



**TRANSCRIPT**

**SHOW AIRING MAY 2, 2010**

**Host: Roland Martin**

**Guests: Austan Goolsbee, White House Council of Economic Advisors**

**Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD)**

**Wade Henderson, CEO, Leadership Conference on Civil  
and Human Rights**

**April Ryan, White House Correspondent, American Urban Radio Networks**

**Karen Finney, Democratic Political Strategist and MSNBC Contributor**

**Deborah Simmons, Senior Correspondent, *The Washington Times***

**Smokey Fontaine, Chief Content Officer, NewsOne.com/Interactive One**



TV One – Washington Watch

K. Wills Transcripts

Contact/Producer: Jay Feldman

Story/Angle: “Washington Watch” – May 2, 2010 Show

**(HEAD-  
LINES)**

MR. ROLAND MARTIN: At the top of our agenda this week, after days of blocking debate on financial reform, Senate Republicans give up. Now the hard work of getting a good bill begins. The GOP says Democrats and the President are playing the race card to gain votes in the midterm election, and Arizona’s controversial immigration law raises important questions for African-Americans.

Our “Washington Watch” newsmaker this week – Austan Goolsbee, of the White House Council of Economic Advisors, breaks down the financial reform bill and explains how it could protect ordinary citizens from paying the price of big-bank greed. Plus, Baltimore congressman Elijah Cummings on what can be done to cut down the epidemic of street violence in our cities. And in our “Washington Watch” roundtable, April Ryan, White House correspondent for American Urban Radio Networks; Karen Finney, Democratic political strategist and MSNBC contributor; and Deborah Simmons, senior correspondent for *The Washington Times*. Plus, the nation says so long to civil rights icon Dr. Dorothy Height. All that and more today on “Washington Watch.”

**(SEG-  
MENT 1)**

MR. MARTIN: Financial reform cleared its first hurdle this week when the Senate, after several days of Republican filibusters, agreed to take the issue up for debate, their debate expected to last right up until the Fourth of July. When the fireworks are over, just what will it mean to you and me? Joining me today to answer

that question is Austan Goolsbee of the White House Council of Economic Advisors and one of President Barack Obama's key financial aides.

Austan, welcome back to the show.

MR. AUSTAN GOOLSBEE: Great to see you again.

MR. MARTIN: All right. Let's jump right into it. Last week, we had Sen. Ted Kaufman on the show, and he has a bill with Sen. Sherrod Brown saying "break up the banks." Everybody's talking about "too big to fail." Why is the White House not supporting this particular initiative, if the concern is we have these banks that control too much of the resources of this country?

MR. GOOLSBEE: Well, look. The President is completely and totally committed to ending this notion of "too big to fail." The only thing I'd say about it is it's not just about big, and so we're looking at all sorts of ways to fight this, but the – the guys that ne- -- needed to get bailed out before – AIG, Lehman Brothers – if you look at Bear Stearns, they weren't the biggest. You could break up the big banks and still be plenty bigger than Lehman. What we[ve] got to end is "too *dangerous* to fail." It's not just about size. But we're looking at – at the – the Brown-Kaufman proposal. We're looking at a lot of things. We ought to end it on size. We ought to end it with the derivatives. We ought to end it of what banks are allowed to do, what kind of risky activities they can take. We ought to end it in every way we can, because –

MR. ROLAND MARTIN: But –

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- we – we – we can't do this – [crosstalk].

MR. MARTIN: -- but here's what's interesting about this particular bill, and that is we have different facets of -- in terms of what it does, what it -- what it does not do. All the polling -- polling data suggests two thirds of Americans say, "We want more regulation against Wall Street." You've had Sen. Chris Dodd, who's been going back and forth with Sen. Richard Shelby on this. Republicans and Democrats are trying to work it out. Why not simply come out and make this the absolute toughest bill possible? Put *everything* in it? Because the reality is the -- the polling data shows the American people have no problem with it. *Wall Street* won't like it.

MR. GOOLSBEE: [Chuckles.] Well, look. Wall Street doesn't like w- -- what -- what we're doing. I hope that we will take the approach not just "let's do anything we can get in the bill." Let's do the right thing. The President's committed to that. Now, that means, first and foremost, let's protect the American people. The Consumer Financial Protection Agency -- independent. Make sure we don't get into the same kind of shenanigans and troubles that we got into --

MR. MARTIN: But -- but --

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- here.

MR. MARTIN: -- will it be independent? Will it be a --

MR. GOOLSBEE: Yeah, it --

MR. MARTIN: -- stand-alone --

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- has to be.

MR. MARTIN: -- or will it be under the Federal Reserve? Because if the

[crosstalk]- --

MR. GOOLSBEE: That part I don't know --

MR. MARTIN: -- because if it's --

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- but --

MR. MARTIN: -- under the --

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- it must be independent.

MR. MARTIN: -- well, if it's under the Federal Reserve -- I mean they were --  
their job is to protect the financial *system*.

MR. GOOLSBEE: Yes.

MR. MARTIN: So, it's -- it's a little hard for the -- the -- the division of the  
government whose job is to protect the -- to protect the system to have an agency  
underneath them who --

MR. GOOLSBEE: I -- look, I --

MR. MARTIN: -- is about the consumer.

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- I hear you, and it's the -- while that might at first seem true,  
that's the system we have now.

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. GOOLSBEE: We've got seven, different agencies that have consumer  
protection in there, and [for] none of them is that their main job. But if this were in the  
Fed, that would be different. This would be independent. You've seen the Fed saying,  
"Well, wait a minute. We don't want somebody in us that's totally independent," the

way this consumer agency would –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- be. So, the fact that the – the big banks and even the Fed are saying, “That seems too independent,” I think, is a – is an indicator. The President

–

MR. MARTIN: Is this a –

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- is going to sign *the most comprehensive*, toughest consumer protection law we have ever had in this country –

MR. MARTIN: -- but is this –

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- and it will be independent.

MR. MARTIN: -- is this – so, is that a deal breaker for the White House? And –

MR. GOOLSBEE: That is –

MR. MARTIN: -- that is --

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- a deal breaker.

MR. MARTIN: -- so, that is –

MR. GOOLSBEE: The President –

MR. MARTIN: -- that’s – that –

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- has said –

MR. MARTIN: -- that the consumer –

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- it must have –

MR. MARTIN: -- protection agency must be an independent agency to look out –

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- well, no, I didn't --

MR. MARTIN: -- for consumers.

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- s- -- I don't know where it will be housed, but the President's totally committed and said he won't sign a bill if it doesn't have a strong, independent agency for consumer protection, that puts in place the toughest laws we've ever had.

MR. MARTIN: What else does this bill do for the average consumer? How -- ho- -- I mean how does --

MR. GOOLSBEE: Yeah.

MR. MARTIN: -- this benefit them, protect them, as opposed to simply deal with Wall Street?

MR. GOOLSBEE: Yeah, exa- -- and that's a great question. So, the first and most important is the Consumer Financial Protection Agency, which is going to deal with mortgages, credit cards, payday lenders, check cashing -- a whole bunch of ways in which ordinary people interact with the financial system -- to make sure that they don't get duped, that they don't get taken advantage of, that we don't have as -- the massively complicated loopholes and all that stuff in your belt.

