



Cato President: Rand Paul Will Be ‘Next President Of The United States Of America’

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NAPLES, Florida — Before Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) spoke to a banquet of libertarian and conservative activists hosted by the Cato Institute here on Saturday evening, Cato’s president John Allison introduced Paul as: “The next President of the United States of America.”

“We want government so small in Washington, we barely see it,” Paul said in his speech to the group, a speech for which Breitbart News was the only media outlet allowed inside. “Instead it’s the opposite. I tell people that it’s sort of like going into AA. I’m Rand Paul, and I’m from flyover America. The thing is we are so much different—thinking is so much different—outside the Beltway than inside the city.”

Paul went through several of his major stump speech elements. How he wanted to cut \$500 billion from the government’s spending when he first got to Washington, but was laughed at inside and outside the Beltway. Inside, he was mocked for wanting to cut so much—while outside the beltway, he was rapped for wanting to cut too little. Paul laid out how he wants to close the Department of Commerce and the Department of Education, and took a minor shot at former Texas Gov. Rick Perry for the campaign gaffe that wiped out his 2012 presidential campaign.

“I was tired of the liberal media saying well all you conservatives you say for you’re for balancing the budget but you never tell us where you’ll cut, so I gave them a list of \$500 billion I would cut including four or five Departments—I won’t try to name them because it never goes over well if you can’t remember the name of them,” Paul said. Perry famously forgot during a debate where he’d cut. “Some of them, if we were to eliminate them, people would never know the difference. The danger is if we close the Department of Commerce that people wake up and say, ‘Oh when did they close the Department of Commerce?’”

Paul said that these fights to drastically reduce the size and scope of the federal government need to happen not just because of the widespread waste, fraud and abuse with taxpayer dollars but because that misuse of resources is hurting Americans who are most in need. Essentially, what focusing like this does, he says, is help Republicans stick to the principles of limited government—and not dilute them or offer a Democrat-light approach—while still offering an attractive alternative to communities that have traditionally voted for Democrats.

“We need to have these fights because politically what we need to tell people who haven’t been considering us—we need to look at the poor and the working class and we need to say to them we’re not going to touch a penny of the safety net until we cut every dollar of corporate welfare,” Paul said.

We need to make a big cause out of getting rid of the Ex-Im [Bank]. I think we need to. It’s one of those things that there’s a few select people in Washington who are lobbying for it. We could get rid of it and no one would notice but one or two lobbyists in Washington.

If we’re going to say that everyone in the country can’t be on Medicaid—which is true, we can’t borrow money from China to give everybody free stuff because money doesn’t grow on trees—but we need to make the lead cause of what we get rid of, why don’t we get rid of all the corporate welfare before we start talking about food stamps?

Or before we start talking about welfare? All that still has to be talked about but the thing is we need to talk about things that will attract people to our party who haven’t been attracted to our party previously.

Then Paul explained conservatives should have a choice on who their nominee should be—and if Republicans don’t want another Bush, they don’t have to nominate Jeb Bush.

“Has anyone here been disappointed with a Republican president?” Paul asked the crowd, a question to which everyone answered in the affirmative.

Here’s the thing: We’re going to have a choice. We’re going to have a choice as this moves forward. I find people who are some of the greatest givers to causes who wait until after the nominating process and then they pour hundreds of millions of dollars in to support the nominee. Well that doesn’t change the country. What if you get a nominee who’s only slightly better than the other side?