**Joseph Brett** (00:00): Well, our democracy is everything. I mean, it's the essence of why we're a country, how we were established as a people of by and for, ourselves essentially. And so, I take great pride in that. Our democracy is us, and voting and participate in our own democracy makes us what we are. And so, I take it very, very seriously. And as a veteran, of course, we all took an oath to protect and defend the constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. So, to see our constitution under attack is shattering to me quite frankly. But yes, our democracy, we weren't divinely inspired. There wasn't a king, there wasn't a pope, there wasn't a queen, there wasn't a dictator, there wasn't somebody, a book, a Bible, et cetera, dictating how we should perform. It was our constitution that gives us the right to be the greatest country.

(01:02): And from that right, we have assumed a mantle of being the best country in the world, in a country at which immigrants want to be part of, because they have rights here, which they don't have other places. So, our democracy is precious.

(01:18): As a former military guy and lieutenant, and as a teacher at one time, and a person who is now working with veterans issues, what can we do to make this democracy better? Because we're threatened now, not only by other issues, by disinformation, cyber war, et cetera, that are going to influence or are going to attack us. So, what we need to do as a civic duty is to become better educated. We as a society need to produce better students, increase our educational opportunities for all, and make us more aware, smarter so we can be a better democracy. So, we won't be able to be separated from our truths so easily.

(01:58): And so, we owe it to ourselves to participate, to vote, to support candidates of our choice and choosing, to also speak out when we see injustice. And when you see civil rights being violated, we have a right to do that. In the army, we took that oath as an officer, you're not supposed to obey unlawful orders. I don't know how many people take that seriously, but that is an oath we took. And so, we also ought to have an oath as a citizen that we're supposed to vote, take our responsibility seriously, and speak up when we see injustice and vote accordingly.

(02:35): The electoral college teaches us that every vote matters. If you don't win the popular vote, the electoral college in the presidential sense, there's only 30 or 40,000 votes that made our current president the president. So, if those people voted differently, 30,000 of them out of what? Six or 7 million voters, we would have a different result. We wouldn't be in discord right now maybe. But every vote does matter. Particularly it matters to you because you voted. You should take pride that you voted and your vote. You cast a vote, therefore you matter. You're not some person passing by you, you are a living, breathing citizen of your community. And by casting your vote, you just made that statement planning loud and clear. I'm here, I vote, I matter, I'm paying attention. And that's what everybody should thing.