

Ted Lieu Town Hall | Update

April 24, 2017 | 7:00 pm | Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center

I attended the Ted Lieu town hall and left amazed at the level of aggressive disruption.

As far as his message goes, he shared brief updates on the strikes in Syria and the investigation into Russia's interference with the elections. He expressed his concern for the lack of trust from foreign governments since this administration says one thing and does another. He said he felt dejected from election night up until January 21st when he saw women marching. The audience erupted into a roar of applause for that. He said he "is resisting this administration" because of the programs they are putting forth. He spoke for about 45 minutes and then opened the floor up to questions. About 40 people got in line but with lengthy questions from some (soap box moments) and equally lengthy responses, only about four questions were asked in about 20 minutes.

Overall it felt unproductive to me because not a lot of new information was disseminated. One of his recommendations to show opposition was to create a spoof PowerPoint of Paul Ryan's version and post it online. For me, it seemed to pit trivial against trivial and is an ineffective way to "stay high when they go low." His main suggestion was to vote Republicans out in 2018. He shared a list of seats/districts that could be won. Life as we know may not be around in a year in a half so I was looking for something more short-term. Also, something that promoted working together rather let our side have the ball. He asked for donations for the Lieu Pac which supports getting Democrats elected. Clearly it is needed per what happened at the town hall.

Congressman Lieu is approachable, knowledgeable, and a leader in the face of opposition. He seems fair and willing to listen to issues and vote based on what he believes reflects the voices of the people he serves. This is my opinion. He said the calls to Congress helped defeat the first iteration of healthcare repeal. The deluge of calls firmed up Democrats' positions to remain steadfast and swayed some Republicans to not support it.

The calls to Congress/Washington need to continue.

Now, the sad part.

This event was supposed to be a public forum where information was given and people could ask relevant questions. This was my first one and I expected it to be like the movies. Instead, it seemed like the audience was on edge waiting for a brawl to erupt in the police officer lined auditorium.

The vitriol and mob mentality from the elections was front and center. The red hats (akin to the red coats) are coming out strong to disrupt and insight chaos. The front row was filled with red hats and ugly signs. One person held his hand scrawled "LIE" cardboard sign up the whole time. They jeered and yelled constantly. Congressman Lieu said "Flynn asked for immunity" and we heard "you lie". Just about every comment was met with that. He mentioned Clinton's name in response to a question and we heard "lock her up."

At one point Congressman Lieu said I have given you a lot of latitude but I'm paying for this space and I'm paying for the Redondo Beach Police to be here. "I make the rules." Despite the warnings, the MAIN heckler did not stop until six officers surrounded him and I guess gave him his options.

I was trying to see the person/people who kept yelling and wondered if these people were bussed in here. Maybe they were paid but no, these were my neighbors. About 20 minutes into the program two women came in wearing red hats and they went straight to the front row where seats were held for them. I recognized them as neighbors who have been going to the same Starbucks just about every week day around 8 am. I go once in a while but they are always there so I'm making an assumption. She has such a coarse voice that even though I was in the back of the auditorium I heard her jeering at Congressman Lieu. Based on overheard conversations over the years, I can tell she has an affluent lifestyle. So it dawned on me that the red hat people got together to plan to come to disrupt the town hall. Their objective was not to learn or silently oppose, it was to annoy everyone in the room so they would be distracted. There was so much venom in their intentions. Congressman Lieu managed the room well despite being heckled even worse than a comedian on stage. The phones were out so there are probably videos of the Town Hall online. I would guess that a couple hundred people were there.

The moral of the story is that people from all political views need to show up to send the message that the American hope is for peaceful disagreement. The phone calls, letters and outreach to politicians needs to quadruple in order to show that we are not passive. The aggregation of people in protest sends a message. Unfortunately, there are so many programs are under attack that there are now even marches to protect SCIENCE.

Meetup.com hosts #resist meetups. Join to stay connected with the marches and policy updates. They are not militant groups but rather neighborhood groups that share information about how to get involved.

Michael Moore sent out an email a while ago to urge calls to congress.

<http://michaelmoore.com/10PointPlan/>

Women's March. <https://www.womensmarch.com/> - May 1st events

There is a need to show up to events and to share our views with family members and ask them to do something, even if it just making a phone call. This segment of the red hats still ardently believe in their cause (which does not seem policy related) and based on the Town Hall, seem to have an agenda of creating chaos. Quiet masses silence loud aberrations.

~Melanie