

California Rep. Ro Khanna speaks at IFE Tech Salon



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On April 19, 2022, the Institute for Education, in partnership with the Ambassador of Belgium to the United States and IFE Diplomatic Steward H.E. Jean-Arthur Régibeau, hosted an IFE Tech salon titled "Entrepreneurship as a Driver of Innovation in the Digital Age: A Strategy for American Innovation." It featured Congressman Ro Khanna (CA-17) and was moderated by bestselling author, magazine writer, and TV commentator Nina Easton. The interview focused on several topics, including the impact of S. 1260 on U.S. investment and leadership in science and tech innovation, the Endless Frontier Act, entrepreneurship as a driver of innovation, and strengthening the economy while ensuring people are not displaced from their homes.

The salon was held at H.E. Régibeau's elegant home, also known as the Anna Thomson Dodge House, which is one of the grandest on Foxhall Road. Ambassador Régibeau welcomed guests to his home and set the tone for the conversation. He mentioned E.U. and U.S. mutual interest in ensuring entrepreneurship as a critical component of digital markets and the Paris Cyber Summit set to take place between May 10th-12th. He denoted Rep. Khanna's leadership on many issues and lauded Coach Kemper as a leading convener in Washington, D.C. Coach Kemper thanked the Ambassador, IFE leadership, provided an update on IFE's CS@CS coding camps, and introduced Rep. Ro Khanna.

Rep. Ro Khanna began his remarks by thanking H.E. Régibeau for his leadership on so many issues of mutual interest to the E.U. and U.S. and praised Coach Kemper for being "a model" of bringing people together from across industries and walks of life. Rep. Khanna then began his interview with Nina Easton, where he touched on a range of issues, including the need for using technology advancements to level the playing field for American workers, the need to rectify the ongoing "brain-drain" happening in the U.S., and the need for America to become a nation of production once again.

Throughout his conversation with Nina Easton, Rep. Khanna also mentioned the need to get away from the idea that the best jobs are "behind a computer coding" and instead urged guests to be intentional about creating opportunities and pathways for people to leverage digital tools. Rep. Khanna also mentioned the Internet Bill of Rights he is working on, the Endless Frontier Act, and the bipartisan work he is undertaking with Senator Marco Rubio.

The conversation covered many topics, allowing guests from different fields to provide unique perspectives and insights on ways to leverage digital tools, increase technological competitiveness, and ensure a level playing field for American workers.

Contributed by IFE Fellow Tomas Kloosterman; Photo credit Tu Tung

Spotted: H.E. Jean-Arthur Régibeau of Belgium, Coach Kathy Kemper, Rep. Ro Khanna, Under Secretary Kathi Vidal, OSTP Director Dr. Alondra Nelson, Dr. R. David Edelman, John Paul Farmer, Aneesh Chopra, Under-Secretary Carlos Monje Jr., Deputy Under-Secretary Dr. Dmitri Kusnezov, Shaun Modi, Omair Khan, Nina Easton, Livia Shmavonian, Michael Dunaway, Ph.D., Russ Schriefer, Ben Elmore, Nina Bianchi, Kelsey Valentine, and Jennifer Johnson.

