

Housing Developments – Episode 1

_[00:00:00] Hi, I'm Jerry Howard the CEO of the National Association of home builders. And I'm Jim Tobin Executive Vice President Chief lobbyist for the National Association of homebuilders. You are I am indeed still after all these years. It's great. It's great. It's great to be back to my I haven't spent much time with you since IBS.

It was a great trip out there. I think yeah. Absolutely. We had a great time. And it's going to be good to be back in the office doing the work of the members. Yeah. Well, this is the first broadcast of our new podcast called Housing Developments. It's going to be a biweekly show assuming Jim and I are ever in the office at the same time to do this because we're both on the road an awful lot, but it'll give us an opportunity to share with our members.

I think some of what's going on in houses. That's right. We're here in Washington DC Capital of the Free World capital of the United States, Capitol of the National Association of home builders [00:01:00] and just we want to do is make sure that you all out

there understand what we see in Washington DC all the things we capture is we talked to people in the administration on the Hill are fellow our fellow housing compete reacts and just have an idea of what's going on in the industry and give you a chance to hear what we hear.

Yeah, I think we'll even probably try and add to that by talking about what we hear when we're out in the field as I mentioned Jim and I travel an awful lot and we pick up things from Builders out in the in the country and I think it's important for us to let every Builder know what there are their fellow members are thinking about because ultimately that impacts NAHB and it can impact your businesses so I think we're going to give you a great Insider View and if we're lucky we'll even bring in some guests.

From government some of the other housing Advocates that you talked about maybe some Finance types if we can get them in here. Generally, I think we just want to have conversations like you and I have in the office every Monday [00:02:00] morning on our own just to figure out what's going

on and where we need to be heading that that's that's right.

So let's let's get to it. So two weeks since the international Builder show. It's been I think the best show that I can certainly remember in a long time and you know, we've been together for a long time. Now but we've been together as call my business colleagues. That's right. That's right. That's important.

That's right. As I heard you say I'm the as we're wrapping up in the board floor best show in 10 years tell us about it. Tell us what you saw from your perch has as you know, one of the the driver of design and construction week and building this event to now well, like you said it was I'll go even farther Jim.

I can't remember a better show in my career at NAHB. That I mean there were probably some that were a little bigger there were probably some that were had more important issues to be discussed. But in terms of the smoothness of the operation [00:03:00] the number of people and the overall attitude of the attendees, I can't remember a better

one the biggest complaint I got and I'm interested to hear if you got any the biggest complaint I got was that the meeting rooms the education rooms were too small.

That's a really good problem to have that's right. I same thing. I heard everything is crowded people were waiting in line to you know, when you're waiting in line to get to food. It's one thing when you're waiting in line to talk to vendors. That's great. Not only for our exhibitors, but the builders know that they're if they're that that's successful than their in the right.

Yeah, the vendors I think we're really happy not only with the number of people in the aisles, but the quality of the leads this IBS this designing construction. We had real decision makers that were the attendees and that's what our exhibitors need to see. I have not heard any negative experience from any of our vendors and that's a real positive sign going into our sales for next year.

Yeah. Well, you know, we have [00:04:00] our metric for how the industry's doing. I think IBS and DCW's

probably a new one that we should put on there to just get the vibe of how the industry is going. That's what that's not a bad idea. Well, we'll talk to Rob Dietz if we can work on that, but just to fill in some of the gaps here the attendee registration was up by 15% As you mentioned.

There were over a hundred thousand people combined at design and construction week and IBS. And by the way, IBS is about twice the size roughly of Design and construction week. So you said that where the driver we certainly are the driver in that regard? It was a tremendous show. I was particularly interested in some of the speakers that we were able to get and two guys in particular.

I think Jim really piqued my interest and that was a Tom Reed and and Josh Gottheimer. Sorry about that. Tom Reed and Josh Gottheimer read the Republican from New York on the Ways and Means Committee and [00:05:00] Gottheimer Democrat from New Jersey on this on the house of financial services committee. Those guys come in together in this problem solvers caucuses is interesting.