The second thing is you're going to know if -- if you have a bank, and you have an account at this bank, if something goes wrong in the economy, you're not going to lose all your money. You're not going to lose your deposits. You're w- -- we've just gone through a crisis where the very *existence* of a bunch of people's financial

institutions was in jeopardy. And that leads to the third thing. Nobody is ever going to have to come up with money to bail out these institutions again. We're going to outlaw that. If anybody gets to where they are going to fail, they have to fail. The government's going to liquidate them, break them up into pieces. Any of the costs of either the bailouts that have been done, or any future costs that m- -- that might occur are going to be paid by financial institutions.

MR. MARTIN: Well, but here's what's interesting – that all last year, the White House spent lots of time wagging their finger at banks, talking about bonuses and things along those lines, but there was no teeth behind it. And that is it was constant, “You're spending too much,” “You're spending too much,” “You're spending too much.” And so for the American consumer, they're saying, “*Wait* a minute. These guys are still handing out billions of dollars in bonuses. They're” – “They are st-“ – “They survive because we bailed them out.”

And so how do you deal with that, when the public is saying, “We're still getting screwed – we've lost 8 million jobs – while they are still getting rich”?

MR. GOOLSBEE: Look, I hear – I *agree* with those people saying that.  
[Chuckles.] You might've heard *me*. I was saying that.

The thing is this. When George Bush – Pres. George Bush started the TARP and the – and the bailouts began in fall of '08, they did not put in the kinds of conditions that would have – that – that we could have used to prevent that. Now, the President, coming into office, they put in the special pay master. They've t- -- they have – for

companies that have gotten –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- bonu- -- they have put in tough conditions. The President, in this financial reform, wants to put in “say-on-pay” legislation that would allow the shareholders at these companies to say, “Wait. Hold on a second. We want to have a voice in how much you’re paying the people who” – “If” – “We’re the owners of the company. We don’t want them to pay out,” you know, “excessive bonuses.”

What the President said in his remarks, I thought, was – was most telling –

MR. MARTIN: Um-hum?

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- in that he said nobody begrudges if you’re getting paid for performance. But what’s confused people here, and what has them very upset is a whole lot of people are getting paid –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. GOOLSBEE: -- and it doesn’t look like they *had* a whole lot of performance. We had a whole lot of rescues and saving their bacon, so how are they getting paid? And I think that is a perfectly valid question.

MR. MARTIN: Financial news this week: gross domestic product has – that number’s gone up, but the most important thing in there is that consumer spending – the confidence – increased –

MR. GOOLSBEE: [Crosstalk.]

MR. MARTIN: -- more than 3 percent. Now, the question is, i- -- is that the latest

sign that we are slowly inching ourselves into a much better economy? What does it really mean for the consumer – those numbers?

MR. GOOLSBEE: I – I think it is. I think you've said it exactly right. That is a sign that we are turning the corner. And we've now had three, straight quarters of positive growth. When the President took office, we were at  $-6\frac{1}{2}$  percent. Now we're at  $+3\frac{1}{2}$ . So, we've got to get the economy going on a sustained level – and hopefully, this is a sign of that – and that is a prerequisite for getting the job growth that the President says we must have. So, this is a good sign. The consumer growth of their spending and confidence is also a good sign, but it's not enough. I mean this is just the beginnings. We're not really going to have confidence, and we can't call it a full-blown recovery, until we start getting some major, positive numbers on the job side.

MR. MARTIN: Okay. Austan Goolsbee, we appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

MR. GOOLSBEE: Great to see you again.

MR. MARTIN: All right.

Folks the President returns to the playbook he used during to win the presidency, but Sarah Palin and Rush Limbaugh say he's playing the race card. We'll delve into that story and much more with our roundtable panelists, April Ryan of American Urban Radio Networks; Karen Finney, Democratic political strategist and MSNBC contributor; and Deborah Simmons from *The Washington Times*. Be sure to stick around. Trust me. It's always an interesting conversation.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 2)**

MR. MARTIN: All right. There's a lot of news this week we have to tackle, and so let's jump right into it. Joining me today are April Ryan, White House correspondent for American Urban Radio Networks; Karen Finney, Democratic political strategist and MSNBC contributor; and Deborah Simmons, senior correspondent for *The Washington Times*.

And so before we started, April said can I handle three women. [Scoffs.] Of course.

MS. APRIL RYAN: *No*.

MS. KAREN FINNEY: Oh! Oh.

MS. RYAN: No, no, no.

[CROSSTALK CHUCKLING.]

MR. MARTIN: All right! Let's – [crosstalk]. I'm a grown man.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: All right.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: We have this one issue where Republicans are – are criticizing the President, saying he is playing the race card when it comes to his – the – you know, the campaign – 2010 – the vote in November. Here's what the President had to say as it relates to who they're targeting in the campaign.

[VIDEO CLIP.]

PRES. BARACK OBAMA: It will be up to each of you to make sure that the young people, African-Americans, Latinos and women who powered our victory in 2008 stand together once again. If you help us make sure that first-time voters in 2008 make their voices heard again in November, then together we will deliver on the promise of change and hope and prosperity for generations to come.

[END OF VIDEO CLIP.]

MR. MARTIN: All right. Deborah said the White folks [are] upset.

[LAUGHTER.]

MR. MARTIN: So, *The Washington Examiner*, *The Washington Times* running these headlines, “ignoring White guys” --

MS. DEBORAH SIMMONS: Yeah, yeah.

MR. MARTIN: *What-* --

MS. SIMMONS: What’s up --

MR. MARTIN: -- *-ever*.

MS. SIMMONS: -- with that? What’s up with that? Look. It’s -- it’s -- there’re critics who want to say it’s a version of Obama saying, “White men can’t jump.” The fact of the matter is that White males vote every election anywhere from 30 to 35 -- 37, 38 percent of them carry in the presidential race. We just saw -- we saw it with Kerry. We saw it with Bush. We saw it with O- -- Obama in the -- in the ... last election.

But here’s the bottom line: African-Americans, Latinos and women are --

MR. MARTIN: And young voters.

MS. SIMMONS: -- and young voters -- young voters? No. I don't -- I'm not putting young voters in this --

MR. MARTIN: All right.

MS. SIMMONS: -- category --

MR. MARTIN: Okay.

MS. SIMMONS: -- because they came out in enormous numbers --

MS. FINNEY: Yes.

MS. SIMMONS: -- the last presidential election. This is a midterm election, so I believe he's talking to them to get them to carry over that energy --

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. SIMMONS: -- from two years ago.

MR. MARTIN: But -- but, Karen --

MS. SIMMONS: Understandable. And Black --

MR. MARTIN: -- [crosstalk] --

MS. SIMMONS: -- folks don't always -- come on. Let's be truthful.

MR. MARTIN: -- no, I *gotcha*.

