

Tulsi Gabbard Presentation at UVU



Presidential candidate Tulsi Gabbard at Utah Valley University.

On Friday, February 21, 2020, I was able to attend an informational meeting with Congresswoman from Hawaii and Democratic Presidential candidate, Tulsi Gabbard. I was surprised by the lack of security personnel. I would think that any presidential candidate would get exclusive protection under the secret service's radar, but I guess you have to be a more viable candidate than Tulsi Gabbard to receive that kind of treatment. Anyways, her opening speech was intriguing, but I also thought that her speaking was a bit robotic... she sounded a lot like a generic American politician. She almost seemed nervous as she gave her opening arguments and I thought that that was unique for a person who is in the media's limelight so often. It was still great to meet a running candidate though, and I respect her even though I don't agree with her.

After the initial speech she made of what she wants to do for America, she opened up the floor for questions and comments that she could respond to. There were many questions that were very inquisitive. They almost reminded me of a CNN townhall. The first person to raise a question

inquired about her 2nd amendment gun rights policy views. She is a unique Democrat because she wants to keep firearms in the hands of Americans who use them responsibly. This varies from the view of the majority of Democratic candidates, who generally oppose the owning of firearms or advocate the heavy restriction of the ownership thereof. The 2nd amendment seems to be at the top of the priority list for many Utah voters.



McKay Anderson and Presidential Candidate Tulsi Gabbard

Someone from our Comparative Politics class asked her about the racial profiling that is going on throughout the country and what we can do to stop it. Honestly, I felt like she didn't really give a clear answer; but I did see that she wanted to crack down on background checks and make sure that the people who own guns are mentally stable. I also thought that her stance on healthcare was closely aligned with my personal view on the nation's healthcare system. She essentially wants to revamp parts of Obamacare, but also have a private option. This policy intent is closely aligned with the views of her fellow Presidential running candidate, Joe Biden. Many of her answers were indirect and, in my opinion, didn't really answer the posed questions. But I think that if I were to

vote for a Democrat, I'd probably vote for Tulsi Gabbard. She seems to be one of the most level-headed people on the stage and I think that she is fairly moderate, despite her political affiliations. Someone also asked her what she would do to ensure that there was fair treatment to people who had been convicted of non-violent drug crimes. I am in support of this notion and she said that she is not opposed to pardoning those who have been convicted of non-violent drug possession offenses.

After the questionnaire was complete, I was able to shake her hand and get a picture with her! She asked me my name and then after shaking her hand and getting a picture with her, I told her that I admired her response to Hillary Clinton when she called her a "Russian Pawn". She laughed and thanked me.

Overall, I thought that the presentation was interesting, and I thought that it was cool to hear a speech from a current presidential candidate. Although I am not a member of her political party, I respect the rule of law and the Democracy that we have established in this country. I love the fact that I was able to get a picture with her afterwards! She seems like an enjoyable person and I am sorry that she does not have more support in the Democratic Party. I believe she would increase the likelihood of a Democrat winning in 2020!

McKay Anderson, UVU student