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Robert Allison interview with Robert Travaglini, Senate President, 2003-2007, and Brian Lees, Senate Minority Leader, 1993-2007

Date: 2017

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Robert Allison: So Senator Travaglini and Senator Lees, thank you for joining us here in your old office. Can you tell us a bit about what brought you into public life?

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Robert Travaglini: At a very early age I realized because I grew up in East Boston, it's a very politically active area. It's been known for its political campaigns and I was drawn to public service based on an awareness that that's how you could help people. That politics, for Brian and I, and for so many of us who served in this building, is the art of helping people. It's certainly not about serving yourself, this business has been plural since the day it began. We understood that, we knew it was about getting things done in a way that was acceptable and appropriate and in the end got you to where you needed to be. But I knew at a very early age that that was the course I was going to, in college and with political science and in campaigns, when I was a kid from, my god from Frank Bellotti to L. A. Richardson and Brooke that Brian worked for, Kevin White, Mike Dukakis. We can go back a long way, Bobby, but it was a path for me to pursue that I knew I was going to find a reward.

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Allison: And how about you?

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Brian Lees: Mine's a little bit different. But my mother was active in local Republican politics. Those were the days when you went to chicken dinners, chicken barbeques, and candidates came in, and I thought that was pretty exciting and, when I was young. And then I went to college, and when I got out of college I moved to Washington and ended up going to work for Ed Brooke, a former United States senator from Massachusetts, Republican. The first African-American ever elected in the history of the country to the U.S. Senate. But a wonderful guy, I got to know him well, I became very close to him, working with him, and he really gave me the bug. It's just as what Trav just said, you can get something done if you get involved and people that sit on the sidelines can't. They can maybe complain or ask for something, but if you get involved, you can actually get things done if you build coalitions and you work together. And so I learned that from him, moved back to Massachusetts, moved to Springfield, of which I was from the North Shore, moved to Springfield, ended up running for Congress, lost, but then ran for the State Senate and won and then stayed here until Trav and I left right at the same time, basically the same time, went on to be Clerk of Courts in Hampden County, but then decided I wanted to do some other things.

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Allison: Now each of you started off working for someone else. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about having a mentor or a role in office.

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Travaglini: It's a great point and it's absolutely accurate. The people that Brian and I have been exposed to were looked upon as icons in the business. He had Ed Brooke, I had Frank Bellotti. I was a kid, graduated Boston State College, 1974. Frank Bellotti had just won the attorney general fight. And I'll never forget being interviewed at the time, and he said to me, "You really don't deserve this position on paper, but I see something in your personality that I'm going to give you a chance." And he did. He hired me as an executive assistant in his press office. I used to do all of the preparation and presentation for his information for all of his speaking engagements, traveled around the state with him, and when I left Frank, I had a chance to work for Kevin White and the City of Boston as the mayor of Boston, as an executive assistant to the mayor. I gained this experience on a state and city level that perfectly positioned me to run for elective office.

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Allison: Both in the city and in the state.

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Travaglini: Yes, and it was perfect. And district representation became a reality in 1982. It was a brand new open seat, and by that time we had assembled an army of young, capable, and energetic friends and supporters that, it was a great time.

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Allison: And you entered the city council with a number of other notable people.

Travaglini: I did.

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Travaglini: Tom Menino, who was a very dear friend of mine, and we served together in the city council. We had offices next to each other. There are things that I still can't talk about but can laugh about. And when he became mayor of Boston and I became President of the Senate, we would have dinners in the North End very quietly and look at one another and say who would have ever have imagined that we're in a position of such significance, that we're altering people's lives with every decision that we make and most of the time it was for the better.

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Allison: Can you talk a little bit?

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Lees: Kind of a bit the same, believe it or not. When I got out of college, I went to Salem State, I went to Washington, ended up working for Geico. I was a business major and I was in their accounting department, one of those people lined up with many desks and just adding up figures for actuary stuff all day. And I heard Ed Brooke had an opening in his office and I called

and found out what you do, I applied for it. And almost exactly what Trav just said, which is so bizarre because I didn't know that particular part of the story, I knew he went to work for Frank Bellotti. I went in and Brooke said, "You know we have a lot of people that are qualified, that have interned on the Hill." That's a big thing before, you know you want to intern on Capitol Hill and when you're in college and other things, but he said, "I kind of like you, I like your spunk and you're pretty honest and can you start in two weeks?" And I said, "I could start tomorrow if you want me to start tomorrow but two weeks is fine," and then went to work there and continued to work for him. He asked me to come to Boston and be in the Boston office and be a project person around the state, I did that. And he unfortunately was defeated for office to Paul Tsongas, but he, we kept in touch, we still did things. And at one point he called me and said, "I want you to come see me in Washington." I was back up here in Massachusetts working in western Mass. "I think you should run for office and I want to talk to you about that." What I learned from him was that, again, anything can happen and you can get things done if you're in office, but I also learned from him the thing, and Trav and I are very much like this as well in detail and being probably a little anal about detail, do everything yourself and be involved in everything and you'll never regret whether you win or lose. Because you start out at the bottom, even if you help people make signs, hold signs, do door knocking, phone calls, just do everything yourself so you know exactly what you're asking people to do for you when they're part of your army, your team, working for you to get out the vote. And so I did that.

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Allison: What brought you to western Mass?

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Lees: Well, you know, funny I--

Travaglini: A greyhound bus. (laughs) I couldn't help myself.

00:07:29,240 --> 00:07:42,580

Lees: There was a little bit of a blip after Ed Brooke lost. I went to New York and worked for a company that was part of American Express and my territory was the Bahamas, Caribbean, and Central America.

Allison: So Springfield makes a lot of sense.