MS. SIMMONS: Black folks don't always --

MS. FINNEY: [Crosstalk] --

MS. SIMMONS: -- turn out in large numbers --

MR. MARTIN: But, Karen --

MS. SIMMONS: -- during midterms.

MS. RYAN: In the midterms. Not the midterms.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: -- *this was the* –

MS. RYAN: That's right.

MR. MARTIN: -- *coalition that put him in office.*

MS. FINNEY: But here's –

MS. SIMMONS: Yeah.

MS. FINNEY: -- the thing. I mean here's the thing. There were how many headlines right after he won about – let's – and we did polling. Let's look at the coalition of voters that Obama was – put together. It was young voters, African-American voters, Hispanic voters. That was kind of the new coalition –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. FINNEY: -- a lot of new voters. And, frankly, it is a time – long-honored tactic that when you're in a midterm election, you go for what we call "drop-off" voters.

MS. SIMMONS: Right.

MS. FINNEY: African-Americans tend to be drop-off voters, meaning they don't vote in midterm elections.

MR. MARTIN: Now – now, April, now, look. Now, the President and Tim Kaine, DNC Chairman, they can sit here and make these kind[s] of videos; but it's really your *policies* that are going to get people –

MS. RYAN: Right.

MR. MARTIN: -- enthusiastic.

MS. RYAN: Right.

MR. MARTIN: And Democratic enthusiasm [is] way down compared to Republicans'.

MS. RYAN: Right. And Valerie Jarrett just this week had a roundtable of African-American reporters in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, and she specifically came out saying, "Look," you know, "we were there for African-Americans, particularly with the healthcare reform bill. We've been there, trying to help the Black farmers." And she also talked about HBCUs, trying to push out that, "Yes, we're here. We're working." Yes, you sti- -- yet, you still have the issue of unemployment.

But on the issue of Hispanic voters, that's going to be a problem for the midterm, because [of] the immigration issue. The President --

MR. MARTIN: Right, um-hum.

MS. RYAN: -- was on the plane last week, saying, "Look. I'm not dealing with that now, because," you know, "we've got a lot on our plate, the midterms" -- i.e., that's something that he should be doing to help *bring* the Hispanics in.

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. RYAN: And then you also have the issue of the fact that he said there's too much -- we've been doing too much already.

MR. MARTIN: Right. So, done dealing with the race card. Enough. [Flings his

note cards.] I'm tired of the Republicans on that one.

[CHUCKLING.]

MR. MARTIN: Okay. All right. Ne- -- next topic. You mentioned immigration. All right? Let's get right into it. The Democrats come out this week. They announce this plan. People call it politics, Sen. Harry Reid trying to get -- gin up support for his reelection campaign. Here's what bothers me. I'm tired of punk politicians.

MS. RYAN: Umph!

MR. MARTIN: I'm sick and tired of Republicans and Democrats --

MS. RYAN: Define --

MR. MARTIN: -- I'm t- --

MS. RYAN: -- "punk politician."

MR. MARTIN: -- *no*. Punk politicians? The people who're in Congress right now, and that is, "Oh. I don't wanna make a tough vote. I've already had a tough vote on healthcare."

OFF CAMERA: That's right.

MR. MARTIN: Well, why in the hell are you in Congress? If you don't want --

MS. FINNEY: That's what your *job* is.

MR. MARTIN: -- if -- I mean your job is to do this. And I'm tired of Sen. Lindsey Graham, "Oh, we don't need to deal with" -- "Well, we can't do two issues at one time."

What *is* it about these weak-kneed, punk politicians --

MS. RYAN: *Um!*

MR. MARTIN: -- who can't tackle two, major issues at one time that we must --

MS. FINNEY: Well --

MR. MARTIN: -- confront?

MS. FINNEY: -- and, of course, one of the things that Republicans were saying is, "Well," you know, "we've already got so much" on their plate, and *then* they say --

MR. MARTIN: *What's on their plate?*

MS. FINNEY: -- but *then* they say -- this is what's --

MS. RYAN: Midterm elections.

MS. FINNEY: -- my favorite one --

MR. MARTIN: This is their *job!*

MS. FINNEY: -- but my favorite one is they say, "Well, but," you know, "this is a failure of Barack Obama to a-" -- "to address the immigration problem."

Now, *wait* a second. You can't have too much on your plate, and you're not doing enough --

MS. SIMMONS: Well, you *can* --

MS. FINNEY: -- at the same time.

MS. SIMMONS: -- you can if you've got Sen. McCain in Arizona --

MS. FINNEY: Who is completely --

MS. SIMMONS: -- and Char- --

MS. FINNEY: -- abandoning -- [crosstalk].

MS. SIMMONS: -- and Charlie Cri- -- and --

MR. MARTIN: He's one –

MS. SIMMONS: -- wait a minute!

MR. MARTIN: -- he's *one guy*!

MS. SIMMONS: No! And Charlie Crist a- -- in Florida during a midterm ele- --  
where they're trying to – Re- -- Republicans *and* Democrats are battling for those  
Senate se- --

MR. MARTIN: But, Deborah –

MS. FINNEY: But – [crosstalk] –

MS. SIMMONS: -- for those senate seats –

MR. MARTIN: -- De- -- Deborah, Deborah –

MS. SIMMONS: -- when –

MR. MARTIN: -- Deborah, Deborah –

MS. SIMMONS: -- large –

MR. MARTIN: -- I – I understand –

MS. SIMMONS: -- numbers of Hispanics are –

[CROSSTALK.]

MS. SIMMONS: -- living –

MR. MARTIN: -- Deborah –

MS. SIMMONS: -- *legally* –

MR. MARTIN: -- I *got* that.

MS. SIMMONS: -- and both are engaged in a –

MR. MARTIN: Deborah, I got that.

MS. SIMMONS: -- i- -- in a -- in a civil --

MR. MARTIN: No, no. Deborah, answer this --

MS. SIMMONS: -- war.

MR. MARTIN: -- for me. Answer this for me. Is it possible that the people who're getting paid more than a hundred thousand dollars a year --

MS. SIMMONS: Um-hum.

MR. MARTIN: -- who are elected to lead --

MS. SIMMONS: Um-hum?

MR. MARTIN: -- why can't they deal with climate change and immigration? I don't *care* there's a -- there's an election in November.

MS. FINNEY: [Crosstalk] --

MS. SIMMONS: They can.

MR. MARTIN: Why can't --

MS. FINNEY: They *can*.

MR. MARTIN: -- they do it?

MS. RYAN: It's a practical[?] issue -- [crosstalk] -- congressional --

[CROSSTALK.]

MS. SIMMONS: But they have to --

MS. RYAN: -- [crosstalk].

MS. SIMMONS: -- speak out of both sides of their mouths, as politicians --

MR. MARTIN: So, they're – [crosstalk] –

MS. SIMMONS: -- do all the time!

MR. MARTIN: -- politicians.

MS. RYAN: They –

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: Okay. I gotcha. [Chuckles.]

MS. SIMMONS: [Chuckles.]

MS. FINNEY: In fairness, the Democrats came out with a plan late in the week, and, actually, President Obama was very favorable towards the plan –

MR. MARTIN: No. First –

MS. FINNEY: -- and – [crosstalk] –

MR. MARTIN: -- of all –

MS. FINNEY: -- no, no, no, no, no.

