

James Brooks: [00:02:32] Yeah. So. You're here. You've had a great year. What's next?

Don Young: [00:02:37] Well, you know this this year's just begun.

Don Young: [00:02:40] We're, we're I'm excited about it. I'm very excited about the president's cabinet. They're thoroughly criticized on everything which bothers me to some extent because let them do their job and they've been held up by getting replacements and they can't fill their underpeople. And so we're going to work on that see if we can expedite it anybody has to be confirmed is delayed. It's all politics instead of OK, let him do his job. I've never opposed anybody who's been nominated. And regardless of what President, for a cabinet position or an undersecretary or anything let the person who has the ability to be in charge take responsibility. If they screw up, then it's his fault. This "hold up his candidate," I think it slows down, supposedly, the working relationships with the government agencies and Congress. Oh I'm looking forward to -- The big bill as I'm working on right now is the transportation bill. We have differences of opinion there and I don't think the President's proposal is doable and even within my own group they have to recognize they have to fund it. We're about 21 trillion dollars in debt. We can't borrow money for infrastructure; we have to pay for it. And that's going to be the big fight. Cause we don't say, you have to raise taxes. They're not taxes, they're user fees: You're going to get a result from what you put in to it. And I'm confident. He did come out the other day, the President did come out -- for like the Chamber did and the truckers -- for a 25 cent increase.

James Brooks: [00:04:15] That's something you've been pushing for a while.

Don Young: [00:04:17] Long time, long time, and if I'd done what I wanted to do when I was chairman and -- one thing about when you're in this business there's nothing really new. You just read changes. Maybe it's a facade. But you know, I've been pushing in ever since way back 15 years ago a five-cent tax with indexing, because what people forget in '91 we passed 18 1/2 cents. If you go back and read the history, that was an interesting debate and then we passed 18 1/2 cents. But we forgot to index it. So right now that 18 1/2 cents that goes into the Highway Trust Fund, its buying power is about 8 cents.

Don Young: [00:04:58] So you're getting further behind every year because you don't have the buying power. And so what I would like to see him do is put the 25 cents -- I'd even take 15 cents. But I mean 25 cents would do the job. And it's crucially important for the economy of this nation to move product. That's what Eisenhower wanted to do way back in his era of time. He built supposedly the interstate highway for military purpose. It wasn't for that, it was for our economy. And that's before we were an exporter or an importer. Now we're an exporter importer without a highway system. The product which you receive costs the consumer a great deal more. The one group that supports me big time are the truckers because every time you delay a truck you're costing them money. So they are -- and they pay the lion's share anyway. But people in the cars say you're raising my taxes. I'm saying that's not true. We're providing you with the proper transportation system.

Don Young: [00:05:50] Do you have any coffee?

James Brooks: [00:05:51] Coffee? That's a good question.

Don Young: [00:05:54] Oh, just forget it.

James Brooks: [00:05:54] I'm not a coffee drinker -- the best I've got is water.

[00:05:59] I've got my own bottle of water. I can't believe I came to a newspaper and they don't

have coffee.

Emily Miller: [00:06:00] We have some upstairs in the newsroom.

Don Young: [00:06:00] I can remember when I used to walk into these things and all you'd hear was *cling* *cling* *cling*. Now it's ssssss (air conditioner/computer sounds).

James Brooks: [00:06:15] A lot harder to do on a typewriter to fix mistakes.

Don Young: [00:06:18] Oh, tell me about it. When I first get elected, all we had was the Underwood typewriter and everybody had to type 90 minutes and ... they had to be -- and then we got spell-correct Underwoods which were ... that was a marvelous thing. And what we didn't realize was that all the people who write to me got one too.

Don Young: [00:06:40] And then we got computers. We thought, oh boy, the big old computers we thought wow, boy, and you know now the constituents all got computers and now we got all these fancy things, iPads, these things and everything else. We never get ahead.

Don Young: [00:06:58] All right.

Emily Miller: [00:06:58] Well, still have questions: Women around the country are reporting sexual assault and assault like never before.

Emily Miller: [00:07:05] What do you think of #MeToo movement and what--

Don Young: [00:07:07] The What?

Emily Miller: [00:07:07] The #MeToo movement.

