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As I was thinking about coming here and talking to you, I actually wanted to be able to be able to deliver this speech that I'm about to deliver for quite some time. Tomorrow is going to be one year since I was sworn into the United States Senate. And I will say over this past year, it's there's a lot going on to say the least. And I really wanted to be able to talk not just what I'm scared of or what I'm concerned about, but what I'm hopeful for and what it is that I'd like to see brought about during my time in the U.S. Senate, during my time being able to be somebody here in New Jersey and in this country that is able to push forward.

So, I wanted to share that with you and I was wondering, you know, I was a little nervous coming before all of you because of just the extraordinary work that so many in this room have done when it comes to science and technology. Now, much to my parents' disappointment, I'm not a data scientist. I'm not an engineer. Unlike many of you, I don't have cutting edge research to share with you today. But I am lucky enough to be able to serve in this job that allows me to represent this entire state and be part of the United States Senate thinking about what comes next for our country.

I don't have to tell you how fast things are changing in technology. And I have gotten a chance to be able to talk with scientists and business leaders from across our state talking about what direction those investments are going to go and how to forge a future we can only dream of. And I wanted to use these remarks to take a step back and share with you some of the things that I've heard about and thought about as I've traveled around this state of 9 million people. Thoughts on this moment that we're in and what's possible as we look towards the future.

First, I want to say that we are clearly in a moment of incredible and extreme change. Technology is changing at breakneck speeds. We can only imagine where we're going to be, not just one year from now, but let alone 10 years from now. And that change is impacting the way that we work, the kind of jobs that we do, where we work, and what's valuable in the marketplace. It's impacting our societal structure, creating new connections with data and information while leaving us more alone and fragmented than ever before. It's impacting the very fabric of our state; the physical infrastructure, the energy demands, the water requirements, all parts of this moment of change. Now, this change is coinciding in New Jersey and across this country with an affordability crisis, a crisis in providing care for our youngest to our oldest and a crisis in trust in our institutions, our politics, in our democracy and also in each other.

And all of this is also happening simultaneously to other tectonic shifts. We are entering a new global era different from the post 9/11 world that we have left behind. This is the most

competitive global environment that America has faced in a century. And we face an inflection point in American leadership, the future of our democracy, and questioning of the rules-based order that has largely defined how our world works for the past few generations. It's a competition, by the way, that goes beyond whether we have the best workforce or the best technology. It's a competition whether with China or other actors to determine who writes and enforces those rules, whose technologies will be adopted globally, and ultimately whose economies and people will be best situated to prosper in the decades to come. We have to shape our future because if we don't, it will shape us and that would come with significant economic costs and security concerns and will change our way of life. The rules, the pathways to success, the very definitions of success will be written by our competitors and our adversaries if we don't step up in this moment. This is the challenge of our generation. Now, the question that comes before us is what will we do about it?

As I've sought to develop national strategies for meeting this moment of global competitiveness, I've come to the realization that New Jersey is perfectly positioned to be a major part of what comes next. And I'm excited about that possibility. This new era of technology will create new centers of innovation. And I believe that New Jersey can be that hub.

Our state has been that center for innovation before. In the early days of the republic, Alexander Hamilton looked across the river from Manhattan and saw a home for innovation and invention. Patterson became the nation's first planned industrial city under the vision of Hamilton's society for establishing useful manufacturers. Hamilton saw Patterson's importance as an innovation hub as quote adding wealth and independence and economic security to a fledgling democratic nation.

Now from the initial seeds planted by Hamilton a million flowers bloom changing the world around us. The steamboat and steam locomotives were developed in Hoboken changing the way we traveled and making the world smaller. Edison and his more than 1,000 patents from the phonograph to the light bulb fundamentally changing the world by literally bringing light into darkness. Campbells changed the way that we eat through the invention of the condensing soup making it more affordable and longer lasting. The first transistors developed by Bell Labs, the first coast to coast phone call, the incredible work of Marconi and Morse all changed the way we communicate. Countless medicines and life products developed by companies like Johnson & Johnson, from toothpaste and dental floss to surgical tape and band-aids to a host of life-saving drugs, changed the way we stay healthy. Men and women working at Curtis Wright Corporation in Patterson and at the New York Ship Building Corporation in Camden built the airplane engines, the Navy destroyers

that changed the outcome of the Second World War and the future of freedom and democracy and Albert Einstein whose theory of relativity and research made him the greatest mind of the 20th century changed the way we look at the universe conduct war and think about science.