MR. MARTIN: -- now, let's be honest. The President's vacillating. On one day –

MS. FINNEY: He may be –

MR. MARTIN: -- he says –

MS. FINNEY: -- vacillating, but –

MR. MARTIN: -- no, no, no.

MS. FINNEY: -- it's our job –

MR. MARTIN: He's –

MR. FINNEY: -- to hold him accou- -- he's –

MR. MARTIN: -- but is he -- but he's --

MS. FINNEY: -- now come out --

MR. MARTIN: -- not *leading*.

MS. FINNEY: -- in support of it. Well, you know, that we're going to have to push him on. But I think there's an important political point we need to make around here. What we just talked about in terms of the Republicans claiming that Democrats are playing the race card -- that is linked to this issue.

MS. RYAN: Yes -- [crosstalk].

MS. FINNEY: Republicans are terrified because they know that this law in Arizona -- now being proposed in Texas, by the way -- means that the Republican party has ceded the ground in terms of any o- -- [crosstalk] --

MR. MARTIN: But -- but wait a --

MS. FINNEY: -- possibility of -- [crosstalk] --

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: -- minute. But wait a minute.

MS. SIMMONS: Washington has been wrestling with immigration reform --

MR. MARTIN: Democrats and --

MS. SIMMONS: -- for fif- --

MR. MARTIN: -- Republicans.

MS. SIMMONS: -- *absolutely* --

MS. RYAN: But -- but -- [crosstalk] --

MS. SIMMONS: -- for *15 years!*

MS. FINNEY: This has been a problem for a *very long time*. The Congress of the United States of America – [the] same members have been there for the last eight years.

MR. MARTIN: Both parties.

MS. RYAN: Both parties.

MS. FINNEY: Both parties have completely failed in their responsibility to lead on this issue. Obama has an opportunity to lead on this issue, but what I *hope* happens is –

MR. MARTIN: But Democrats –

MS. FINNEY: -- wait a second. Wait a second. What I hope happens, though, is we cannot take the pressure off of congressional Republicans and congressional Democrats. If they're so worried about this issue now – as they should be – now is the time to put all this b.s. politics aside, and let's get something *done*.

MS. RYAN: What's happening in Arizona – it's a violation of equal protections under the Consti- --

MR. MARTIN: Well, fir- -- well, fir- --

MS. RYAN: -- -tution.

MR. MARTIN: -- well, fir- -- first of all, the courts haven't ruled on that.

MS. RYAN: Right.

MR. MARTIN: Okay. This is a crazy election. You know, of course, Charlie

Crist –

OFF CAMERA: Right.

MR. MARTIN: -- Republican governor, [is] now running as a[n] independent.

MS. SIMMONS: Kendrick Meek.

MR. MARTIN: Now you have Marco Rubio, who tea p- -- two be- -- tea baggers love him.

[CHUCKLING.]

MR. MARTIN: Kendrick Meek -- Cong. Kendrick Meek [on] the Democratic side. Now you have millionaire Jeff Greene, who's now thrown –

OFF CAMERA: Uh-oh!

MR. MARTIN: -- *his* hat into the deal. And so, actually, I was at a dinner a couple of months ago with him, and he said he was considering this. Now you[‘ve] got four people running, a rich guy running saying he’s an outsider, Crist independent. I mean the person who wins, you know, the governorship in Florida could win with *30 percent of the vote!*

MS. SIMMONS: Right. Absolutely.

MS. RYAN: [Crosstalk].

MS. FINNEY: That’s exactly right. That’s --

MS. SIMMONS: And – and the thing is – is that much of the media has not even focused on the fact that Kendrick Meek is in the race. Yet, you – I did a quick rundown online of who was – and mostly they’re talking about Jeff Greene, the real estate mogul

who is – who has decided to – to jump into the race; Marco Rubio, who's the Republican –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. SIMMONS: -- ca- -- standard bearer, and then –

MR. MARTIN: Crist.

MS. FINNEY: Crist.

MS. SIMMONS: -- and then Charlie Crist.

MR. MARTIN: But – but – but –

MS. SIMMONS: *But* –

MR. MARTIN: -- but if you're Cong. Kendrick Meek, and you are *the* established Democrat in the race, I mean you have the field all to yourself, if –

MS. SIMMONS: And where's –

MR. MARTIN: -- you will.

MS. SIMMONS: -- the leadership on that? That's when the – you have the titular head of the –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. SIMMONS: -- Democratic Party, who's President of the United States, and Tim – Tim Kaine, who already has shot down the immigration law –

MR. MARTIN: But – but –

MS. SIMMONS: -- and so –

MR. MARTIN: -- well, actually –

MS. SIMMON: -- [crosstalk] --

[CROSSTALK.]

OFF CAMERA: -- Kendrick Meeks [sic] -- [crosstalk] -- Obama --

MR. MARTIN: -- actually, Ka- -- actually Karen --

OFF CAMERA: -- on immigration.

MR. MARTIN: -- I -- I ... talked to Cong. Kendrick Meek on "The Tom Joyner Morning Show" on Friday. He said President Obama will be there, campaigning for him. Former President Bill Clinton will be there, campaigning for him --

MS. FINNEY: And I --

MR. MARTIN: -- and so the Democrats are going to be focusing all of their attention on Cong. --

MS. FINNEY: -- and I can --

MR. MARTIN: -- Meek while everybody else is fighting, really, for the other three candidates.

MS. FINNEY: -- and I can tell you Gov. Dean, former chairman of the party, actually, on Friday did a fundraising e-mail for Kendrick; because I think everybody sees that what ju- -- this development with Crist widely breaks things open -- the potential for Meek. If you look at -- I was taking a look at some of the polls.

MR. MARTIN: So, you think Meek is better off with three or four --

MS. FINNEY: With a three-way --

MR. MARTIN: -- candidates versus [a] --

MS. FINNEY: -- because, actually --

MR. MARTIN: -- two-way.

MS. FINNEY: -- I took a look at the polls. And if you look at the polls, they polled Crist, Meek and Rubio; and, actually, they're fairly close. There is a *good shot* there for Kendrick Meek to make up the ground. The ground that he would have to make up in a three-way versus a two-way --

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. FINNEY: -- is *much* smaller.

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. FINNEY: So, this is a *huge* opportunity --

MR. MARTIN: And -- and now --

MS. FINNEY: -- for Kendrick --

MR. MARTIN: -- with a --

MS. FINNEY: -- Meek.

MR. MARTIN: -- four-way --

MS. FINNEY: Exa- --

MR. MARTIN: -- I mean --

MS. FINNEY: -- that's exactly right. And the- -- and you know what? On the conservative side, I say let 'em duke it out over their cessationist [sic] --

MR. MARTIN: [Laughs.]

MS. FINNEY: -- exclusionist --

MS. RYAN: No, no.

MS. FINNEY: -- policies.

MS. RYAN: And I – I think that –

MS. FINNEY: Let 'em *have* it!