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Lees: Well no, no, it did. It was there, and I'm like, "I got to get back to Massachusetts, to be able, if I want to be involved in politics." And I was reading the Wall Street Journal one day and saw a job in Springfield, Massachusetts at a paper company called U.S. Envelope. I applied for it, and to make a long story short, got the job and moved here. And then five years later decided to run for office, and they say, "Wow, we brought you here and now you want to," but they said, "Yes, you can do it," took a short leave of absence and all is history after that. So Westvaco U.S. Envelope I am for always indebted to because people in your lives can change your life and the head of that company changed my life by letting me run for office at the time with agreeing to take a leave and if I didn't win I could go back.

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Allison: Very good. Now what can you tell us about what life was like in Massachusetts at about the time you entered the State Senate, what quality of life, the economy?

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Travaglini: Well I think we experienced both the hills and the valleys. We experienced the good times and the bad. When we came in, when I came in, and I was in the city council from '83 to '92, I came up to the Senate in '92, and it was a difficult time at that time, economically we were hitting one of those cycles where things were difficult and the bulk of the decisions were being made to cut things, to revisit and transform, and to try to make more efficient the operations of state government. And the good times were better than the bad. The bad times we were forced to make decisions that we knew we couldn't defend, that people were going to be hurt by them, and we weren't really fulfilling the mandate that was entrusted to us of providing help for people who needed it. Because we just didn't have the money. Those were the difficult days. And I can remember times in here where colleagues, Brian and I would be sitting here, and it wasn't uncommon to see a tear because you knew it was painful.

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Lees: But you know one thing that was interesting about that time, and I came in a few years before Trav did, when you knew that times were bad, we all worked together, we cooperated, we realized politics is the art of compromise, when Trav talks about coming into this office, when you had a caucus, normally the Democrats are in this office, the Republicans are in the Minority Leader's office, we had a lot of caucuses in here, and you know what happened, we all realized we're in the same boat.

Travaglini: That's right.

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Lees: And you had to make decisions because the state potentially could go bankrupt, you have to balance the books in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts every year. And, so we had to as a full body figure out what you're going to cut and we had to kind of all agree that we were going to do it. There were a little skirmishes here and there, but we had to get to a certain bottom line. What was the bottom line? The amount of revenues that was going to come in. And so we all learned in the late '80s, early '90s that you had to get along, you had to trust each other, you may have some minor differences, and we're not talking about social issues here, but minor differences on fiscal issues, but you had to work together. Because guess what? You had to make cuts, everyone did, and had to vote for that, or huge tax increases of which when the economy had been tanking a little before that, you weren't going to get enough votes for a tax increase, not from Democrats or Republicans. So it really I think set up the dynamic for when the Senate President and I really worked closely together because we became very good friends. You knew you could trust each other, you knew we were in this together. Yeah, we were going to disagree sometimes and he was wrong probably more than I was but still--

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Travaglini: (laughs) I thought I was wrong once, but I made a mistake.

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Allison: Yeah.

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Lees: I had to get that out just to see if he was listening to me because, but we had to work together and that's why I believe things worked so great during the '90s and after when he and I were really—

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Travaglini: When you're in a position of leadership, there are three levels of relations with your colleagues. First, you hope they like you because if they like you, they're going to find a way to help you. If they don't like you, then you can figure out what they're going to do to you. Then they'll trust you. There's affection, there's trust, and then they become loyal. Because you've demonstrated to them over a course of time and through a myriad of different situations that your interest is their best interest and what's right. And the right way of doing things never changes. And Brian agreed with that philosophy. When we started off, the chemistry in this building, when we, when I became president and Brian was Minority Leader, was strained. It was strained. And we looked at each other, and I'll never forget calling the speaker over here in a meeting and I had this manual and all these books on that desk. I'm trying to look smart and informed and well-prepared for what was ahead of me, and in none of those volumes of history are experiences of the body that I see or read that we had to be adversarial. Everybody thought that you had to fight it out. I called him in, I called him in. I said, "Come over here, maybe I missed something. We don't have to be adversarial. We can help one another. Tell me what you think is right, tell me what you need and suggest to me how we get there." I knew I could get to twenty-one real easy. That's all I needed, twenty-one votes of the body. And we started a new spirit of communication, of negotiation, and of a genuine concern for each other's political wellbeing that translated into benefits for our constituents. And if you don't care about credit, you can get a lot of stuff done in this building. If you do, you're going to have roadblocks.

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Allison: I wonder if you could tell us, you've served with a number of different Senate Presidents--

Lees: Correct.

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Allison: I wonder if you could characterize any of those relationships as well as this one?

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Lees: Well look, I've liked all of the individuals I've served with, whether it be as Assistant Minority Leader or Minority Leader. All good people have different ways of getting things done. And I've served with William Bulger who was certainly well known in this building and around the state. I served with Tom Birmingham, a fine person who had served on Ways and Means and moved up to become Senate President. But what Trav just said about, it was strained at certain

levels in this building at times, and if you don't trust each other and don't work to get along, hey you can be right sometimes, you can be wrong sometimes, but you got to kind of keep moving the ball along and trust was a big part of his presidency and likeability. People certainly, he was probably one of the most loved people I've ever worked with in government, a real true leader, but his word was his bond. And hey, you're going to get, win some things, you're going to lose some things, you're going to get some things, and you're not. And people had to understand that. And, one of the other things that was so important, and I will say this with him sitting beside me and not trying to blow smoke at him, but just so he realizes, one of the things he and I tried to do, and he being the leader and I kind of, even though as Minority Leader we're supposedly equal, but he had a lot more members, we never wanted to set anybody up to look bad. And we never, never, did anything to try to hurt any other member. We were above board, we were honest, we weren't trying to play something out in the press.