Don Young: [00:07:11] You know it's of course a big movement. We're concentrating a lot on that, and I don't know whether Congress can fix it, right up front with you. This is one of the things that concerns me. As my liberals have promoted free expression, free dress, free suggestions, all kinds of different things, and you know all those things have been going on ever since Lyndon B Johnson and George Washington. Are they right? No. But you know I, I, get a little concerned when there's other bigger problems, and there are bigger problems in this country. And we shouldn't be addressing those instead of concentrating on that and let the people themselves handle this problem.

Don Young: [00:07:56] What laws could you pass, is what I'm saying.

Emily Miller: [00:07:58] What can you as a congressman do to hear and support women?

Don Young: [00:08:01] I do support women.

Emily Miller: [00:08:03] I didn't say you didn't.

Don Young: [00:08:04] I mean, duh. You know when you say support women, I mean everything I do is for support of the people, which are women. And I get, I get a little disturbed when people want to divide men and women. Everybody wants to be equal yet you want to be divided. I'm saying what I do is good for the state of Alaska, which includes men, women, and children.

James Brooks: [00:08:27] I was listening to the Petroleum Club talk last night and you had the folks come in talking about guns and stuff after the Florida shooting. You mentioned that state's

responsibility on that.

Don Young: [00:08:39] It's the states' and it's also -- you know, I lived through an era, time and up until 40 years ago kids took guns to school and there were no shootings. Is anybody looking at what happened in those 40 years?

Don Young: [00:08:50] No. What's happened to the family? No one's addressing that. What's happening to the media? What's happening to the video games? What's exposing the man's or woman's mind and they go nuts? What is creating that? You know it's sort of like putting an alcohol rehabilitation center to treat the systems after the fact and, of course, you know I'm totally against gun control.

Don Young: [00:09:22] It's the Second rights Amendment have been for ever since I was that high. I believe it's the one thing that keeps tyranny away from us, the one thing that keeps the government, making them behave. And they say oh, we're protected by the Constitution. We have slipped a long ways, and I don't want that to continue.

Don Young: [00:09:40] One thing that prevents that is, very frankly, the 600 million guns that are in the United States of America. And the thing is, I don't think anybody'd have the gall or the courage to take over the United States. I just don't think it would happen -- not the enemy, within itself. And so I'm, I'm -- Could that have been prevented? They knew has a bad one. Why didn't they apprehend him ahead of time? Then they say we're going to take and eliminate the assault guns. Then what's going to be next? Pistols, and they take that. And what about the rifles? What about the shotguns?

James Brooks: [00:10:12] Do you think there's anything Congress can do or should or even should do? Like, not even necessarily gun control.

Don Young: [00:10:19] The thing I will support, and I have supported before, is identification of those that are mentally unbalanced and you know that may be hard to do because then you're infringing upon your rights. How do we know you're mentally balanced? A background check? Maybe.

James Brooks: [00:10:35] We had that issue with asylums awhile back too.

Don Young: [00:10:40] By the way, we didn't have a lot of these problems when we did have asylums. I worked in one for a long time and I know what I'm talking about. I had some very good friends there. They're all dead now.

Don Young: [00:10:53] Because I was studying psychology in college.

Don Young: [00:10:57] All right.

Emily Miller: [00:10:57] A few questions about climate change. You once said you don't believe in climate change and it's the biggest scam since the Teapot Dome scandal. Recently in the ADN though, they said your spokesperson said that Young believes in climate change, it can't be pinned down to humans alone but it does exist, it's due to a variety of factors. Do you believe climate change is real? Is global warming.

Don Young: [00:11:17] Oh, change is happening but it is not mankind's fault. (Inaudible) but I just said it goes back to like, so-called gun control. It's all man's fault. It's third person but there's one person and I'm saying in climate change, this is not new.

Don Young: [00:11:32] Where did the oil come from? Where did it come from

Don Young: [00:11:39] Where did the oil come from in the Arctic?

Don Young: [00:11:43] Come on, come on. Didn't come from ice. Didn't come from ice

Emily Miller: [00:11:50] Well you know, the majority of scientists believe in climate change.

