

https://lancasteronline.com/news/politics/q-a-former-hud-secretary-julian-castro-speaks-in-lancaster/article_8a2e7278-d72c-11e8-a76d-b3444f4bf4d1.html

Q&A: Former HUD Secretary Julian Castro speaks in Lancaster about 'likely' run for president in 2020



SAM JANESCH | Staff Writer Oct 24, 2018



Julian Castro, former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, is in town to speak at the CHI St. Joseph Children's Health event, speaks during a Q&A on Tuesday, October 23, 2018.

[Buy Now](#)

Suzette Wenger

With the 2020 presidential election just around the corner, one of the top potential contenders said in Lancaster on Tuesday he's preparing to make his decision "right after the Nov. 6 election."

Former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julian Castro **said he's "likely" to run** for the Democratic nomination.

And before a speaking engagement at the Ware Center, he said in an interview that President Donald Trump has repeatedly failed, lied and tried to fear-monger for political purposes.

"Folks want people they think are honest in government, and they don't see that with this president," said Castro, who served in President Barack Obama's Cabinet from 2014 until **Ben Carson** took over the federal housing department for Trump in 2017.

Castro, 44, previously served as mayor of San Antonio, his hometown, where he was first elected in 2009, in the district his twin brother, U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro, represents in Congress.

One week after the release of his memoir, "An Unlikely Journey," he spoke at a CHI St. Joseph Children's Health event on "creating healthy communities" at the Ware Center.

Here is an abbreviated Q&A of LNP's conversation before the event.

LNP: You have **said you are "likely" to run for president in 2020. What are the factors that will ultimately be part of your decision and when will you decide?**

Castro: “I’m going to make the decision right after the Nov. 6 election. There are two things I need to do. I need to have a conversation with my wife at length... And secondly I want to see what happens on Nov. 6 because I’m convinced that these elections set a mood and they send a message from the American people about what folks are thinking.”

LNP: **If that message is not something you prefer, maybe Democrats don’t perform as well in the House or in the Senate, would you re-evaluate?**

Castro: “That’s not going to be the only factor but it’s certainly going to be helpful. I believe though that the Democrats are going to do well on Nov. 6... I believe that folks are going to come out that they’re going to send a message, that they want accountability in government and we’ll see what happens.”

LNP: **What would your early platform look like?**

Castro: “If I run it will be because I have a very strong vision for the future of this country. I’m convinced that we need a 21st century blueprint for opportunity. It takes more to succeed in the world today than it did 100 years ago, 50 years ago. It takes more education and more skill. there’s no reason in this country why anybody should go without healthcare. There’s no reason why somebody should work 40 hours a week and not be able to provide for their family. What we see across the country are the rents going up like crazy. People are having to spend more than a third or more than half of their income on rent and we need to be big enough to match the times and the needs of people and what it takes to thrive in the 21st century”



Julian Castro, former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, is in town to speak at the CHI St. Joseph Children's Health event, speaks during a Q&A on Tuesday, October 23, 2018.

[Buy Now](#)

Suzette Wenger

LNP: You’ve been **critical** of the president’s messaging on the caravan of Central American immigrants coming north to the southern border. How big of an issue is this caravan in your home state of Texas and is it getting blown out of proportion?

Castro: “The president is trying to fear-monger 14 days before an election. The fact is that we have processes in place to deal with people that present themselves at the southern border to process their claims for asylum. For those who may be entitled to asylum there’s a process for that. For those who are not, there’s a process for that. The United States is big enough that we ought not to panic over something like this. The president is trying to induce a panic to gin up support in his base. It’s cynical. It’s manipulative. And I believe the American people, enough folks, can see through that.”

LNP: In a related topic, this community in Lancaster has historically **resettled a large number of refugees**, reportedly 20 times the national average per capita. With the recent reduction in refugee admissions, where do you stand on the maximum number of refugees allowed in the country?

Castro: “I’m disappointed the president and his party want to cut off a lot of folks who have applied, who are hoping they might make a life in the United States. I believe we’re a country that’s big enough to accept refugees as we’ve shown over these last few decades. So we have to decide in this country whether we’re going to fall victim to xenophobia, to intolerance, to hating each other. That’s the path that this president is trying to take us down. Or are we going to be a country that’s understanding of each other, that’s compassionate and figures out a way for people of different backgrounds to work together, to live together, to create prosperity.”

LNP: How do you intend to talk about your message to avid supporters of the president? This county and this state went for President Trump two years ago, and a lot of people here went for him because they liked his disruption and for shaking up the system. How do you talk to people like that and make your own message resonate?

Castro: “I can completely understand why some folks would want somebody from the outside that’s trying to shake things up in Washington, D.C. The difference between 2016 and now is that we’ve seen that this is just not the man who’s up to that job... It was possible that we could’ve gotten an outsider to shake things up in a smart way, in an effective way, in a way that propels our country forward. Unfortunately that’s just not Donald Trump. We’ve seen him fail time after time. So my hope is that those folks who want somebody that will shake things up will keep that sentiment, will continue to believe that we need somebody to shake things up in Washington, D.C. but will see that there’s somebody else that can be more effective in doing that.”

LNP: What are the biggest, most pressing issues with housing and urban development now and in the next couple years?

Castro: “It’s still very difficult for middle class families to actually get a mortgage. We went from this time period a decade or so ago when it was maybe too easy to get a home loan to what we’re in now which is that it’s too hard. That even if you have pretty good credit and you’d be a responsible homebuyer it’s tough to get a mortgage. And we need to strike a strong balance. Secondly, the rents have been skyrocketing like crazy across the United States. We have a rental affordability crisis and we're not doing nearly enough right now to address that ... On top of that in some of these cities now we see a spike in unsheltered homelessness. ... For the first time in seven years last year the number of homeless veterans went up again. It was one of the proudest things in the Obama administration that between 2010 and 2016, we reduced veteran homelessness by 47 percent and then it started going up again. We need to get serious about putting a full court press so we get it back going in the right direction.”

LNP: What’s the biggest issue that people aren’t talking about right now that will be important in the 2020 campaign?

Castro: “Housing is one of the big issues. In none of the 2016 presidential debates, either on the Republican side or the Democratic side, was a single question about housing asked — even though everybody out there who’s in the housing market can tell that something's tremendously wrong here. The rents have spiked. Our home-ownership rate is still at one of the lowest levels in four decades, but nobody’s talking on the campaign trail about housing. And that ought to change because the American people can benefit from serious conversation about housing.”

More Headlines

- [Here's what you need to know about the Eagles-Bears playoff game](#)
- [Pa. Farm Show 2019: First look at the butter sculpture](#)
- [♥ We the People Why has a head stared from an attic window in Peach Bottom for more than 100 years? \[We the People report\]](#)
- [4th man charged in foiled robbery at Smithgall's Pharmacy](#)
- [Aerial photos show extent of logging on Girl Scouts camp, property to be offered for sale soon](#)
- [Lancaster musician embraces improvisation as 'Dr. E and the Invisible Band'](#)
- [Former inmate sues Lancaster County Prison over alleged civil rights abuses](#)
- [First-period flurry powers Penn Manor to CPIHL win over Warwick](#)
- [L-L wrestling: Lancaster Catholic doubles up Columbia, 48-24](#)
- [Citrus Bowl loss raises questions for Penn State football \[column\]](#)
- [L-L League hoops alums Shewbridge, Beers brothers have Lancaster Bible College charging forward](#)