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Travaglini: And there may have been times where they warranted that. But we were above the frame.

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Lees: And we never did. We weren't going to talk to the press about members. You know, positively, what we're doing, we were very transparent, but we weren't trying to set somebody up. And, we didn't want to hurt anybody because everybody has their own district, everyone is trying to do a good job that's here, and everyone believes in what they're trying to do. Now they may not have agreed with the president or myself, but we realized that in order for the next time to get their vote on something we couldn't set them up this time because that was never going to work, and so we had good relationships with everything. I mean we had fights on the floor at times, sometimes more planned out than, probably we shouldn't be saying that, than people would've thought.

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Travaglini: They weren't planned out, they were aired out in caucus. And you look ill-prepared if you go into the body and you don't have a view or an idea of what about, what's about to transpire. You're not ready. If you've done your work and you've done your homework, you left this office or his office and you walk to that chamber and you had a pretty good idea what was going to happen. All you have to do is be simple at math. You got to count, and there was no orchestration or theatrical production. There was a course of conversation and an exchange of ideas with your colleagues that left you with an impression as to whether or not something was going to pass or fail, simple. I didn't like surprises. I used to tell people all the time, tell me what you want, tell me what you need, tell me why you need it and how we're going to pay for it, but don't do it out there and surprise me or the rest of the body and try to take advantage of a situation to advance yourself at somebody else's expense and the press. Because if you do that, where I come from, that's against the rules and I can't forgive that and overlook that because then everybody is going to do it.

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Lees: Well that's what I was mentioning about 'planned' and we knew, kind of, where things were going to go. I remember the former Senate President Tom Birmingham once saying to me about something that came up. I'm not a lawyer, Trav is not a lawyer, but he said, "Lawyers better know the answer to the question before they ask it." So we, learning from that, we were going to know what we were going to face on the floor. Now, some of them are going to be fights, I'd have to, you know as Minority Leader, whether it be a tax issue or less government or something, kind of fight things out. But you darn well better know what you're going to be asking and really, what is, what's the reason behind it and where is it coming from. And so we, that's the kind of relationship we had. Look, we did a lot of tremendous things when Trav was president of the Senate that people said never could be done. We had the first universal healthcare in the nation in Massachusetts, now Mitt Romney was governor, but we, you had to get it through the legislature, you had to get things going, and it was a lot of parts of that. So we were able to do that, get the first step in gay marriage through a constitutional convention. No one thought that could be done. No one, and we worked together, together, he and I, of what we going to do, how we were going to explain, and we were going to be totally transparent, so everyone knew every step of the way what we were going to do. And to the surprise of many, we were able to do that with a positive attitude, not a pointing a finger attitude.

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Travaglini: You can add stem cell research to that list and you can also add the life sciences. It all started in our tenure when we appropriated the money. Deval Patrick came in as governor and ran with the idea when we left, but it was all teed up and ready to go.

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Allison: Can you tell us a bit about your path to becoming president of the State Senate?

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Travaglini: It was bumpy. (laughs) No, actually--

Lees: Less bumpy than he likes.

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Travaglini: When I came in President Bulger was the president of the Senate. He affectionately nicknamed me "boy wonder." He used to call that, when somebody'd come in that he thought he'd see something, and was personable, was well-liked by the body, knew how to move around. I think geography played a great role as an asset to my ascension to this position. I lived right across the tunnel so I came in every day and I spent every day, all day, in the building. And then at night, I would go into the district to shore up the base, and to stay accessible, visible, and engaged. In the body I realized that's it's all about making friends. Your relationships would determine how successful you were on the floor. I said to you earlier, when people like you, they find a way to help you, and there's no mystique to that. And if you know how to help somebody else, Brian would come up to me and one day, there was so many votes up here that don't really mean a lot in the overview of your performance as a senator, but occasionally, they mean a lot to your individual member. It's certainly not going to be politically suicidal for you to take a vote in your district, when it's got something to do in the Berkshires. I used to laugh at some of my

colleagues. "Oh, you live over, these votes don't count for you." I said, "What are you crazy, they may be different, but they all count." But when you can help somebody in time of need and you offer that help without being solicited, they remember. When you go out, we used to go out all the time after the day was done, pick eight or nine, we used to call it team America, we were in preparation. We had Freddy Berry, Terry Murray, Stevie Pangi, Stevie Brewer--  
Lees: Henri Rauschenbach.

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Travaglini: Henri Rauschenbach. I mean, Republicans and Democrats. We'd head down to the Hanover Street in the North End. I knew what I was doing, I didn't tell anybody else what I was doing. But Bobby you're absolutely right. It started, probably six years in advance, 1997, when you realize that President Birmingham was president, he was going to run for governor and there was going to be an opening. And you look around the body and you start saying to yourself, "Is there a chance?" First I said, "No way, just be quiet, just be your affectionate self, just be helpful. You're a type of a go-to person." Everybody in the body knew that I was a pretty resourceful individual around this part of town and they would come and ask for guidance and we would give it to them. But then it reached a point where Brian even came to me at a time and said, "Look, this, you should look at this." I said, "Can you get those six Republican votes?" Because they did it once before and I wanted to remind him that it wasn't unprecedented. He said, "If you really need them Trav, I think I can swing them." But thank god we didn't need them, but it was a process. But it was all about your character, how you respected the integrity of the body, how you responded to the needs of your colleagues, and were you trustworthy, were you clean, did you do everything right? And were you in the business for the right reason? I mean unless you see it differently, Bri, that's how I saw it.