That history from Hamilton to Einstein to the students studying here today provides us the road map for the work that we need to do to shape the moment of change we are in. And now to meet this current moment, we must build a new strategic and interconnected innovation ecosystem across our state; something I call the Einstein Corridor. So, what does that mean? The Einstein Corridor? It will be a complex ecosystem that will build upon the extraordinary colleges and universities and our existing business community. It will bring in venture capital in a way we haven't seen before, create a true startup and an entrepreneurship environment, generate advanced manufacturing, modernize our ports and transit, and attract and retain talent from all over the world. It will provide a blueprint for a future of our state to maximize our potential. One that over the course of the next two decades can supercharge investment and innovation so that industry leaders and cutting-edge researchers will want to be in New Jersey for fear of missing out.

I've heard from too many of you about the challenges of starting and growing businesses here of attracting capital or just affording to put down roots into one where young people will stay and invest and invent. This needs to change now. A few months ago, I traveled to South Korea and Japan with Senator Tammy Duckworth where I saw the importance of confronting those challenges as we met with business leaders in both countries, leaders of companies that represented the kind of cutting edge innovation that we would want to cultivate here in New Jersey, who have invested hundreds of millions and sometimes billions in the United States. One of the things we kept hearing about time and time again is that America is too complicated of a place. That we have federal regulations and incentives on top of state regulations and incentives on top of local regulations and incentives. What companies are looking for is clarity, not complication. What they're looking for is synergy, not silos. What they are looking for are places where federal partners are working hand-in-hand with state partners and local partners to create the kind of conditions where they can confidently invest money in jobs. I know that creating this ecosystem can be difficult as we've seemingly forgotten how to run regular appropriations process and effectively fund the government down in DC. And now we see federal research dollars and work and education and visas thrown into disarray.

My father came to the United States, came to New Jersey as a foreign student on a visa. He also stewarded federal research dollars to try to cure cancer and Alzheimer's here in New Jersey. Many other families have or aspired to these stories. And here in New Jersey, we are

in the middle of a government transition at the state and local level, and the transitioning of government will face real challenges. That's why I'm so excited to see Governor-elect Sherrill as a true partner in this cause. The development of this Einstein corridor was my top priority as I sat down with the new governor elect and I hope that she will join us in this endeavor. As I shared with her, the mission to make New Jersey more affordable requires New Jersey to be more innovative.

The two go hand in hand. The more we innovate, the more we can draw in investments to support not just our businesses, but our schools, our communities, our transit and infrastructure, all of us working together can become a magnet for federal scale investment. We should be increasing federal investments, not gutting them and shooting ourselves in the foot. I helped pass the Chips and Science Act, and I'm now working on a 2.0 version of industrial policy that will lift up other key industries, and I want to engage all of you on how best we can do that. What we need to be able to do for you to be able to do your best work. There is so much funding from the department of energy to the department of defense the national science foundations and others that we can better work together to attract and fuel innovation. New Jersey is a finalist for the National Science Foundation Regional Innovation Engine Competition. A competition that if we win will bring new resources to our state. The Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory has been awarded two highly competitive projects by the Department of Energy from the Chips and Science Act, bringing a total of 24 million to our state. And the joint base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst recently received a second Air National Guard cyber operations squadron making it one of the few bases in the country with two cyber squadrons.

This is a good start, but there is so much more that we need here in New Jersey to reach our potential. I want the coming years to be the most productive era of federal investment in our state. And I want New Jersey to get more sophisticated in attracting and retaining businesses. No longer should we be outshined by other states in developing up incentive packages, workforce programs, university partnerships, federal resources, and other elements that help innovators make up their minds on where to invest and build. These things should be done together in coordination at all levels of government. Together, we can create turnkey infrastructure. In the spirit of Hamilton and Patterson, we can look at creating new advanced manufacturing hubs, especially in places like South Jersey, where I'm from, built around pretermitted sites to be able to cut red tape that sometimes keeps investment away. And together, we can create a unified brand to the world so that whenever any of us travels, New Jersey travels with us. So that when any of us present our latest findings or proposals for new funding, New Jersey presents with us. That whenever

any of us discovers a new cure or a new element, creates a new technology or builds something never thought possible, New Jersey is discovering, creating, and building.