What do you think about it? Well, I think it's about darn time. We've seen some effort to try to get to the middle and get something on these two these two gentlemen represent essentially 48 other members of the House of Representatives have come together in this problem solvers caucus. Bipartisan, there's 24 Republicans and there's 24 Democrats and they actually have kept their list pretty quiet for a reason because they represent when you get to 48 or 50 votes in the House of Representatives, you can actually give headaches or victories to the house leadership and if they can come together and promote certain ideas that can get a vote and they can they can move the needle then that's good for America and is unite talk about all the time.

We're so polarized right now we. With the politics of the left and [00:06:00] the right are controlling the middle and it's great to see two two two men from both political spectrums coming together to try to shoot the middle and get to in get to some solutions

between those extremes, you know, it's rare to see and I don't use this phrase lightly.

These guys are real Profiles in Courage because you and I both know the vitriol and the polarization that you mentioned that's up there. Is such that, you know, I expect that Tom Reed could possibly get severely punished politically by his own party by the right-wing the Tea Party Guys the freedom caucus, you know, these guys are displaying the kind of leadership and I don't want to get you know sappy about it, but they're doing what the founding fathers.

Anticipated that we would be doing. I think it was wonderful that you were able to get them there Testament to you when your team and I think it was something that that NAHB really needs to pick up on after all as you [00:07:00] know, better than anybody our issues are not partisan our issues our housing and we can work with people in both parties.

That's right. You mentioned about Tom Reed. He took a strong vote at the beginning of this Congress.

Who's the only Republican to support the Democratic rules package and that's what's going to govern the. Represents for the next couple of years always a partisan vote. But Tom there were there were some reforms that the problem solvers been pushing for in that package and he was a man of his word and he voted for that package to the rebuke of his own his own leadership came out from a little bit and you're going to find Josh Gottheimer going to be in the same position as he moves forward to the next couple of years with his own leadership.

And certainly the progressives in the house is you said they are there looking to take scalps early and and we're starting to see even the majority. Having in fighting with each other when they should be unified having have won the election, you know, it's kind of funny you and I've witnessed this before I sort of sit back and I think about what our mutual friend John Boehner who had so much trouble [00:08:00] controlling the Republican conference when he was the speaker and and the.

Far-right emerged as the power Brokers. I can almost sit in picture him sitting back and just laughing because Nancy Pelosi is going through the exact same torture that he did. Yeah with a cigarette and a glass of red wine. If the remember our friend John Boehner, well and Jerry, you know, you mentioned you mentioned the problem solvers, but there's there's other there's other caucuses inside the Congress to that we're working with as well.

You have got the new Democrats which are a group of socially Progressive but but business friendly, Crash in the house. They've got a housing platform. We're engaging with them directly on Crafting the next step of that that that legislation those ideas. You've got the blue dogs really business-oriented Democrats who got decimated in the in the 2000s is is the is the Democrats became more liberal.

The blue dogs were the were the the sheets were the Democrats of where the Republicans went after and took them out. They've come back and stronger [00:09:00] Force. We've got really good friends over there. So I think the Housing Industry has a. A nice

group of Coalition you have the Tuesday group. Those are the moderate Republicans and it's not as many of those after last year's election working.

But what is your an opportunity for us and really crafting housing legislation other than middle-of-the-road Common Sense thinking. Oriented, but for the American Coalition we might be able to get something done. It's going to be really threading a needle here, but I think we got a chance to well and I think I think we're gonna have to try to take our leaders from the administration right you and I we go to the.

I was probably at least once a week maybe once every other week if it's slow it's talked to the White House about all the different facets of housing affordability. Whether it's Workforce Development, whether it's Housing Programs, we're always talking to the White House and I think there's going to be some leadership come on leadership coming out of there, you know, tell me you you were had a front-row seat as we all did for Ben Carson, but tell his speech at IBS and before the board was great.