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Lees: No that was very true, very true. From my standpoint, very different than Trav's, Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci got elected the 1990 election. When they came in, they almost took the Senate over. They had a lot of senators, it was the first time ever, 15 members, a lot of folks, and Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci found that all of a sudden, all of these brand new freshmen, most of whom had never even served in public life at all, were coming to them regularly and asking for things or asking questions or information to them and their staff and I got a call one day from Paul Cellucci, and he said, "Governor Weld and I are thinking of naming the Assistant Minority Leader of the Senate," I had only been here for two years and a few months, "to the cabinet, and the governor and I want you to be the Assistant Minority Leader because we would like somebody that kind of came in with us, that's a bit younger, and that is really a person that we're going to, is going to be our contact in that caucus." Not that David Locke, who was the Minority Leader, wasn't, because he was a wonderful person and a good leader. I said, "Well I don't think you can get me through the caucus to get Assistant Minority Leader, I just got here." "I'll take care of it." Because he had been a senator. Paul Cellucci had been a senator.

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Travaglini: And he was very good at what he did.

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Lees: And he was. And very well-liked. He went in, the governor came into the caucus and said, "This is what we would like to do, and we want to take a vote right now." And I became Assistant Minority Leader, and a year later, the Minority Leader lost. So I was in a position to move up. And so I would like to say it was as perfectly planned out as Trav's was, but he was beloved and I don't say that lightly. He was beloved in the building. He was a go-to guy, but more importantly, he was someone you could talk to. It wasn't just you go to him, and he'll tell you something. He would talk to you, and so we tried to make that the team that we had after he got elected president that they could come, any member, Republican or Democrat, go to either side. I was never offended if a Republican went to the Senate President and asked for a favor, or if somebody came to me, "Can you do something? Because I can't whatever." And it was fine. We never cared about any of that, and it's back to his point, I think. People that want credit really run into trouble in this building. I want you to know, and this is true, and I would like to say I was a bit player in a lot of things, but I had leaders that would help and help me. And I believe I helped them, and I never gave a speech without saying at some point, "Look I have nothing to do with this passing, someone else did. I'm not saying I didn't help, but someone else." Because that's what this business is about. It's about friendship and loyalty and giving credit where credit is due.

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Travaglini: And he used the word, there's a word that in this business, you're looked at in a way that is inappropriate. He used the word favor and when you do somebody a favor, to me there's a connotation that that is somehow nocturnal, deceitful, unethical. Helping a homeless person find a home, is that a favor? Helping somebody get into a school, helping somebody get a job, helping to improve the standing of someone's life and changing that life in a better way, that's a favor. I'm guilty of a lot of those favors and I offer no apology.

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Allison: Ok, good. What surprised you most about becoming, the office once you became president of the Senate?

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Travaglini: When I first walked in here, as president, I sat at that desk because this was my working office. I used this because of its palatial quality, because of its preserved history, I wanted everybody to see this. And we used to sit at this couch and we'd have phones at the desk and this desk. And it allowed me to bring in more people than the smaller office could hold so everybody felt part of the team. And each and every day, I realized the first day that I'm only going to be as good as the people I surround myself with. I got an all-star staff. Arthur Bernard, chief of staff for me, was chief of staff for Deval, he's now with the firm. David Friedman was my legal counsel, he's now legal counsel for the Boston Red Sox. David Morales was my health policy, he's now the number three man at Steward Hospital. Christian Scorzoni was my policy advisor, he's now one of the most expert people on alternative energies and environmental issues. And Arthur, Christian, and I are all part of the same team, we're still a team. But David and David are still very close to us. So that was the nucleus of our operation, and they were all

gifted in their own way. And then I had the luxury and the benefit of serving with people like Brian and Freddy Berry as the leaders in both of the party, I saw it right away. I said, "This is going to click." And all the people on the staff, the only one I knew was Christian. I never had a relationship with anybody else, and I wanted it clean, I wanted it fresh. I wanted it to be special. And it was. We clicked right away. Right away.

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Allison: How did you choose your staff?

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Travaglini: How did I choose it? My brother, Michael, was a big help. Michael was with Shannon O'Brien in the treasurer's office. He was Shannon's first deputy when she lost the gubernatorial race to Mitt Romney. Michael was in a limbo from the primary to the end of the year. I had twenty-two hundred applications for positions. Twenty-two hundred. I said to my brother, Michael, "Mike I need a favor." There I go using that word again. "I need a favor. Look at these resumes. Look at these applications. Get me some talent. Bring them in, and let me but I don't want to waste any time, Mike. I'm not a patient person. I don't tolerate fools and I can't go through that dance. So find me the talent that I need so that I start off smart." He came up with those names. He was a tremendous help.

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Allison: Any thoughts on the staff?

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Lees: Well, if you can, you try to pick people from your district. It's certainly much easier for the former Senate President than it was for me or from your general area so they have some sense of what's happening there. Unlike some of the folks in Boston, we in western Mass, and I represented Springfield, and East Longmeadow, and Longmeadow, and Ludlow, and Granby, and Hampden, and Belchertown, and Longmeadow, you had to have a district office. So you had to have people there, so you wanted definitely local people there that could do that, and I had wonderful folks there. And here, just like the Senate President mentioned, when I was named Minority Leader, I was bombarded with folks, but I will just give you one person because I had a number throughout the years, and I had wonderful people, so I don't want to miss somebody. But I was very fortunate that I was able to have one of the retired people from Ed Brooke's office, Roger Woodworth was his name. He had been a clerk for Chief Justice Warren Burger, believe it or not. So he was an older guy, smart guy, and he helped in the initial stages of kind of weeding through and seeing what could be or couldn't be. He was a bit of an eccentric guy and when you'd have somebody come in for an interview, I'm sure they were like taken aback like, "Who is this guy?" But you need to have somebody else look at things a little differently than you do, as Trav just said and that was good. I was also very fortunate, I served with a number of governors, I started with Michael Dukakis, but Bill Weld, Paul Cellucci, Jane Swift, and Mitt Romney, were governors when I was Minority Leader and I would hear from some of their staff people and others that they would like to, usually they would want to go to the governor's office but once in a while if you're lower-level, you're not a cabinet secretary level or something,

they would like come to the Minority Leader's office. But, you'd try to pick good people. I'll just give you an example, my legal counsel for years and years was Dan Connelly. When I left he went over to work for Terry Murray and became a legal counsel of Ways and Means. Here's the Minority Leader's office and the chief of my office in Boston. When I left, they realized how good he was. Trav loved him.

