battle."

Fiorina, who said she had a close relationship with God and Jesus Christ in her youth, admitted her concept shifted during her adult years, imagining God to be a "super CEO" uninvolved with the details of individual lives. One Christmas morning, however, she said her perspective suddenly and permanently changed.

"I thought that human beings created a GPS where technology can keep track of billions of parts and give precise instructions," she explained. "If mankind is capable of that, then Jesus Christ is capable of having a relationship with each of us."

Having made that commitment, Fiorina said, "Over the next several years, that relationship was tested." She battled cancer and, in 2009, mourned the death of her stepdaughter Lori, who had lost a battle with addiction.

"I know those tests drew me closer to God and deepened my relationship with Jesus Christ," she added. "I pray this journey will take me to the place God intends."