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: Deborah – Deb- -- Deb- -- Deb- -- Deborah, one second. April?

MS. RYAN: Okay. Let me say this, though. Again, Crist did something that was politically expedient for him. In fact –

MR. MARTIN: But also, it was a smart move.

MS. RYAN: -- right, but it's –

MS. SIMMONS: Yeah, it is.

MS. FINNEY: Of *course*!

MS. RYAN: -- but – but this – Florida right now is another test case with the Tea Party, and we're going to see what happens, but for Kendrick Meek, what would be the best thing for him is if the President *were* to do something on immigration. Florida, again, is a state that has a lot of immigrants.

MS. SIMMONS: Absolutely.

MS. RYAN: So, the bottom li- --

MS. SIMMONS: Legal.

MS. RYAN: -- yes, legal *and* il- --

MS. SIMMONS: And illegal.

MS. RYAN: -- -legal. You have 40 percent of this nation's illegal immigrants who are -- what is it -- racially profiled. And if the President were to come to Florida with some kind of immigration issue, it would really help this Democrat --

MR. MARTIN: So -- so --

MS. RYAN: -- with the Hispanic vote.

MR. MARTIN: -- so, wait -- so, you think that immigration would help Cong. Meek more than --

MS. RYAN: I think so.

MR. MARTIN: -- economics will? I -- I --

MS. RYAN: I think both sides.

MR. MARTIN: -- no. I --

MS. RYAN: I think both sides.

MR. MARTIN: -- thin- -- I think --

MS. RYAN: I think --

MS. SIMMONS: No, no, no.

MR. MARTIN: -- economics is --

MS. RYAN: -- [crosstalk] --

MS. SIMMONS: I think -- I think it's a dual road there.

MS. RYAN: -- I think so. I think so.

MS. FINNEY: [Crosstalk] --

MS. SIMMONS: What's important, and -- and for us to watch --

MS. FINNEY: -- [crosstalk].

MS. RYAN: Yes.

MS. SIMMONS: -- politically, is – is there is precedent for what Charlie Crist is doing.

MR. MARTIN: Um-hum.

MS. SIMMONS: He's following exactly what –

MS. RYAN: Joe Lieberman.

MS. SIMMONS: -- Sen. Joe Lieberman –

MS. RYAN: Yes.

MS. SIMMONS: -- did by running as an –

MR. MARTIN: A- -- a- --

MS. SIMMONS: -- independent.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: -- [crosstalk] – there.

MS. SIMMONS: B- -- a- -- and –

MR. MARTIN: Lieberman *lost* –

MS. SIMMONS: -- and remember –

MR. MARTIN: -- in the Democratic primary –

MS. SIMMONS: -- yeah, but – but remember –

MR. MARTIN: -- and then ran as a[n] independent.

MS. SIMMONS: Lieberman –

MR. MARTIN: That's the only deal.

MS. SIMMONS: -- also had other members of the Black Caucus, including  
Cong. Maxine Waters --

MR. MARTIN: Oh, yeah.

MS. SIMMONS: -- and others that had their boots on the ground in --

MR. MARTIN: Oh, I -- no, a- --

MS. SIMMONS: -- that state --

MR. MARTIN: -- absolutely.

MS. SIMMONS: -- campaigning for him --

MR. MARTIN: And -- and also --

MS. SIMMONS: -- for him -- for him --

MS. FINNEY: Wait a second.

MR. MARTIN: -- almost a year --

MS. FINNEY: Wait a second.

MR. MARTIN: -- ago to the day --

MS. SIMMONS: -- for him as well.

MR. MARTIN: -- Sen. Arlen Specter --

MS. SIMMONS: Absolutely.

MR. MARTIN: -- left the Republican Party and --

MS. SIMMONS: And -- [crosstalk] --

MR. MARTIN: -- became --

MS. FINNEY: Let's --

MR. MARTIN: -- a Democrat.

MS. SIMMONS: -- yeah.

MS. FINNEY: -- not -- I don't want us to lose sight of the fact that there was a -- so far, in the primary election, the way that Rubio has run this Tea Bagger-powered campaign against Crist says a lot about what is going on in the Republican Party right now in terms of more moderate Republicans not feeling that there is --

MS. RYAN: Extreme right.

MS. FINNEY: -- a place for them, and the -- and whether or not this question of the extreme right is going to take over the whole party.

MR. MARTIN: I -- I -- I --

MS. FINNEY: *That's* part of --

MR. MARTIN: -- I --

MS. FINNEY: -- why the Republican Party's *terrified* with --

MR. MARTIN: -- agree to --

MS. FINNEY: -- the immigration debate.

MR. MARTIN: -- a certain extent with your assessment. What I -- but what I also see -- and this is how it can affect Democrats and Republicans -- there is tremendous anger at incumbents --

MS. FINNEY: Absolutely true.

MS. SIMMONS: Absolutely.

MR. MARTIN: -- and that is the people who are in office. And that's why when --  
[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: -- when I talked about w- -- with immigration, when you talk about the weakness when it comes to Wall Street reform, what people are looking for -- they are absolutely --

MS. FINNEY: *Action!*

MR. MARTIN: -- looking for leadership. And this is why I think the President's making a mistake sort of vacillating on immigration. What people want right now is "what are you going to do?"

MS. SIMMONS: Right.

MR. MARTIN: April, Karen, Deborah, we certainly appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

MS. SIMMONS: Thank *you*.

MS. RYAN: Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: Folks, you can join in on this discussion. Log on to TVOneOnline.com and leave your comments there.

Coming up -- is immigration reform a civil rights issue or an economic problem for African-Americans? That's next on "Washington Watch."

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 3)**

MR. MARTIN: Outside of Florida and New York, immigration isn't a topic you hear much about in the African-American community, but the passage of Arizona's

controversial immigration law brought back to light two, familiar issues for many African-Americans, especially Black men: racial profiling and high levels of unemployment.

Here to put a Black perspective on immigration reform is Wade Henderson, CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

Wade, welcome to the show.

MR. WADE HENDERSON: Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: Immigration – let me tell you something. When I had my show on WVON, whenever we talked about this issue, I can tell you, 9.5 out of 10, Black folks were absolutely against amnesty. They were saying, “Send them back.” And so this is a contentious issue in the African-American community.

It’s a *very* contentious issue, Roland, and you were right when you said that the Arizona immigration law has really brought this issue back to the national scene. But let me remind you that immigration is a national issue; it’s not a partisan issue, and African-Americans have a stake in developing policies for our country that not only benefit the whole, but also focus on our communities as well. We’re encouraging African-Americans to take a more what we think enlightened and progressive view. I’m very pleased that organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League, particularly at the leadership level, recognize the importance of immigration reform; but it’s also important to educate the rank and file as well.

Now, let me tell you why it’s important for African-Americans. First, it’s important because we *are* concerned about jobs. Jobs is the number one issue facing our

community. We want to make certain that jobs are available to African-Americans, and we need to do a couple of things to do it. First, we need to promote a public jobs program, because we certainly know that, with the high volume of unemployment, what's now being done by the private sector is inadequate to respond to that problem.

