

AP FACT CHECK

# Misshapen rhetoric in GOP debate

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ted Cruz stretched matters involving Iran and his own finances. Donald Trump seemed to forget he proposed a massive tax on Chinese goods. Chris Christie took a magic eraser to things he's said.

A look at some claims and how they compare with the facts:

**CRUZ:** "President Obama's preparing to send \$100 billion or more to the Ayatollah Khamenei."

**THE FACTS:** Cruz makes it sound like the U.S. is bestowing the largest-ever foreign aid payment on longtime foe Iran. The reality is much more mundane: A seven-nation nuclear deal commits Tehran to curbing its nuclear activities. In exchange, Iran regains access to about \$100 billion of its own money that had been frozen under international sanctions.

**TRUMP on Syrian refugees:** "When I look at the migration, I looked at the line, I said ... where are the women? It looked like very few women. Very few children. Strong, powerful men, young and people are looking at that and they're saying what's going on?"

**THE FACTS:** Apparently whatever Trump saw of the refugees wasn't complete. Of the 4.6 million Syrians identified by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees as humanitarian "persons of concern," men ages 18 to 59 make up 21.4 percent. The rest are women, children or people age 60 or older.

**MARCO RUBIO:** "Unfortunately, Gov. Christie has endorsed many of the ideas that Barack Obama supports," including "the appointment of Sonia Sotomayor" to the Supreme Court.

**CHRISTIE:** "Let's set the facts straight. First of all, I didn't support Sonia."

**THE FACTS:** Actually, he supported her appointment, despite reservations.

Christie's own statements when he was running for governor of New Jersey in 2009 show that while he wasn't crazy about Sotomayor as a Supreme Court justice, he wasn't dead set against her, either.

"After watching and listening to Judge Sotomayor's performance at the confirmation hearings this week, I am confident that she is qualified for the position," he said, arguing that Obama should be allowed to choose a nominee "who has more than proven her capability, competence and ability," adding, "I support her appointment."

**CHRISTIE, countering Rubio's criticisms for his past positions:** "Common Core has been eliminated in New Jersey." "I never wrote a check to Planned Parenthood."

**THE FACTS:** Common Core has not been eliminated in his state — far from it.

A panel Christie put together recommended a series of changes to state standards this week, but only recommended changes to 232 out of 1,427 standards in math and English. The panel also proposed renaming the standards the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. A separate Christie panel recommended the state continue using a Common Core-aligned test — and require it for graduation by 2021.

On Planned Parenthood, Christie's denial is at odds with a Sept. 30, 1994, *Newark Star-Ledger* story that quotes Christie as saying, "I support Planned Parenthood privately with my personal contribution, and that should be the goal of any such agency, to find private donations."

Christie was running for local office in Morris County, New Jersey, at the time. The same quote appeared again in a book, "Chris Christie: The Inside Story of his Rise to Power," a book with which Christie cooperated.

The original story was written by *Star-Ledger* reporter Brian Murray, who now works as a spokesman for Christie in the governor's office. On Tuesday, Christie said he was misquoted in the 1994 story.

**TRUMP, denying he told *The New York Times* he favored a 45 percent tax on Chinese goods:** "That's wrong. They were wrong."

**THE FACTS:** Trump began wriggling out of his idea for a massive tax on Chinese goods soon after he told the paper last week that he would impose one and that "the tax should be 45 percent."

Several days later, he said the tariff could well be much less than that and might not be needed at all because China probably would start trading more fairly in order to avoid it. Now, he denies ever proposing 45 percent, despite his remarks on the record.

**CRUZ, asked about loans from two large banks totaling as much as \$1 million that fueled his 2012 Senate campaign,** said he and his wife "ended up investing everything we owned." He acknowledged his failure to disclose the loans to the Federal Election Commission, saying: "Yes I made a paperwork error."

**THE FACTS:** Cruz did, as he asserted, eventually disclose the loans in personal financial forms filed with the Senate. But citing a mere "paperwork error" in failing to report the loans to the FEC glossed over the fact that the law requires candidates to make such reports to the election regulators.

He also did not address the fact that a large chunk of the loans came from Goldman Sachs, where his wife works as an executive, and whether that might have made the loan possible.

# Trump strikes back at Cruz as Bush lands key endorsement

BY SERGIO BUSTOS and BILL BARROW  
Associated Press

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. — With two weeks to go until Iowans head to the polls in the first vote of the 2016 primary season, Republican front-runner Donald Trump ramped up his attacks against rival Ted Cruz on Friday, while Jeb Bush scored a key endorsement for his White House bid.

