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Ronald Reagan Institute Hosts “Across the Aisle” series with Representatives Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA) and Young Kim (R-CA)

WASHINGTON, DC – The Ronald Reagan Institute’s Center for Civics, Education, and Opportunity (CCEO) hosted Representatives Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA) and Young Kim (R-CA) on Monday for an engaging bipartisan conversation centered around the importance of civil discourse. The event is part of the Institute’s summer “Across the Aisle” speaker series for emerging leaders who are part of the Ronald Reagan Institute’s [Leadership and the American Presidency](#) (LTAP) program.

“It takes more than one political party to keep America free, safe, and prosperous,” said CCEO Director Janet Tran in her introductory remarks. President Reagan and Speaker of the House Thomas “Tip” O’Neil repeatedly reached across the aisle, despite fierce ideological and political differences, to engage in bipartisan negotiation for the betterment of the country. “Across the Aisle” conversations are designed to invoke this legacy with today’s leaders who are working towards strengthening our democracy and discourse.

Reagan Institute Director Roger Zakheim, who moderated the conversation, stressed that the best way to advance civics in this country is to have elected officials model it, whether in an on open forum with students or while deliberating on the House floor. “Bipartisanship and collaboration is a great way to do that,” he said.

For Houlahan and Kim, who are both members of the Problem Solvers Caucus, bipartisanship is key to their legislative and political successes. “I don’t have to hide my bipartisanship, if I do, I’m not the right person to represent my community,” said Houlahan.

Kim, who represents one of the most diverse congressional districts in California, agreed. “If you want to get anything done and represent your constituents, you really have to learn how to work across the aisle,” she said.

Houlahan and Kim collaborated on and co-sponsored the bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021, which would enable the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to leverage resources to prevent and treat malnutrition globally. The bill overwhelmingly passed the House and is currently awaiting a Senate vote.

Throughout the discussion, Houlahan and Kim emphasized that though they may have opposing viewpoints, it does not prevent them from working together on important issues.

“We can get a lot of things done if we only treat each other with respect,” said Kim.

A recording of the event is posted on the Reagan Institute’s [YouTube Channel](#).

CCEO will host its next major event, “[Reagan Institute Summit on Education \(RISE\)](#),” on July 27 and 28 virtually and in-person at its Washington, D.C., office and auditorium. The event will feature leaders and key stakeholders in the education community – including members of Congress, federal and state education officials, Governors, academics and business leaders, – to address the purpose and health of education in the United States.

About the Ronald Reagan Institute: The Ronald Reagan Institute (RRI), the Washington, DC office of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute, promotes our 40th President’s ideals, vision, and leadership example through substantive, issue-driven forums, academic and young professional programming, and scholarly work. RRI builds on the legacy and ideas of President Reagan through our three policy centers: the Center for Civics, Education, and Opportunity, the Center for Peace Through Strength, and the Center for Freedom and Democracy. Each of these centers ensure President Reagan’s legacy is advanced in our nation’s capital.

The Ronald Reagan Institute’s Center for Civics, Education, and Opportunity (CCEO) works at the nexus of civics and education policy, answering President Reagan’s call for an “informed patriotism” to ensure a prosperous future for America. American civic life poses many challenges to our institutions and to our faith in democratic practice to improve them. These challenges require a multifaceted approach. As such, the CCEO looks to create a collective impact on American society through partnerships that help support the three levers of change. Together, the CCEO will look to these levers to better prepare America to answer the challenges of the 21st century and “renew the American spirit and sense of purpose.”

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