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Travaglini: Still do. More than you. (laughs)

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Lees: And he went over as did several other folks that worked for me. And that is a testament, I think again, back to this, how Trav and I got along. We respected each other's staff, we worked hand and glove, they would help me if we needed something legally.

00:32:29,570 --> 00:32:32,169

Travaglini: We knew them. We cared for them.

Lees: And we would help them.

Travaglini: That's right.

00:32:32,169 --> 00:33:48,380

Lees: And no one ever had to worry. We weren't like, again, and it was never that "gotchya moment," that we were like, "Oh, our staff got something else." The only time I really got the Senate President, and I just, this just came in my mind, as the Republican leader you have to ask on every amendment, what is it and what does it cost? And what is it going to do to the bottom line? And Trav knew that and told everybody, "Get ready, he's going to ask the same question over and over and over again, and if you don't answer it right, he's going to go nuts." And at one point, after we were done with the whole process of accepting amendments or not accepting amendments, I got up and said, "Ok, what's the final total of the budget? So we know what it is." And his chair of Ways and Means got up and they were two dollars off. And I got up and said, "I'm sorry, I'm not putting up with this any longer, you're trying to pull something over on the Republican minority party." Just to get to him because once in a while it was not very easy to get to him. He started to get concerned and then all of a sudden he was like, "Wait, what, what?" That is something he probably doesn't remember, but I do.

00:33:48,380 --> 00:34:03,190

Allison: Now aside from that, what were the biggest challenges you faced during your tenure as the Senate President? Or you could speak about what challenges the Senate faced?

00:34:03,190 --> 00:34:04,710

Lees: His challenges were mine, so I'll let him go first.

00:34:04,710 --> 00:35:49,710

Travaglini: Well I mean, the biggest challenge you have as one of the big three, it's the governor, the speaker, and the Senate President, is maintaining the trust and the confidence of both your

colleagues and your constituents. And when you become one of the big three, it's no longer a district, it's the entire Commonwealth, so you're answerable to and accountable for everything that transpires. Those Monday meetings that they have, I think everybody that, everybody should have the opportunity to participate in one of them, so you get an understanding of how significant the decisions are, and what are the ramifications, what are the costs, what is the intent, did we reach the protocols on the thresholds or are we missing the target? If everybody had a chance to do one of those, there'd be a greater appreciation for the position and the responsibilities inherent in it. But that was the challenge for me. Every day making sure I was prepared and ready for making decisions right. Getting it right. There was all types of interagency and intergovernmental squabbles with your colleagues in the House or in the Executive branch. It was routine. The biggest thing for me was never losing sight of what was important, doing the right thing. Period. Because if you did that, everything else fell into place.

00:35:49,710 --> 00:36:42,540

Lees: Well doing the right thing is obviously extremely important, and if you work with somebody you like as much as I did, with the Senate Presidents I had, usually that was, we were feeling that we were trying to do the right thing. Mine's a little bit different than Trav's. When I first got elected Minority Leader, again I had not been here all that long, I was very fortunate, and thank you to Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci, but I mentioned that gentleman a moment ago, Roger Woodworth, and he came into my office and he said, "You're the Minority Leader, the one thing you need to know are the rules, and you need to study the rule book and we're, I'm going to prepare five days of studying and you're going to know it backwards and forwards. You're going to know it as well as the clerk knows it, and certainly, again nothing against the Senate President, much better than the Senate President knows it, and you're going to, you can tie them in knots if you want to."

Travaglini: Oh, you can.

00:36:42,540 --> 00:37:30,550

Lees: Because the minority in a Senate, not in the House, but the minority in the Senate, has a huge amount of power under rules. And, oh my god, it was the most boring thing I've ever done in my life. But I spent five days with him, you know almost five or six hours a day, learning backwards and forwards. But I will say, and I think the Senate Presidents that were here when I was here, one thing they knew that I was aware of is what were the rules and could they benefit the Republicans or could they benefit our point of view? Or, were they not being done right on something else so we would have to come back and correct something later? And I tried to do that in a positive way, but would occasionally bring up some obscure rule and then everybody would have to go running to find out.

Travaglini: That knowledge was power.

00:37:30,550 --> 00:37:32,650

Lees: That's what he used to say to me.

00:37:32,650 --> 00:38:25,000

Travaglini: What he lacked in votes in the body, he made up for by his knowledge of the rules. And when he wanted to make things difficult for me or who was ever in the rostrum, he could. And he would throw you off your game, he would disrupt the harmony and the chemistry in the body, and he would put things in a situation that now is unstable and unpredictable and you were at risk. And once you were there, and you ever had to say, "Let me explain," you were gone. So I tried never to allow him, I think once I just wanted him to know that I know the rules because in the Senate there is one rule that eliminates all the rules, rule 64 or rule 32. And I just say to him, "I'll pull that rule up Brian," (laughs) "and now it's all subject to the rule of the chair." But we never had to do that.

00:38:26,000 --> 00:38:32,790

Allison: Now, what did you hope to achieve in your tenure as Senate President? Did you have expectations of what you could accomplish?