Don Young: [00:11:54] The "majority of scientists" that are listened to because of the media. I've got 72 good scientists that work with me all the time on this, including one at the University of Alaska saying this is a cycle system 11 times we froze, and we are on our warming period. And people don't want to listen to that because it's not popular. And you and I are going to do something about it. It's not going to happen.

Don Young: [00:12:23] And you know -- it's a matter of control by individuals that think the best thing is frightened people, so they can be directed into the corral. That's really what it's all about. You know, I will stick by that because I studied the geological structure of this globe and you see this happen all around the world. One place is warm, one place is cold.

Don Young: [00:12:47] We're getting snow in Fairbanks not by the gun-zillion bales and they're not getting any Anchorage. Now why? It's "climate change." Well maybe it is, but was it caused by man? I mean, I, was in New Mexico one time, by the way -- now where is he?

James Brooks: [00:13:01] I think he went back to his office.

Don Young: [00:13:02] --New Mexico, and a guy who was with me said just think, Congressman, 11 million years ago there was 285 foot of ice right here in New Mexico. What melted it all the way back to the North Pole? Before man ever existed? Did anybody ever ask that question? What changed? What happened? No one wants to listen to that. They think, oh it's here and we can change it now, you know

James Brooks: [00:13:26] Regardless of what's causing the change, do you think there's ability for the federal government to help, with the villages like Newtok or anything like that? This is because I was thinking of the transportation aspect.

Don Young: [00:13:41] You've got to keep in mind, how do you -- Ted Stevens, bless his heart, put 47 million dollars into Kivalina breakwater. It didn't work.

Don Young: [00:13:50] They could have put ten million in and moved them to higher ground. And that's what we ought to be looking at. You're not going to impede water, number one. Number two, they would've moved anyway if we weren't there. Well, we tried to keep them from moving. They had to move. And so as far as the federal government doing it, you know what are we going to do in Louisiana? Are we going to be able to fight nature? I'm saying OK, adapt. We're the only species God's created that does not adapt. You know, there was -- when we had no ice at the North Pole, we had polar bears.

Don Young: [00:14:30] But you take the DNA sample -- go on and ask Fish and Wildlife -- of these brown bears down here: The same DNA sample as a polar bear.

Don Young: [00:14:37] So you follow what I'm saying? Is, we keep thinking we are so important and we can change things, and I'm saying it is going to change. Adapt. And we can do that.

Emily Miller: [00:14:52] Are you a fan of Donald Trump?

Don Young: [00:14:53] You know he was not my candidate. I think he's doing a much better job than people think he is. The liberal left-wing press is absolutely trying to destroy him because they lost their sweetheart. And that was a shock to everybody. But he has a good cabinet. I'm very pleased with his cabinet and they're good people. I don't like his Twitters. That sort of thing. I don't deal in them myself. But you know we were headed -- and we can still be that way because the progressive party (I won't even call them Democrats) the progressive party wants to have the government direct and dictate to all humans within the United States, how, when, and where they're born, how they live, and how they will die.

Don Young: [00:15:38] That's really what they want to do.

Don Young: [00:15:41] Who's talking?

James Brooks: [00:15:44] They're over there on the phone.

[00:15:47] We asked -- wanted to get folks from -- questions from folks here in Juneau. And one of the things that came up was folks were seeing Muller indictment thing of the Russians and concerns about election things. Do you think there's any ... Do you think folks should be concerned about the upcoming election? Or should we be doing anything about it?

Don Young: [00:16:09] I think we should be concerned. There's an easy way to stop it. I see where Alaska's begun to do that. The electronic voting. If you didn't have electronic voting, you wouldn't have any problems. It was the modern voting system that's caused the ability to interfere. When you had to mark or -- I hate to say use a chad -- but when that was a down thing, I mean that was supposed to be the modern thing. But if you have to mark your ballot that's the way it should be. And I think that would be very helpful, and I believe we're going to have to address that.

Don Young: [00:16:40] I don't, very frankly, blame the Russians. If I can cause chaos in Russia, I'd do it in a minute. You know, they're economical competitors, you know. But I think this whole Mueller investigation is again he's he's going out -- big deal, he indicted how many Russians?

James Brooks: [00:16:57] I think 13.

