

Patrick Madden Stump Speech

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. My name is Patrick Madden. I'm a computer science professor at Binghamton University, a researcher in integrated circuit design, and I'm running to be the next representative for New York's 22nd Congressional District.

I wasn't born in the 22nd. But it's been my home for close to twenty years now. I mention this, because I think that it's something we take for granted from our politicians. That they reflect our interests, simply because they happen to work in the same city we do; that they were lucky enough to be born in the districts they claim to represent. I didn't have that same luck from birth—I was born in Michigan. I grew up in Albuquerque. I worked the oil fields in Oklahoma, and Wyoming, and Texas. And I got my doctorate from UCLA. Where I got lucky, was that my work brought me to a university where I have colleagues and students that push me and challenge me to be better every day; that I've been able to raise my family in a community of people who work hard and care about their fellow citizens. I'm lucky, that this is the place that my wife and my daughters and I call home.

Now, even though we live in the same district, there's a good chance that a lot of you here don't know who I am yet. You may be wondering to yourselves, what does a professor from Binghamton know about politics? And that's a fair question. Because although I do know a good amount about politics, the truth is that I don't know anything about being a politician. I don't know what it's like to face my constituents after supporting devastating legislation. I don't know what it's like to work with special interest groups. I've never had to sell out my supporters to defend a political party. But I do know what it takes to represent the 22nd district.

This community isn't a part of a larger machine. Our district is filled with citizens who are honest and kind. We believe in loving our neighbors and treating everyone we meet fairly. It's a place where hard work is rewarded: where everyday people can make a difference and even the smallest voices among us can have an impact. But, again, we take for granted from our politicians that they care about our community as much as we do. They don't know how important that word really is.

See, it used to be that communities like ours were the backbone of our nation. It seems to me that, in this modern era, whether we believe in a big government or a small one, that we've moved away from this central belief. And this is troubling to me, because my success in life has been a testament to the neighbors, to the teachers and the family members and the friends who believed in me and supported me. And this has never been truer than in the past 20 years I've lived here. It's safe to say that I'm a product of *this* community—*our* community—and I believe that it shows. But right now, we're not doing everything we can to strengthen (name of current region), and I want to tell you what I mean by that.

When I see Freshman students for the first time, newly arrived on campus, they're always filled with this seemingly limitless energy. It's like they're saying to themselves, "Finally, a place where I belong. A place where I can contribute. A community that I can be a part of." And as a fellow scientist, I share in their excitement. So they start their classes, and they get to work. And from their Freshman year to their Senior year, they work and they work and they work, and somehow, that work doesn't diminish their spirit. And four years later, when I see them on graduation day, they still have that same energy. But the difference is now they're saying, "I can't wait to get to California. I can't wait to get to Silicon Valley. I can't wait to get to a place where I can contribute. A community that I can be a part of." It wasn't always like this.

We used to be known in the 22nd district as the "Valley of Opportunity." The place where professionals like my students would come to work for companies like Lockheed-Martin and Link Flight Simulators. I myself work in the Watson School of Engineering, which was named for the founder of IBM; my school

was able to grow because of IBM's growth. I was able to move my family here *because* of the strong history the 22nd district has in the technology sector. But as it stands today, our district represents only 13% of New York's computer and electronics manufacturing jobs. And I'm here to tell you, that there is so much more we can be doing for our community.

The 22nd district should be more than just a place where people are from. It should be a place where our children are inspired to stay. It should be a place where our families remain strong, a place where couples like my wife and I come from across the country to start their own families and contribute to our community. We'll show them that the 22nd district has as much talent and perseverance as any other district in this nation. I'm running for office because I believe that the 22nd district can be a Valley of Opportunity once again. And this belief is what I'll be taking with me to Washington.

Thank you.