

And If They Don't Like You-
Remarks by
Forrest McConnell
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Some of the most powerful people in Washington flat out do not like you.

That's right, they don't like you. Or me.

Their actions over the past year can hurt your family, your employees, your business, and your customers. That's because they don't respect the risks that you take or the responsibilities that you have.

Or they don't understand them.

Senator Warren said word for word that "dealers trick customers out of billions of dollars every year on car loans." She also said that "we didn't build our businesses. Someone else did."

When I started my first business at 25, I was absolutely terrified when I signed my name on a million dollar loan. And I didn't see any politicians' signature anywhere!

And then the CFPB Director claims that we "take a 4 percent buy rate to 12 percent." Seriously?!

And you all saw that *Wall Street Journal* article with the headline "*Your Car Dealer Must be a Racist.*" The editorial was actually favorable. But hey, people read headlines.

So what are you going to do about it?

If you're thinking, "I'm just one person. This is the government. I can't take on the government," well, sure you can! You have one of the most powerful associations in D.C. backing you up.

There has never been a successful individual who reached that success without obstacles. Think about all those times you woke up at 3a.m. worrying about your business.

Would some of the people in that video have your back?

Hell no... But NADA does.

Let's just step back for a minute and put today into perspective. You're not here just representing yourself. You're here representing every dealer that isn't in Washington today, along with their employees and customers.

One of the things you might encounter today are people who don't agree with you. So how do you handle someone who doesn't like you? I thought about this a lot throughout the year. We're going to meet with people who have the power to make decisions that affect all of us.

But don't worry because you've been in the persuasion business your whole life! Think about when you were a kid and you convinced your parents to let you take the car out for the night—even if they knew it was a bad idea.

Or remember the time you got the date that was totally out of your league—mine ended up being my wife! And today, you make a living in the persuasion business... I learn a lot about persuasion from my ATAE, Tom Dart. And Peter Welch could sell matches to the devil.

But both do it in an honest and diplomatic way.

Think about that angry service customer barreling through your doors on a Monday morning, and by the time they finishing talking to you you're good friends.

That's what persuasion can accomplish—turning a negative into a positive.

Everyone at NADA has been working their tail off so Washington understands, respects, and trusts what we do. We were the first ones on the Hill the day the government told us they were coming after our dealer-assisted financing model. We got members of Congress to back us up and they started putting pressure on the CFPB.

We even asked Richard Cordray, the CFPB Director, for some answers...and pretty soon we had other people asking him too. But it hasn't all been about dealer-assisted financing.

In the past year, NADA helped repeal outdated bills that were time-takers and money-wasters. We've led the charge against harmful tax reform proposals including LIFO; heavy-duty truck excise taxes; and broad recall legislation on rental vehicles.

But we couldn't have done any of this without you. NADA is in the persuasion business with you. We've convinced many people in Washington that dealer assisted financing is a valuable service that saves customers money—exactly the opposite of what some politicians may think.

And our legal team created a solution with our fair lending Guidance.

Remember that clip from Bloomberg? We fought back with the media too. We told them we are far from “middle men.” We are the ones customers can come to for financing and service, every day of the week.

But we still have a lot of work to do and, today, our work is on the Hill. Members of Congress get dozens of issues thrown at them every day. Why should they take a second glance at ours?

How many people here have been in the auto business for at least 10 years? Raise your hands. Well, in that 10 year period, your representative had to win five elections. Imagine the pressure to get re-elected every two years. So they need our support as much as we need theirs.

So let me tell you how to charm your Congressman:

Look at things from their perspective. Remind them of who you are and how you benefit their District. Remind them when they make decisions, those decisions directly affect you, your families, and your employees. Remind them they're not regulating big businesses. They're regulating thousands of small ones—many family-owned for generations.

Remind them we generate 15 percent of all sales tax in the country; we provide one million jobs; we own tons of dealerships in their Districts; and we give back to charities--millions last year.

This isn't leverage. These are facts. So don't be afraid to tell them.

Eight months ago in New Orleans, I told you that NADA has your back. And I meant it. In this town, you need it. NADA makes a difference in DC and being part of this industry makes a difference in our own lives.

That's what happened to a guy I know...

I don't think Mike Schmitz ever dreamed of owning his own business. When he was a kid he simply had a dream of belonging because Mike was an orphan. He was passed along from orphanage to orphanage. He was troubled yet he was hopeful.

One day a nice couple in a big Chrysler drove up to his orphanage to adopt him. When he got into the Chrysler, he sat in the middle of the back seat hump. For the five and a half hour trip, he stared ahead and didn't speak the whole entire ride. Later when he got to his new home, his parents asked, "Why didn't you say anything?"

Mike said: "I was afraid you were going to take me back to the orphanage."

Mike's new life began but it wasn't without risks. As he got older, he started having some trouble in school. In fact, he failed the fourth grade. His fourth grade teacher, Ms. Howell, didn't give up on him though. She chose to support him to the point that she became the fifth grade teacher. She said: "Mike is going to make it to the fifth grade because I'm taking him there."

As he worked hard, she worked *harder* to support him and his dreams. Mike ultimately passed, graduated, and learned to dream big. And, today, he's a Mercedes Dealer and the Mayor of Dothan, Alabama. He's a car dealer and a politician.

I think there are people in this room today who can relate to Mike's story. No matter where you came from, this business gave you an avenue to succeed. In fact, the auto industry helped Mike get his 'American Dream.'

So when you all go out to Capitol Hill today, show Washington how you benefit this country. Show Washington about the good paying jobs you create and the money you give back to charity. Show them how your business is the backbone of the local community. And if you have time, tell them how this business helped you reach the American dream.

And you'll find that not *everyone* here dislikes us. In fact, we have a lot of supporters.

You heard from some of them earlier this morning. We need more great leaders like that—leaders that understand and respect our business, and the risks that we take. Like the risk that Mayor Mike Schmitz took...

Or the risks that Dave Westcott took... or Dave Cox...or that your Vice Chairman, Bill Fox, took... and the risks that all of you took.

So do you think you can take on the government now? Sure you can!

Go ahead and persuade them.

Thank you.

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