00:38:32,790 --> 00:40:02,600

Travaglini: The bar was so, was set so low for me I thought I was in a limbo contest. For me, there weren't great expectations in the beginning, Bob, but I always understood the significance of the opportunity and the realization that it was temporary. I used to, I told him this, I used to tell my staff, "Listen to me, I'm not here for a long time. We're going to get a lot of stuff done and we're going to pick up the pace, but I'm not telling you. This is not a divine right monarchy, so I'm not staying for an extended period of time. So if you want to get stuff done, you want to build a relationship, you want to build a network, and you want to be part of something special, you're in the right place." We were not afraid to take on anything. That's just who I was. Nothing ever came easy to me and that's a good thing. And because I was exposed to the people that trained and mentored me, I witnessed certain issues and events unfold right in front of me. So I didn't come in here wet behind the ears. I was excited by the opportunity, ready for the challenges, and willing to assume the risk. And we started right away. I called them in. I said, "Listen to me, let's take on some stuff. Let's revisit and take on the challenge." I said, "You with me?" "I'm with you." I said, "Ok."

00:40:02,600 --> 00:40:04,840

Allison: So what were some of the things you took on?

00:40:04,840 --> 00:41:26,480

Lees: Well, just to back up one moment. When, when I got elected Minority Leader, I did a small little thing, but I thought it was very important for the body and for myself in order to move some agenda along, especially with Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci now governor and lieutenant governor. I wanted to open the Senate up to television, and it was a fight of several years, but we finally did that. I also was the only member of the Senate that had come from the manufacturing cycle. I mentioned to you that before about going to Westvaco U.S. Envelope, a paper company. I thought the business climate in Massachusetts was horrendous. And whenever I, when I worked in business, could convert a paper product out of Massachusetts, I did it, with my ability as the head of new products, every single solitary time. Well now I'm in the legislature, that's jobs for people in the Commonwealth. So I felt job creation, changing the

business climate, regulation was important. And then when Bob got elected, Bob and Bob here we have, but when Bob got elected Senate President he said, "Hey, we're going to try a lot of stuff." And just what he said. "Are you with me?" I said, "Hey, we can try anything." And guess what? Some of them make it.

00:41:26,480 --> 00:42:57,220

Travaglini: We came out with an economic development bill, the first one that blew people away, that showed that we were willing to work with businesses, that we were not the enemy, and if you want to participate in this campaign, come in here and sit, I got the biggest table in the building, sit here and show me how smart you are. If you have something that belongs in the bill, trust me, it'll be in the bill. If you're just coming in to complain and you want to spout off at the mouth, you got the wrong people. But we used to put people at that table that didn't talk to each other for five and ten years, especially when we did healthcare. And I'll never forget that. I mean we got very close with Ted Kennedy. We had Mitt Romney, he was on a national stage. Ted Kennedy was on that stage well in advance of Mitt's arrival, and they were all in this office, as Brian knows. I look over at that chest, I can still see them with Judge Reggie the day we signed this bill and realizing the historic level we had reached. And when Partners would come in, all the community hospitals, all the health centers, all the providers, all the insurance, everybody came in here and I said to them, "Listen to me, unless everybody gives a little something, nobody is going to get anything. So you stay at that table until we're done because if you leave, you leave the decisions up to us, and we'll make them for you in your absence and we won't have a problem with that." And they all stayed.

00:42:57,220 --> 00:42:58,220

Lees: It was.

00:42:58,220 --> 00:43:00,920

Travaglini: It was great, working with Sal DiMasi as speaker, Ronnie Mariano.

00:43:00,920 --> 00:43:03,590

Lees: I was in opposite meetings.

Travaglini: Wonderful people.

00:43:03,590 --> 00:44:21,460

Lees: Incredible. But I will say one thing that always amazed me, and as you know, Mitt Romney was governor when, my last several years as Minority Leader. I could never, all of the work that we put into that bill, Republicans and Democrats, both sides, you have, the governor vetoed some things, that's ok, that's part of the process, you, but the bulk of stuff stayed in. I could never, and this has nothing to do with this particular discussion, but I thought Romney should have been so proud of getting that through with bipartisan support, with Ted Kennedy, and when he ran for president everybody beat him up on it and instead of turning around and saying, "Look, yeah, there was parts of it I didn't like, I vetoed some, I won on some things, I didn't," but let me tell you that we wanted to make sure that people in Massachusetts had the ability to get healthcare, one, and two, we knew from a business standpoint everyone that

doesn't have it goes to the emergency room and costs us a lot of money and takes away from the programs Trav and I were trying to do otherwise, so. And the House members, and the Minority Leader, and the Speaker over there. But that always amazed me and that just still does because no one could, Romney had a wonderful way of explaining things and I just thought he could've.

00:44:21,460 --> 00:44:30,090

Travaglini: He was a very talented and capable individual. I enjoyed working with Mitt Romney. I knew where he stood. We always didn't agree philosophically--

Lees: Oh yeah.

00:44:30,090 --> 00:45:46,930

Travaglini: --and ideologically, but I understood exactly where he was and more importantly, he knew where I was because I would tell him. And I would tell him no. No, you're not going to get my help on this. We, I can't agree with you and I won't agree with you, and these are the reasons why, but it was something. And when, I'll never, we were fortunate after 2004 convention here when John Kerry ran for president, I mean could tell stories, and not today, with John Kerry and that 2004 year, and then with Mitt Romney, and with Tom Menino, and with Frank Bellotti, it's just, it's been a marvelous experience, and the most rewarding piece of it is I know that I was very helpful to people in need and I made friends like this that have allowed me to make my life more memorable, enjoyable, and fulfilling. So serving in this office was the culmination of my career in public service. I knew it, there was nothing after this, even though people came to me and begged me to do other things. It was over, but while it was there we took full advantage of it, and for the most part, had an effect.