Don Young: [00:16:58] So? Now how's that, how does that solve a problem? They don't have to respond. I mean, duh he indicted them, and under what law? Was it our law and were they here? If they were here and still here yes, but they're in Russia. So -- but it looks good in paper.

James Brooks: [00:17:18] It does.

James Brooks: [00:17:18] What do you think we should do in response or -- Do you think we should be taking any particular steps things you're not seeing?

Don Young: [00:17:26] What we ought to do is make sure it doesn't happen through the electronic process.

James Brooks: [00:17:30] OK.

Don Young: [00:17:30] Very simple. And they can do it.

Emily Miller: [00:17:38] You recently wrote a letter and weighed in about the proposed sale of AEL&P .

Don Young: [00:17:40] The what?

Emily Miller: [00:17:41] The Hydro One .

Don Young: [00:17:41] Yes.

Emily Miller: [00:17:41] -- possibly buying AEL&P. Can you elaborate on why you think that's the wrong move and what impact in Juneau --

Don Young: [00:17:45] Well what I want to make sure --there's two things. One is, it was a, was never a public, I mean a private entity. It was a public entity. If they could give me the assurance it is going to remain as a public entity and have a common carrier in their transmission lines so anybody else who wants to take and develop electricity is not precluded and under the system now, they can use it, frankly, if we get off their tails. But if they were to buy it and say no competition, they couldn't use the transmission lines -- that decreases the ability for people to have cheaper electricity. And this is supposed to be -- we were supposed to give them -- we built Snettisham we were supposed to have electricity the cheapest in the United States and we paid it off. You did, I didn't. You paid it off.

James Brooks: [00:18:37] With rates.

Don Young: [00:18:37] And so I'm saying OK if you were to buy it, as you the buyer, you have to guarantee me the cheapest electricity and you've got to allow him to put electricity in your transmission lines. So there can be a lower price but they end up being owning it, and they're all -- And I don't blame them in making a profit, but there is a saying there is what we call legitimate profit and exorbitant profit, and when there's only one supplier in the area and has a lock on it you're going to have a higher cost of electricity.

James Brooks: [00:19:06] Makes sense.

James Brooks: [00:19:07] Think there's any chance in the transportation plan, whatever comes out of it, of support for a road out of Juneau? Or into Juneau?

Don Young: [00:19:17] Well that was one of my projects and my bill, as you know, SAFETY-LU, and I just think it's been used as a political football. Juneau had better get a road. Otherwise, I don't think Juneau has a long life.

Don Young: [00:19:31] As your population grows in the interior, and especially the Wasilla-Palmer, which is bigger than Anchorage right now, you got a new group of people. They're very likely in time to say forget it, we're not letting Juneau be the capital. A road where people can drive and come in and give accessibility to both sides, you're connected and you're part of -- Juneau has a greater, greater ability to survive.

Emily Miller: [00:19:59] Do you think if we don't build the road, that Juneau eventually will not be the capital?

Don Young: [00:20:00] Maybe not during my lifetime, I think it would be in your lifetime. I think it would be in *your* lifetime. Maybe you, I don't know.

James Brooks: [00:20:06] I don't know about that.

Don Young: [00:20:08] It's just a matter of numbers. And if it gets worse ... You know when I first came to Juneau 60 years ago, the Southeast had a tremendous representation. You had Bill Ray, you had Benny Banfield, you had Mildred Banfield, you had Bob Zigler, you had Bill Boardman and Ernie (inaudible), you had Bradshaw, all these people down here.

Don Young: [00:20:34] You've lost that. And next year, I mean year to (2020) you're going to lose two more.

Don Young: [00:20:40] And that means your numbers don't look good. So a road though would offset it. If you don't have that road, I'll guarantee it will happen.

James Brooks: [00:20:48] You don't think the ferry--

[00:20:50] I don't support that. I used to fight against it. What the heck was the name of the guy who used to make movies down here?

Emily Miller: [00:20:58] Lyle?

Don Young: [00:20:58] Pardon?

Emily Miller: [00:20:59] Lyle?