I know we can build this Einstein quarter because I've seen the elements every single day. These are strengths. They are things that we are already doing as a state. But we can supercharge and build upon one another to create the kind of interconnected ecosystem that makes up this corridor. It starts right here with the work you're doing on AI and data science. Built upon that is one of the largest talent pools in the country. More than 160,000 computer and math professionals here in our state. and existing infrastructure from companies like CoreWeave to the New Jersey AI hub connecting Princeton, Microsoft, CoreWeave and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. I look at the work being done in the state on photonics, a field essential to everything from AI to medical devices to quantum and national security. New Jersey has the highest density of photonics companies in the world but that is a story we don't do a good enough job talking and telling about. Companies like Thorlabs and Edmund Optics have become innovative leaders while NJIT has an actual center for photonics innovation. This sector is ripe for New Jersey not just to compete but to dominate.

Speaking of quantum, New Jersey should be America's quantum computing capital. We have more than 30 faculty embedded into two departments of energy national quantum centers. Rutgers, Princeton, Stevens all have incredible quantum programs and from them we are building a workforce that could unleash the power of quantum and spark a generation of advancements. Every company leading on quantum computing, every scientist working to advance quantum technology, every major government funding opportunity, New Jersey should be its home.

I am pushing for a Manhattan project style federal investment to give our nation the upper hand in this global competition that we are currently not strong enough in and I want that investment to be built right here in New Jersey. China is currently surpassing our nation on so many fronts in biotech and advanced materials. It's time we find another gear and that starts right here in New Jersey. Eight of the top 10 global biopharma companies are based in New Jersey. Our universities deliver over 1 billion in annual research and development that have more than 1,200 active passions patents. Companies like BASF, Salv Dupont, EMD Electronics position New Jersey to be a leader in the supply chain for semiconductors, clean energy and biomanufacturing.

And on the manufacturing side, you've got an industry that's reemerging in New Jersey, ship building. You can see it from the Hanwha shipyard in Philadelphia across the river. America needs to build ships. Why not build them along the Delaware? Why not build them

in New Jersey? We have the ports ready to go and I'm in touch with the leading ship building companies around the world to try and strike a deal.

On top of all of the incredible industries based in our state, you've got a truly remarkable federal government presence. Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, Picatinny Arsenal, Naval Weapons Station Earl, and the FAA Tech Center doing cutting edge aviation modernization and safety down in Atlantic County. So, few places combine air, land, and sea assets into one state. Assets that are themselves incubators for innovation and power ecosystems of small businesses of jobs. Assets that can help us power this corridor.

And, finally, in order to attract and retain businesses and talent, we need to strengthen New Jersey as a desirable place to live from everyone from ambitious college grads hungry to jumpstart their careers to professionals seeking to build a family. It's a place my parents, Korean immigrants, moved to four decades ago to build a life for me and my sister, my dad a medical researcher, my mom a nurse. From the revitalization of our urban areas to the exciting development of our beautiful shores to the investments we need to make to build a 21st century transit system, we have to show that the progress of our state is here.

And at the end of the day, that is our goal. The Einstein quarter isn't just an idea to get companies and government programs to invest in New Jersey. It's an idea to get people to invest here to reverse the brain drain that leads less than 40% of high school grads to stay in our state for college. It's an idea to say that if you want to build something, build it in New Jersey. If you want to invent something, invent it here in our state. And if you want to discover something, discover it right here in New Jersey.

The world is changing, but it's not the first time. From Alexander Hamilton to Thomas Edison, from Alice Parker to Arthur Nobile to Beatrice Alex Hicks to Albert Einstein, New Jersey has led that change. And who will be next on that list? Through this Einstein corridor, those in this room and this generation to come will restore New Jersey's place as the invention and innovation capital and you will remind the world scrolled on the lower Trenton Bridge that when it comes to our future we play on these words New Jersey makes and the world takes. Thank you so much and I look forward to building this Einstein corridor alongside all of you. Thank you.