MR. MARTIN: But the private sector – they're the ones, frankly, on the immigration issue who have – who are benefiting from cheap labor.

MR. HENDERSON: Well, they *are*, and they're exploiting cheap labor, and until you close that loophole, you won't be able to help it.

But let me go back. George Miller, who is chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, has a new jobs bill that would create public jobs. An estimate [of] about a million jobs would be created by the bill. We're supporting it. We think it's important. But, secondly, you need to close the loopholes that make it easier for employers to exploit the undocumented, and what that means is two things. One, you've got to pass a law that takes the 10 million undocumented that are currently in the country and legalizes them so that we're all on an even playing field in competing not just for high-level jobs, but for low-wage jobs as –

MR. MARTIN: But that –

MR. HENDERSON: -- well.

MR. MARTIN: -- doesn't poll strongly even among African-Americans –

MR. HENDERSON: Yeah –

MR. MARTIN: -- and so – and so ... how do you get around that? Because,

again –

MR. HENDERSON: -- look.

MR. MARTIN: -- I know what I hear from the rank and file –

MR. HENDERSON: Roland –

MR. MARTIN: -- and they're not jumping up and down –

MR. HENDERSON: -- Roland, I –

MR. MARTIN: -- about saying "let 'em in."

MR. HENDERSON: -- Roland, I don't dispute you. It's not about "let 'em in," because the comprehensive immigration reform bill that we're supporting has a border enforcement component that tightens up the borders.

Now, let me say to you over the last several years, a number of steps have been taken to make immigration enforcement more realistic and more effective. [We] used to have about 2,000 border patrol agents on the borders, and that was only a few years ago. Now we have about 20,000. You now have a more sophisticated electronic network that helps identify the undocumented coming in, and deportations are actually working. So, to the extent that there was a problem before with rampant undocumented immigration, that problem has now been addressed.

But more importantly, until you really regulate the job market, until you take away the incentives for private employers to exploit the undocumented, you're never going to be effective. So, that's why we're saying you've got to do a couple of things. You've got to enforce stringent laws. You've got to enforce labor laws, but you also have to

deal with laws that allow workers to be misclassified as independent contractors and circumvent employment laws that are currently on –

MR. MARTIN: I –

MR. HENDERSON: -- the books.

MR. MARTIN: -- I wholly agree on the –

MR. HENDERSON: Yeah.

MR. MARTIN: -- enforcement side, but here's what often happens –

MR. HENDERSON: Yeah.

MR. MARTIN: -- is – and that is – and I've seen it in Chicago – where Cong.

Luís Gutierrez and others, they say –

MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. MARTIN: -- “Hey, these raids are not right. They're not proper.” So – so, how in the world can we talk about enforcement –

MR. HENDERSON: Yeah.

MR. MARTIN: -- and that is – if people are here illegally, [agents are] raiding –

MR. HENDERSON: Right.

MR. MARTIN: -- businesses and pulling them out, and then say, “Well, that's bad”? In South Carolina – *The Washington Journal* did a piece a couple of years ago on a company – a lot of illegal immigrants. They raided the facility. Seventy-five, 80 percent were moved out. It forced the employer to go out, recruit African-Americans in that particular town. What happened? All jobs filled.

MR. HENDERSON: Um-hum.

MR. MARTIN: So, you have people who are saying –

MR. HENDERSON: Sure.

MR. MARTIN: -- yeah, enforcement, but then you have L- -- Latinos who say, “Hey, wrong enforcement.”

MR. HENDERSON: [Chuckles.] Look, you’re going to get that. I mean, obviously, groups are going to speak to interests that sometimes affect only their particular concerns, but I think the *larger* issue – and the issue that Congress is looking at, the Administration, and those of us who are working in public policy – is we recognize there has to be a balance. If you’re going to legalize 10½ million undocumented persons who are currently here, then you also have to have a concomitant approach to border enforcement and interior enforcement to make sure that persons who are taking advantage of the system improperly are not permitted to do that.

African-Americans have interests in resolving the immigration debate. Those interests are no different than other Americans who are concerned about the effects of rampant immigration, but we do it in a comprehensive and thoughtful way, and we can do it in a way that actually works to the advantage not only of our communities, but for the country as a whole.

MR. MARTIN: Ten seconds. Real quick, are you going to see Black folks boycott Arizona?

MR. HENDERSON: I think you *are* going to see Black folks boycott Arizona, because it's an outrageous law, and you have been right to criticize it. We're pleased about what you're saying.

MR. MARTIN: All right. Wade Henderson, we appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you so much.

MR. MARTIN: All right.

Folks, when we come back, the street violence in Chicago has gotten so bad, some folks want the National Guard to patrol the streets. Chicago's not the only city that needs help, but are soldiers on the streets a good idea? That next on "Washington Watch."

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 4)**

MR. MARTIN: All right. My next guest is no stranger to "Washington Watch." He is Maryland congressman Elijah Cummings.

Welcome back to the show.

REP. ELIJAH CUMMINGS: It's good to be with you, Roland.

MR. MARTIN: All right. A lot of stuff happening. We just had Austan Goolsbee on, talking about the issue of Wall Street reform and things along those lines, and – and I -- look – look. The Senate is dealing with this whole issue, and is this bill really the toughest bill to confront what's happening on Wall Street and these financial services companies out here? Or, are we leaving some stuff out?

REP. CUMMINGS: I think it could be tougher, but the fact is that we must do this. I think it's a pretty – overall, it's a pretty good bill. Keep in mind we have a House bill, and – and we – now we'll have a Senate bill, and we've just got to bring those bills together. But, for example, in the House bill, we have some very strong language, thanks to Maxine Waters, that deals with the issue of having – making sure that you have a minority affairs division in a lot of these agencies. A lot of the times, these peoples are mak- -- mee- -- people are making policies and regulating, and there are *no* – I mean absolutely *no* – people of color. She als- –

MR. MARTIN: Yeah. Yeah.

REP. CUMMINGS: -- she also has very strong provisions with regard to making sure that these payday loan folks are not ripping our folks off. And – and so there're a number of –

MR. MARTIN: And Sen. –

REP. CUMMINGS: -- issues –

MR. MARTIN: -- Bob Corker has certainly been trying to protect those companies.

REP. CUMMINGS: -- trying to protect them, but let me tell you. Our community's suffered greatly. I mean if you look at an area like Baltimore, where I represent, you can go in certain areas and see *no* banks, I mean literally for *miles*; but on the other hand, on every other corner, you've got a payday loan – payday loan folks with these phenomenal interest rates. So, there're a lot of good things that are in the

House bill *and* in the Senate bill, and we've got to bring them together.

MR. MARTIN: I gave a speech at the Department of Transportation, and you spoke prior to me talking. We talked to Sec. Ray LaHood about this issue.

REP. CUMMINGS: Yes.

MR. MARTIN: You had some funds inserted into the bill in terms of for – to help African-Americans with this whole issue of bonding.

REP. CUMMINGS: That's correct.

MR. MARTIN: Talk about that, because there're people out there who have businesses. This is one of the hang-ups there. There're millions of dollars sitting there to be – to be spent, but folks aren't truly accessing it.