Don Young: [00:21:00] No, wasn't Lyle. Was a guy that was -- and I made movies against moving the capital because to me, I don't want that bigger capital. To me it just creates more expenditures. Even now since I've been here, we've got an annex building here, an annex building here, ay-ay-ay, it's growing here.

Don Young: [00:21:19] Can you imagine putting in the Valley? I mean, you could forget it. You know.

James Brooks: [00:21:25] Do you think there's any way the ferry system can be a substitute for the road.

Don Young: [00:21:29] No. People want their cars to drive. You know the ferry system is of course under attack now anyway. Yeah. That's another thing.

Don Young: [00:21:39] I mean that's something else you have to think about because if we, very frankly, it wasn't for me you wouldn't have the ferry system because I got it included in the highway bill that included the ferries as a part of the highway system.

James Brooks: [00:21:50] Which made it eligible for funding.

Don Young: [00:21:52] That's right. And if you get enough opposition from up north: "Why should we be putting state money into a system that serves so few people?" You can have all the arguments you want. Again, they vote. They fund.

James Brooks: [00:22:05] That demographics is destiny argument?

Don Young: [00:22:07] The demographics -- but the road will make it a lot more defensible. So I'm a big supporter of the road.

Emily Miller: [00:22:17] Well NPR yesterday morning just reported that more than twice the number of women are running for Congress this year than in 2016. One of them is running against you: Alyse Galvan. Do you have any thoughts on that recent trend?

Don Young: [00:22:31] Anybody can run whoever they want. It doesn't bother me one way or the other. I've had women run against me before

Don Young: [00:22:35] This is all about the people and if they decide somebody can do a better job than I can, I hope they vote for them. And you know, it's not going to be a woman-man race, it's going to be what's good for Alaska.

James Brooks: [00:22:50] Should Alaskans be worried at all about that 2018 election? If the House flips?

[00:22:56] Well I think so, especially with Nancy Pelosi, all due respects. Nancy's a progressive. We will lose, as far as -- this is a resource-oriented state. And a lot of people even in Alaska have forgotten that because they've lived off the oil and they don't even know where it comes from. But we don't have much here if you don't utilize resources, and she's adamantly opposed to development of resources. They believe you can live in Never-Neverland and use the Tooth Fairy to solve problems and borrow money to do it. And to me it'd be a disaster for the nation and Alaska of course is part of the nation. But I think we would lose it. We need to begin to recognize we are a resource-oriented state. And if we don't do it, what have we got?. What do you go? What are we doing in Southeast?

Don Young: [00:23:44] What do you got here?

Emily Miller: [00:23:46] The A-J mine, they're contemplating on opening up.

James Brooks: [00:23:47] We've got the two mines, maybe a third one coming up

Don Young: [00:23:52] You know the opposition to those two mines that came from this town?

James Brooks: [00:23:55] Oh yeah. I do.

Don Young: [00:23:56] OK. So I mean they better wake up because again if you don't have economic base you have nothing. I loved it when Greens Creek opened and Kingston opened, very frankly, loved it for another reason. It changed the demographics of Juneau and makes it a lot more understandable about where does our wealth come from.

Don Young: [00:24:17] You know so we don't do that, and as far as A.J. mine, that's a long stretch. You know it might work, not with the price of gold at what it is right now.

James Brooks: [00:24:27] I was just at the Permanent Fund; they seemed to think that resource prices are going to start going up now.

Don Young: [00:24:33] They probably will. But they also can go down.

James Brooks: [00:24:36] They can.

Don Young: [00:24:36] And this is why I get very frustrated with the state legislative body and the governors. Governor -- not just this body.

Don Young: [00:24:44] They've never ever really made it encouraging to develop any businesses in the state. They spent money. And you're dealing with a commodity that you have no control over the price.

Don Young: [00:24:59] You remember in 1986 it went to eight dollars a barrel?

James Brooks: [00:25:02] And everyone moved out.

[00:25:03] Not only that, everybody would gnash their hands. Did they do anything when it went to a hundred and forty dollars a barrel but spend money?

James Brooks: [00:25:11] I mean, CBR: they socked some of it away. So--

Don Young: [00:25:14] What did they do that's socking it away? No new money.

James Brooks: [00:25:16] Well what about, they tried Delta barley: Didn't work. They tried the Alaska aerospace it's kind of.