00:45:46,930 --> 00:46:36,060

Lees: Pretty good ride. We had a very good ride, but between our serving as rank and file members and in moving in to leadership and chairs of committees and, in his case, the minority party isn't chair of committee, but ranking member, and then some of the other things we did, and we were very successful. And again, some things that people just said couldn't happen, but if you roll up your sleeves and you worked together and back to the point that was probably in the middle of this conversation, Trav and I realized, give everybody else the credit, it's fine, it doesn't matter. In the end you know in your heart that we tried to do the right thing. We always worked together and it was alright. Let other people do that. We were bit players in this wonderful game they call politics, and we loved every minute of it.

00:46:33,920 --> 00:46:43,840

Allison: I wonder if we could back up a bit and you could talk a little bit about getting television or getting the sessions televised. Can you tell us how you did that?

00:46:43,840 --> 00:49:08,240

Lees: Oh sure, well it was just one of those things that took numbers and numbers and numbers of votes. That was when Senate President Bulger was here and he believed the institution, it would, kind of, not make the debate as healthy if people were on TV because people they would

just play to TV. I understood that totally. I, however, also told him that I think it's important for the public to see both sides of the debate, and many times the press couldn't be at something, except the final vote was recorded, and that, how did you get there and what happened? And also, to get to see the caliber of people that we had here and the kind of, their ideas and they have every right to express their ideas. Everybody. I mean, I like anyone that's involved in politics. I love the game. I love the back and forth and all of that and I just thought that was important. He tried to convince me and some of his members that that would just open this up. I totally understood where he was coming from and I respected him immensely, and still do, but I happened to believe strongly on that point and I thought it was important to try to do that and we did it. And you know what, maybe in the very beginning it changed a little, but after a while you never even knew the cameras were there. It wasn't like, we were on a short period of time live on some cable thing when it first came up I don't even know where it was or who it was and no one I knew ever saw it, so it didn't really matter. You had tapes and then the press could have your tapes. And that's every day. One tape went to the president's office, one tape went to mine of what happened. That way, and they had one tape that if the press wanted it. But, maybe in the very beginning, but after that, and I think Trav will agree with me on that, no one knew it was here and there were a few people that maybe played that game, but I never picked up on that. I do think it's important that transparency is part of all political process and there's no better way of seeing transparency than seeing what happens on the floor of the Senate, and you know sometimes I would have to get up and try to kill a bill, but people have a right to see that I'm trying to kill it. Or sometimes Trav would pull it off the floor sometimes, people have a right to see that. There's nothing wrong with that, that's part of the process. Sorry, I didn't mean to go on as long on that.

00:49:08,240 --> 00:49:13,700

Allison: No, no that's good, very good. Could you talk a little about the relationship you would have had with the House during your time in the Senate?

00:49:13,700 --> 00:51:42,400

Travaglini: I had a great relationship with Tom Finneran as the speaker when I first came in. One of my regrets, and I don't mind saying this now, is that I didn't have more time with him because there were some tremendous political challenges in trying to balance and keep efficient the operations in this building, bringing Mitt Romney in as the Republican governor, and having Finneran. And the relationship between the House and the Senate when I came into power was strained. And we had to make a decision on who we were going to work with, and what was going to be the preference, what path were we going to pursue, could we establish some trust and some respect in the administration? Were their motives sincere? Can we repair the relationships with the House? Can we establish some credibility? I really enjoyed Tommy Finneran. He was very smart, very stern, very confident in his way, and very forceful in his belief that the House was always smarter than the Senate. Which was fine, I understood it and I used to tease him all the time. I used to call him Boston Latin School, that's the Boston Latin School mentality. I get it. I understand it. But, we were, we were very, very good friends. We still are. And when Sal DiMasi became the speaker of the House, now that was really unique because now you had two Italo-Americans who lived right next door to each other, one in the North End

and one in East Boston, the first time that it's ever happened, and the expectations were so great because we had this relationship that everything was just going to be smooth sailing. It wasn't. It really, and it got difficult because of that relationship, because we were friends. At times it complicated the relationship. Not enough to ruin it, and to get in the way of progress and legislation, but certainly enough where occasionally our wives would have to remind us who we were and that we weren't as smart as we thought.

00:51:42,400 --> 00:51:46,630

Allison: Now what had strained the relationship between the House and the Senate in the years before you became president?

00:51:46,630 --> 00:52:10,770

Travaglini: It's just natural. It's just a natural occurrence. I mean, we talked about you know, the credit. And Brian hit it right on the head. The general public looks at this building on the hill and says, "Them." It's a pool, it's all one pool. They don't differentiate between Republican or Democrat, they don't differentiate--

Lees: Probably don't know sometimes.

00:52:10,770 --> 00:52:16,470

Travaglini: --between House and Senate. When they get mad they say, "Get them. They did it."  
Allison: Yeah.

00:52:16,470 --> 00:52:43,580

Travaglini: And I kept saying to people, don't you understand this? We're all in the same boat, and if this boat goes down, if I take a hit, you take a hit. He understood that, and the majority of people understood it after we brought to their attention that this was the reality of the equation. But, I just.