REP. CUMMINGS: What we have found is that a lot of people – a lot of minority contractors and disadvantaged businesses are ready to take on these contracts, say, for example, in the stimulus bill and others; but they are blocked by bonding. A lot of people don't know what bonding is. A bonding is like an insurance company that sa- -- insurance policy that says, "If you don't perform the work, we're going to pay the person who has contracted with you." If they cannot get that bonding, forget it. They cannot get the contract.

And so what we've done is put a provision in the stimulus bill, and it'll go into a reauthorization bill, but – there's a six-year bill that's coming out very soon – that says – basically, we put \$20 million in that bill saying that that – those funds must be used to guarantee minority and disadvantaged businesses with regard to bonding. So, what

that means is that if a bonding company does not want to bond and says, "Aw, gee," you know, "I think it's too much of a risk," the government will back it up.

MR. MARTIN: But so- --

REP. CUMMINGS: The problem is -- is that the word has not gotten *out*.

MR. MARTIN: -- so, I'm sitting at home right now. Who do I call? Who -- who -- who am I reaching --

REP. CUMMINGS: The Department --

MR. MARTIN: -- out to?

REP. CUMMINGS: -- all you[ve] just got to do is call the ta- -- D- -- Department of Transportation. Call my -- call any congress- -- cong- -- member of Congress' office and say, "I understand there's a bonding program in the Department of Transportation. Tell me more about it," and they will direct you to right place.

MR. MARTIN: All right. And -- and the most important thing -- if that 20 million likely isn't spent by September, it's probably going to get pulled out of the next bill.

REP. CUMMINGS: That's exactly right, but -- and keep in mind, now, that 20 million was just for the stimulus bill. When we go to the six-year bill, we would be looking, like -- looking for something like \$500 million. Now, if we can't spend the 20 million in a year --

MR. MARTIN: You're not getting the 500.

REP. CUMMINGS: -- we're not going to get the \$500 million, and -- and that's the problem. And so I -- I'm glad you brought that up. It's so important.

MR. MARTIN: All right. I want to move on to another topic, this whole issue of violence in our different cities. I mean it's *crazy* what's happening in Chicago. People are even calling for the National Guard to bethr- -- to patrol the streets. What can members of Congress do when you're talking about a really local issue when it comes to crime and violence? You see it also in Baltimore.

REP. CUMMINGS: Yeah. Well, you know, I *live* in the inner city, and I see a lot of it. I think one of the things – one of the things that's driving our crime rate – though our police commissioner's done a great job, and it's happening all over the country – is people don't have *jobs*. I mean people come up to me almost every day, Roland, when I'm in my district; and they say, Congressman, I mean, man, like, I" – "I love what you do, man; but, you know, I need a *job*, Jack. I just got outta prison about a year ago, and I haven't been able to find a job in a *year*."

MR. MARTIN: But here's what's so interrelated about that. And – and I – and I get you at that particular point, but – but you have people who are dropping out of school –

REP. CUMMINGS: Right.

MR. MARTIN: -- who are not graduating.

REP. CUMMINGS: Right.

MR. MARTIN: Then folks are involved in crime. They're going through the criminal justice system.

REP. CUMMINGS: Right.

MR. MARTIN: Then you have broken homes. So, what you have is you have this holistic problem –

REP. CUMMINGS: Yes.

MR. MARTIN: -- when it comes to crime –

REP. CUMMINGS: Yes.

MR. MARTIN: -- and so jobs is really a small part of that.

REP. CUMMINGS: Yes. Well, it's a – but it's a *large* part of it. If –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

REP. CUMMINGS: -- you don't have money, you[ve] got – you're going to make money some kind of way.

MR. MARTIN: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

REP. CUMMINGS: And what we found in Baltimore is we've got a rash of people breaking into houses – I mean very *boldly*. You know what I'm saying? People are in the house. They're coming in with their guns blazing and – and robbing people.

And so what I'm saying to you is we've got to address the issue of jobs with regard to African-Americans. We've got to make sure that these – we just – we've had some issues in Baltimore where people have com- -- will go into nightclubs. They leave the nightclubs, and then they're fighting and whatever. We've got – but we have to have sens- -- very sensitive police dealing with our young people.

MR. MARTIN: But you also have to have, I believe, the community component, where people who live in neighborhoods have to give a damn.

REP. CUMMINGS: That's exactly –

MR. MARTIN: I mean –

REP. CUMMINGS: -- right.

MR. MARTIN: -- I mean – I mean – [crosstalk].

REP. CUMMINGS: That's exactly right. That's –

MR. MARTIN: You – you can –

REP. CUMMINGS: -- exactly right.

MR. MARTIN: -- have a – you can have a jobs bill. You can have more police protection, but if you got folks actin' a fool, fighting and shooting –

REP. CUMMINGS: That's exactly right.

MR. MARTIN: -- you can't legislate that.

REP. CUMMINGS: That's exa- -- you – no, you cannot legislate it. Parents have got to be parents.

And we[ve] got another issue with this whole thing of witnesses being harmed. A lot of people feel free to go out and harm somebody, because they know – “stop” –

MR. MARTIN: No one's going to talk.

REP. CUMMINGS: -- “snitching” – nobody's going to talk. We – by the way, we have legislation that's about to pass the Senate that gives local jurisdictions money to help local state's attorneys protect witnesses. It's a very big deal. Almost half the cases in Baltimore – *serious* cases – never –

MR. MARTIN: Wow.

REP. CUMMINGS: -- get to trial. Why? Because *nobody* will testify –

MR. MARTIN: Well, you[‘ve] got a –

REP. CUMMINGS: -- because they’re scared.

MR. MARTIN: -- well, you[‘ve] got – well that way – tha- -- that’s one way of government –

REP. CUMMINGS: That’s –

MR. MARTIN: -- having witness protection funds there, because you[‘ve] got a kid – 17-year-olds in Chicago, get shot, dying in a cop’s arms, still would not tell the person –

REP. CUMMINGS: -- that’s exactly right.

MR. MARTIN: -- who shot ‘im.

REP. CUMMINGS: And we –

MR. MARTIN: So –

REP. CUMMINGS: -- see that all the time.

MR. MARTIN: -- Congressman, we appreciate it. Thanks a –

REP. CUMMINGS: It’s my –

MR. MARTIN: -- bunch.

REP. CUMMINGS: -- honor.

MR. MARTIN: We’ll have you back.

REP. CUMMINGS: It’s my pleasure.

MR. MARTIN: Folks, up next, NewsOne.com’s Smokey Fontaine on how the

social media website Facebook is helping student activists fight budget cuts in their schools nationwide.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 5)**

MR. MARTIN: A group of New Jersey students isn't taking escalating school and teacher cuts sitting down. Smokey Fontaine joins us from NewsOne.com headquarters in New York via the HP Sky Room with the story.

All right, Smokey, very interesting story. I was in New York recently, and I saw, you know, a television report on this. These students aren't playing around. They're using social media to drive their agenda.