[00:10:00] It was the best I've ever heard him speak. I got to be honest with you. He didn't stick totally to his script. He ad-libbed a little bit engage the audience with you know, a few quips that he threw in there on his own. I thought it was a tremendous speech. I wonder how he stole your idea though for the last six months.

Every time I see you you say we've got to convince people to use a carrot not a stick encourage local governments and state governments to have more favorable zoning encourage local and State. To do whatever they can to make it unless of all the regulatory burden to build a house and I'll be darned if Ben Carson doesn't come right out and say that's what he's going to do.

So what I got to ask you is did you have private breakfast with Carson or how did he steal your idea? Well, he we all know he's a brilliant brain surgeon. I'm just going to say probably maybe season brilliant a brilliant idea when he hears one. So ya know we were I was thrilled to hear the Ben Carson say that

it's now we have to capitalize on that and and and
and that's our plan.

Well, we got to [00:11:00] capitalize on that as you
and I have discussed and we also got to capitalize on
the fact that both parties equally share the blame for
the fact that housing affordability is at a ten-year
low and that although young people coming into the
workforce young people who are forming families
still believe in the American dream of
homeownership that dream is less and less
attainable you and I need to make sure that both
parties understand that the American public is
watching them and that.

Don't start talking about housing affordability as we
get into the 20/20 election cycle something's wrong
grade. And and we're starting to see plans come out
from some sites. Particularly Elizabeth Warren who's
running for president. She's got a housing plan
Kamala Harris also running for for president.

She's got she's got a tax credit for renters out there
people are talking about it. But now we need to
harness both of those sides if we can get one side

talking about it and get the other side talking about it next. You know, we're having a national conversation about hey, let's Let [00:12:00] them fight over it and we'll come out the winners.

It's that's right me, you know speaking of Kamala Harris. I read a poll this morning about the Democratic nominees is Hickenlooper came into The Fray yesterday others are still considering it again. It looks like the Republican primary season of four years ago. We're just about everybody who calls himself a Democrat and who has any bona fide.

He's is going to run for president as the Republicans did back then. But if you look at the polls, there's only three candidates that even come close to double digits and support and Biden said former vice president former Senator. Joe Biden is the front-runner by far with Bernie Sanders second.

And then Kamala Harris is just somewhere over ten percent. What do you think about that? Well, I I it's I find it interesting that what we have is Joe Biden leading the leading the leading the pack. I am of the mindset that both parties need [00:13:00] need

younger leadership and and in need to appeal to not only younger voters because we knew fresh.

Yeah. I know. I know I know but you know, Joe Biden's got that that every man appeal. He's also run for president a couple other times before. I'd be curious. It's one thing to be it's one thing to be talked about as a candidate. And then once you actually put your toe into the ring and every starts taking swings at you haven't even watched what happened four years ago with the the Democratic field.

And and how and how Trump systematically took down Contender after Contender and whittled that 17 person stage down to finally him and Ted Cruz. I'll be curious to see how the Democrats do it.

Everybody pretends that they don't want to damage the part of the old Reagan. Actually. I'm of we Republicans shouldn't beat up on Republicans.

They're talking a good game now, but it's got to get nasty over the next year. You know, we're only a year out from the first the first primaries and Iowa and, New Hampshire, [00:14:00] Nevada. So it's

going to be interesting. Like you said it's the list is shorter of who isn't running for president. Then who is running for president?

And I know we've got some more names coming out putting Joe Biden I here in the next couple weeks. So I you know, it gives us more opportunity and obviously we're going to have to reach out to our members in the in the various States and get them to help us get access to their members of Congress their Senators their Governors who are running for president because what it has been NAHB's

Is is to establish a relationship with every presidential campaign and help them to the extent. They're willing to accept our help develop their housing policy platforms. It's something that has worked very well for us in the past you and I made several trips to New York in 16 to the Clinton campaign.