Don Young: [00:25:24] Oh, no, they're doing well. No, they're doing well

James Brooks: [00:25:24] Got the railroad now, and that one's kind of shaky now too.

Don Young: [00:25:27] But you see, it's always existing products rather than putting anything into hydro projects other than Snettisham.

James Brooks: [00:25:38] Now they're shut down Susitna.

Don Young: [00:25:39] OK. You follow what I'm saying. Have they built the new roads? Have they made the investment climate good for people who want to invest in Alaska? No

Don Young: [00:25:52] So I'm saying where are we going to go if we don't have oil? Where's our timber? We can't cut a tree down. Oh no, it's awful.

Don Young: [00:26:02] And I'm saying OK guys what do you live on? Look in this room: Everything in this room came from what?

James Brooks: [00:26:09] Resources.

Don Young: [00:26:10] Yeah.

Emily Miller: [00:26:10] What about the cruise ship industry?

Don Young: [00:26:12] It's good, but does it do that year-round? And you go down to Ketchikan right now. What do you see? Sheet after sheet after sheet of plywood on stores. There's no steady income. If you didn't have the capital, what'd you have in Juneau? You'd have nothing because your tourist business lasts maybe the 1st of May and maybe til the 1st of October. Maybe. You know, so it's great for -- and by the way you go to Juneau now and you look at a lot of the tourist attractions. You can find them in Havana.

Don Young: [00:26:46] Not Havana. Let's say Puerto Rico. They're the same. They just move back and forth during the seasons then it employs people that have minimum wage. And I'm saying it's

great industry, don't get me wrong. I'm a big supporter of it. In fact, I can say I helped start it. When I first came we didn't have a cruise industry. And Holland America got interested, and because I'm a mariner, we got the idea done and it is the most popular and one of the best cruises in the United States. That I will tell you.

Don Young: [00:27:15] But you're not going to live off of that.

Emily Miller: [00:27:20] So, ANWR was a huge moment for you.

Don Young: [00:27:20] Pardon?

Emily Miller: [00:27:20] ANWR was a huge moment for you this year: How did that feel after decades of trying --

Don Young: [00:27:24] You know someone asked me that and I've had other great moments but it was good because I finally got it done. And like I say, I passed that out of the House 14 times, not 13, 14 times, and passed out of Senate once, and it was vetoed. And it was a good feeling. You know we got it done. It was the right thing to do. It should have been done a long time ago. And you know we just keep on going. It'll be a while before we see the actual physical benefit from it because now it's more mental. And now you know we, under the bills we passed, they had to have three sales, I mean two sales, in seven years.

Don Young: [00:28:05] That means we got to work real tight and make sure the agencies and the people within the agencies follow the law.

Don Young: [00:28:14] And I say that the problem we've had with highway construction, airport construction, hydro construction, and oil development is there's so many different agencies.

Don Young: [00:28:24] You're the Fish and Wildlife, he's the Corps of Engineers, and you're the EPA. You don't work together and you have to submit.

Don Young: [00:28:31] I'm the guy who's trying to develop. You submit the permit to her. She doesn't like what you've done and she changes it and then sends it to him, he doesn't like what she's done or you've done. He changes it and then it's submitted back to you.

Don Young: [00:28:45] You don't like what either one of them have done, so around and around we go and I'm sitting there and I can't do anything.

Don Young: [00:28:50] You know, that's where we're held up.

James Brooks: [00:28:52] It's like what Dan Sullivan has been preaching on that permitting aspect.

Don Young: [00:28:56] Yeah, and it's awful. And that we did it my highway bill, we tried to streamline it. We got it down a little bit, but it's still --

Don Young: [00:29:03] I've got a bridge back east that's falling apart. When I say I've got it, I know of it. And they have the environmental statement. I don't know what else. Ten feet from that old, old bridge to build a new bridge. Now they got to study the effect upon the fish, which means they have to put up a model of the new bridge to see whether the new bridge will dis-serve the migration -- not salmon, just fish. What kind of a nonsense is that? So they're holding the project up. And the cost is humongous as far as you go to build something.

Don Young: [00:29:44] All right.