MR. SMOKEY FONTAINE: They are, Roland. They were facing some of the largest budget cuts of any state, and one college freshman – an 18-year-old woman by the name of Michelle Ryan Lauto – took it to herself and started a Facebook event page via her social media network. Now, she asked on that page for a statewide walkout. And she said, you know, "Let me just send it to my friends and see if anyone has some interest."

Well, within a couple of days, this woman's page got over 18,000 members – folks on Facebook who had gone to that page and said, "Yes, I want to walk out," "Yes, I support you" – and it really *happened*. On that day, whether it was in Montclair, New Jersey; whether it was across West Orange; or even in Newark, New Jersey, the state's largest city, over a thousand students walked out, all mobilized by this one person's

Facebook page.

MR. MARTIN: This speaks exactly to what you and I have been talking about for a long time. I mean how the 21<sup>st</sup> century organizing and mobilizing can be done in a much different way – and for a fraction of the cost, frankly, because it's not like you're setting up telephone – phone banks and passing flyers out.

MR. FONTAINE: It cost her nothing, and – and, look. Facebook has over 400 million members, but primarily it's been used for people to connect to their friends, or to find people they know. Now it's increasingly being used for calls to action. This was an online call to action. It did not cost her anything, and it was very easy to do. Any member of Facebook can do this. You simply log on with your account, and you create an event page. This page can be searched on all the – all the search engines. Anyone can join it. Anyone can be invited, and it allows you to create a really viral event just from your living room.

MR. MARTIN: Well, I t- -- I tell you, Smokey, all across this country we have young people who are looking to fight for various issues and causes, and I have always said over and over and over again you've got to build a database using text messages, using Facebook, using Twitter; because you can galvanize thousands of people simply with the click of a mouse.

MR. FONTAINE: You *can*. She had – she only had 500 friends, but 18,000 people supported this event. I mean you could imagine if John Lewis and SNCC back in the civil rights –

MR. MARTIN: Oh, absolutely.

MR. FONTAINE: -- days had tools as powerful as this -- right? We would be able to really mobilize ourselves locally and nationally. We need to use it. It's easy. If you go to NewsOne.com, you'll see a real one-on-one of how to do this yourself for a cause that you believe in.

MR. MARTIN: Folks, go to NewsOne.com, because, again, though, people talk all the time about they care about stuff. This is the way to get it done in 2010.

Smokey, we certainly appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

MR. FONTAINE: Roland, thank you so much.

["CALL 'EM OUT" FOLLOWS.]

MR. MARTIN: This week, for Dr. Dorothy Height's funeral, TV One carried the entire funeral, broadcast all across the country. When it came to Pres. Barack Obama giving his eulogy, CNN and MSNBC broke into programming to carry the eulogy. Who didn't? Fox News. What were they showing? This hoax story about finding Noah's Ark in Turkey, and then some stupid bear story.

How in the world can Fox News call themselves a real news channel if you can't even carry a news story of the President eul- -- lo- -- eulogizing one of the greatest civil rights leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? This is the problem with the network. They want to say they're a news channel in the daytime and opinion at night.

No, you're not. You're a fake news channel if you cover a fake story dealing with Noah's Ark and not the eulogy of a great woman. Fox News Channel, *you* have been

called out.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-  
MENT 6)**

MR. MARTIN: It's time for our feedback segment with my HP Touch Smart computer. First question comes from Russell, and he wants to know, "Why is it assumed Black people need a spokesperson/leader, and who chooses this person? And since we do, why are the same people 'leading' us in the same circle with the same rhetoric since the Civil Rights Movement?"

Well, first of all, Russell, that's not ac- -- not actually true, because the last Big Six civil rights leader, Dr. Dorothy Height, recently passed away. [There's a] whole new crop of people, and so it's not the same rhetoric, but here's what – the re- -- reality: [the] same issues are there, housing, education, ec- -- economics, unemployment. So, that's what you have there. And so I kind of disagree with you on that point.

All right. Tenay, she wants to know, "Why do you think Black people are not commenting on the protests going on in Arizona? We get profiled every damn day. This is a good time to take a stand and say enough is enough!"

Well, Tenay, not true. A lot of people are commenting. Rev. Al Sharpton said that he plans on going to Arizona to protest. There are people – African-Americans who are supporting the boycott that some people are launching in Arizona, and some Black organiz- -- organizations say they also are going to pull conferences and conventions out of there as well. And so you do see it, but the reality is Latinos are

driving this issue more than anybody else.

All right, folks. Don't stop letting me know what's on your mind. Just log on to TVOneOnline.com and click on "Washington Watch." You can comment on the show, or ask me a question.

Before I say goodbye, one more story. This week, civil rights icon Dr. Dorothy Irene Height was laid to rest. Some may have called the service a funeral, but in Black church tradition, this was, indeed, a celebration of life. At TV One, we carried the whole ceremony from beginning to end, commercial-free. One powerful moment was the nation's first Black president honoring the woman who really *did*, over the course of her 98 years, pave the way for his election. Pres. Barack Obama delivered the home-going message. He praised Dr. Height for her "dogged and dignified persistence" for progress, and he told this story of one of Dr. Height's 22 visits to the Obama White House.

[VIDEO CLIP.]

PRES. OBAMA: One of my favorite moments with Dr. Height – this was just a few months ago. We had decided to put up the Emancipation Proclamation in the Oval Office, and we invited some elders to share reflections of The Movement. And she came, and it was a[n] intergenerational event. So, we had young children there as well as elders, and the elders were asked to share stories. And she talked about attending a dinner in the 1940s at the home of Dr. Benjamin Mays, then president of Morehouse College. And seated at the table

that evening was a 15-year-old student, a “gifted child,” as she described him, filled with a sense of purpose, who was trying to decide whether to enter medicine, or law, or the ministry.

And many years later, after that gifted child had become a gifted preacher – I’m sure he had been told to be on his best behavior – after he’d led a bus boycott in Montgomery and inspired a nation with his dreams, he delivered a sermon on what he called the “drum major instinct,” a sermon that said we all have the desire to be first; we all want to be at the front of the line. [A] great test of a life, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, is to harness that instinct, to redirect it towards advancing the greater good, towards changing a community and a country for the better, toward doing the Lord’s work.

I sometimes think s- -- Dr. King must’ve had Dorothy Height in mind when he gave that speech, for Dorothy Height met the test. Dorothy Height embodied that instinct. Dorothy Height was a drum major for justice, a drum major for equality, a drum major for freedom, a drum major for service. And the lesson she would want us to leave with today, a lesson she lived out each and every day, is that we can all be first in service. We can all be drum majors for a righteous cause.

So, let us live out that lesson. Let us honor her life by changing this country for the better as long as we are blessed to live.

May God bless Dr. Dorothy Height –

[APPLAUSE.]

PRES. OBAMA: -- and the Union that she made more perfect.

[APPLAUSE.]

[END OF VIDEO CLIP.]

MR. MARTIN: Dr. Height, your contributions will not be forgotten.

Well, that's it for this edition of TV One's "Washington Watch." I'm Roland Martin. Goodbye, and have a blessed week.

**[END.]**