In actually developed a pretty good rapport with some of those people likewise you and I were both members of the Trump leadership conference helping now President [00:15:00] Trump and and his

team develop housing policy. I think it's an opportunity for us to make sure that the interests of our members are put in front of these candidates as early as possible and that we keep that message in front of them as strong as we possibly can.

That's right. That's right. And again where there's going to be plenty of opportunity for people to crawl over themselves to find that we see it over there talking single-payer health insurance, you know, there's a variety of things. If you are trying to trying to Define themselves in a campaign finding someone who's willing to jump on the bandwagon for housing.

I believe will then lead everyone else to talk about it as well. So I guess we're we're kind of coming to the end. I'm going to ask you a quick a quick question about IBS. So you've seen this day the last 10 years we've seen a lot of opening opening ceremonies speakers, where does Dana Carvey stack up for you.

Well, Dana Carvey was pretty good. I haven't laughed that hard in a long time. He. [00:16:00] Walked right up to the edge of a couple times, but he pulled himself back and kept the audience

engaged. I really enjoyed Dana Carvey. I'll tell you Terry Bradshaw's spoke in a couple times. Terry Bradshaw has been one of my favorites when he spoken and I have to admit that when we first got him many years ago.

I was skeptical as to what he would say part of that's because I'm not a Pittsburgh Steeler fan as you know, but he did a great job. I put Dana Carvey may be number one. Wow, that's that's pretty so do you put them? Let's see. Yeah, I like a good laugh. I thought I thought Jay Leno was very funny.

I'm a I'm a big Leno fan, I grew up with Dana Carvey on SNL. He was that was my era of Saturday Night Live. So for me, it was kind of funny to hear him do some of those those old voices members from those old old sketches that he used to do. I thought Terry Bradshaw was great Peyton Manning not so good the big fan of know.

Try to think who else your man Jon Gruden. I thought Gruden was pretty funny too and talk [00:17:00] about a guy who went for 20 minutes with no with no script or at least a piece of rolled up

paper. I thought he I thought he did a pretty good job as well. But I think I think Opening Ceremonies just a great way to get everybody loose, you know, and one thing you come in an earlier about IBS.

You can you can tell while the members are feeling not just by walking through the IBS show floors watching the lines at vendors, but from the board of directors perspective. We don't have a whole lot of policy resolutions coming through now, there's two reasons for that. One is we have every policy resolution on the book we can possibly have or you know, what everybody's busy and and everybody's they're making money for themselves and their family and their businesses the providing that affordable housing product for their customers.

And everything's going along. Well, I remember in the in 10 years ago during the downturn how many policy resolutions did we have it? So it's good to see that the members the members are happy and refer to having lived with you through the downturn. It's good to see that I agree [00:18:00] gym, and I'll tell you that.

I think that the one area where we need to keep our eye on the ball is Housing Finance. Particularly a D&C lending, Rob Dietz told me yesterday in a conversation that he's starting to see it tighten again. And obviously that's the lifeblood that drives the industry. So we've really got a we've really got to focus strong on that.

And before we close Jim and I know I'm speaking for you on this too. I think that everybody in Alabama should know that our hearts and prayers go out to those people who suffered so tremendously in that tornado the other day nahb is is prepared to do whatever we can to help with the recovery from that and we will we will.

Be in contact with our local and state associations down there. But I want everybody to know that when any member of our Federation. I'm a member of our NAHB family is injured in any way at all we all feel it. And so again our thoughts and prayers are out there. No one circles the [00:19:00] wagons like NAHB. I mean that's that's the the truth of that.

Anything else you want to wrap up with Jerry? I was I thought a good first first maiden voyage of the new shipment of the ship has set sail will see where it takes us and we look forward to coming back in two weeks with hopefully with some insights as to what's taken place here in town and around the country.

Thanks everybody for tuning in. Thanks very much.