South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham announced he is backing Jeb Bush for the Republican presidential nomination, praising the former Florida governor's approach to national security.

"I have concluded without any hesitation, any doubt, that Jeb Bush is worthy to be commander-in-chief on day one," Graham said Friday at a joint press conference with Bush.

As South Carolina's senior senator, Graham has been a coveted endorsement for some candidates running for the Republican nomination because he holds clout among establishment Republicans in South Carolina, one of the critical early voting primary states. Bush was initially considered a serious contender for the Republican nomination for president, but his campaign eventually lagged behind candidates like Trump and Cruz, who have each positioned themselves as anti-establishment alternatives.

Graham launched his own presidential campaign last summer, but dropped out of the race last month having mustered little support in the polls.

Graham noted that Bush was the lone candidate in Thursday's debate to explicitly reject Trump's continued call to indefinitely ban non-citizen Muslims from entering the United States.

"The thing I admire most about Jeb is that he has stayed true to who he is, that he hasn't tried to get ahead in a contested primary by embracing demagoguery," Graham said.

"Donald Trump will damage the ability to grow this party. He will get creamed with Hispanics and young women," Graham said. "Ted Cruz is an ideologue that has no ability, in my view, to bring the country together. So the top two guys, I think, would lose



Republican presidential candidate, businessman Donald Trump, left, and Republican presidential candidate, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, speak during the Fox Business Network Republican presidential debate at the North Charleston Coliseum, Thursday in North Charleston, S.C.



AP Photo/Rainier Ehrhardt, File  
Republican presidential candidate, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

an election we can't afford to lose."

Graham, 60, singled out another former rival, Sen. Marco Rubio, as "great on national security" and predicted Florida's junior senator "will be president one day." But Graham said the 44-year-old isn't ready. "We're looking for the whole package here. At 44, I was not ready to be president of the United States."

Meanwhile, Trump went on the offensive Friday, calling Cruz "strident" and labeling his remarks about "New York values" in the GOP debate "disgraceful."

Appearing in an extended interview on MSNBC's Morning Joe from Des Moines, Iowa, Trump said Cruz "hurt himself" in Thursday's debate with his sweeping remarks about the political ideologies of New Yorkers.

Cruz said in the debate: "Everyone understands that the values in New York City are socially liberal or pro-abortion or pro-gay-marriage, focus around money and the media."

At the debate, Trump countered with an emotional recounting of his hometown's response to the Sept.

11 attacks.

"When the World Trade Center came down, I saw something that no place on Earth could have handled more beautifully, more humanely than New York," he said. "That was a very insulting statement that Ted made."

Asked by MSNBC Friday about the exchange with Cruz, Trump said: "Y'know, he's a good debater, but he's very strident, and a lot of people are not going to like that."

Cruz, who has been dogged by Trump about his U.S. citizenship status, is facing a federal court challenge in his hometown of Houston. A veteran local attorney on Thursday asked the Supreme Court to decide if Cruz's birth to an American mother and Cuban father while they lived in Calgary violates the Constitution's "natural born citizen" requirement.

Cruz argues that because his mother is American, he became a U.S. citizen at birth. But the Supreme Court hasn't previously considered the eligibility question.

Cruz is also facing scrutiny over a revelation that he had failed to disclose in Federal Ethics Commission filings almost \$1 million in loans from banks including Goldman Sachs, where his wife works as managing director. Cruz called the story, originally published by the *New York Times*, a "hit piece."

More than two hours of prime-time argument Thursday presented voters with a sharp contrast to the optimistic vision of America that President Barack Obama painted in his State of the

Union address earlier this week. The debate was one of two final opportunities for the candidates to lay out their visions for the country ahead of the Feb. 1 Iowa caucuses.

In Iowa, where polls indicate a narrowing race between Trump and Cruz, Trump released his second television ad on Friday, which marks a significant departure from the first one he released earlier this year. While that ad painted an alarming picture of a country under attack by jihadists and immigrants entering the country illegally, the new ad is much more traditional, featuring footage of Trump speaking at a recent rally in Lowell, Massachusetts.

In the new ad, Trump runs through his central campaign platforms, including his vows to strengthen the country's borders, "fix" its health care system and the military, and take better care of veterans.

The ad will be airing in the early voting states of Iowa and New Hampshire, according to the campaign.

The Trump campaign is also giving out free tickets to the new movie, "13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi." The campaign has rented a theater in Iowa, for the free screening on Friday. The film depicts the events of the September 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Libya that killed four Americans, including Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens.

Several GOP presidential candidates have slammed Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton for her role before and after the attack in Benghazi, saying she knew from the start it was an act of terrorism.

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