00:52:43,580 --> 00:55:14,460

Lees: Well for most of my time, and Trav's time here, we had a Republican governor and Democratic legislature. You knew that many of the things coming out of the corner office, that's called in this building, which is the governor's office, were going to be things that were going to have, be tough sledding and have to be changed or maneuvered around. And it started with Bill Weld and then Paul Cellucci and Jane and to a point, Mitt Romney, but, realizing, ok, I'm going to release something. There's really probably four or five major things in that bill I want and I'm going to need to get that through, and if we have to give up on some other things that's ok. And they would talk that way when they first announced it when they went out in the public and others. So, kind of the legislature got a feel of and where they could maybe add something on. And, with very few exceptions in my time here, you know, there are, there are strains from both sides and to the governor's office. Everybody got along pretty well. I mean, compared to some other states, which are extremely partisan, and now the federal government, which is just, you know, too partisan, we realized, ok, we're going to have, some of these are going to go and some of them aren't. The governor's going to win on some other stuff, he has the bully pulpit, the governor did, so it was hard to make, because members are outside listening to the people

in their district and the governor's just been to their hometown saying you know this is what I, you know. There is you know some give and take there and you have to realize and it all started early on. When you're in the downturn, as we started in the very beginning of the conversation, you got to be all on the same page. There's just, when you, when things start to be booming and do as, yeah, you can pick and choose some things that maybe would be more helpful to you. But, when you're not, when you have no money, you got to get together and you got to say, admit to all the members, "We have nothing. So, certain things you want to fight to keep, you go right ahead, but realize, nothing is being added to." And that kind of set the tone for forever, but both sides it's always hard. I mean I always got along with the Minority Leader on, in the House side, but I know sometimes they'd call up and say, "What are you people doing? You haven't done our thing or you sent something over here." It is part of the process. I loved, again, the give and take and I know Trav did, and being the leader he had to make certainly tougher decisions than I ever did.

00:55:14,460 --> 00:56:13,150

Travaglini: There were times, and this is very rarely done, but when they were in full formal and we were in full formal, I would go over there and sit at the rostrum with the speaker, and the body would get a sense of, hey, these guys are communicating, they're getting along. Things are going to be ok. And I would invite him into our chamber at the heat of a debate to show our members that the House is going to, they're with us in this effort. You give a visual that registers mentally and politically with those people, with your members, that gives them some degree of comfort and confidence and political air cover that what they're about to do is right and appropriate. And I thought it was, they were, they thought I had some trick up my sleeve the first time I did it, I walked in unannounced. They didn't know what the hell to do with me. But when they realized what I was doing and what I was there for, it became a trend.

00:56:14,150 --> 00:56:19,360

Allison: Speaking of visuals, could you tell us a little bit about your relationship with the media, and either one of you the type--

00:56:19,360 --> 00:56:26,750

Travaglini: He was much more inclined to engage the media than I was.

Lees: (laughs) There's a--

00:56:26,750 --> 00:57:10,940

Travaglini: I didn't view it as a big part of my job. I certainly understood their responsibility and cooperated to the degree that was appropriate and necessary to keep them informed, but I never went out of my way to ingratiate myself in that profession. I did, I approached the business in a different way. I was more people oriented, I was, paid more attention to my individual members, and I didn't have to rely on my image in the press or the media, it was, because I came from a district where, I mean I was getting reelected with 87 or 89, even your vote when you lived in the district.

Allison: That's right.

00:57:10,940 --> 00:57:19,250

Travaglini: So there wasn't, I didn't feel a need to play that game.

00:57:19,250 --> 00:58:50,160

Lees: I was very fortunate in many ways because I come from western Massachusetts. We don't see channel four, five, or seven. Most of my constituents don't read the Globe or the Herald, which had people up here, very good people and people that, well hey they doing their job every day. I had a Springfield newspaper, we have an ABC, NBC, and CBS affiliate, at the time didn't have reporters at the State House, so if they wanted anything, on your way home they said, "Can you stop at the station and do a quick soundbite?" So you would do that. So that's really where mine came from. And in all reality, channel four, five, and seven, and the newspapers, for the most part, weren't as interested in someone's position from western Mass even though as Minority Leader they could go right to the governor and get the Republican position. Why do they have to ask somebody, so yeah, you had to deal with them. I did that. At the same time, they have a job to do, we have a job to do. I respect it, I just, you know, I try to get as much information as I can in my job, I hope they do the same thing. And for the most part, I think they do. And that's the way it was. But I'm going back to a point that the president had made a while ago and made to me. Look, our actions are going to speak for themselves. We don't have to say anything. We do something, they're going to cover it because we did it. It's more important to get something done than talk about what you're going to do.

00:58:50,160 --> 00:58:51,160

Travaglini: That's right.

00:58:51,160 --> 00:59:08,770

Lees: And he used to mention that to me all the time and that's why, I think that's one of the reasons we also became as close as we are. I, today, you know, back to being a bit player in anything, I'm certainly a bit player with the Senate President and his firm. But because we respect each other.

00:59:08,770 --> 00:59:10,250

Allison: Now what would you say is your biggest accomplishment? Either of you or both of you?

00:59:10,250 --> 01:01:03,200

Travaglini: Well, I think that I'm most proud of the stem cell research because we had to create an environment that gave comfort to those in the research labs that their experimentation, the potential for life-changing experiments and discoveries were going to be safe and covered by the law. They didn't have to do it at twelve o'clock at night in some dark room. And you wanted to change the perception of the general public that this science was intended to stop children's diabetes, to maybe stop heart attacks and strokes, and regenerate organs, I mean it was all intended to be wonderfully changing techniques and discoveries, and people had an image that it was something that it wasn't. They had cloning and all this crazy stuff, and somebody with a mask on and dressed in black, and you didn't know who it was who was conducting experiments in the cellar, under the cloak of darkness. I mean I would never forget going to

Children's Hospital and taking tours in the burns, in the Shriners Hospital and seeing these children suffering like that, knowing that there was a chance we could help some of these families in crisis and these children suffering pain. And why weren't we doing this? And I didn't like being second fiddle to California on anything. We lost one war in Silicon Valley. Well at least that's, they'd been declared the victor. We certainly got them with healthcare. We got them on same-sex marriage. We got them on stem cell. When we were here, we were riding the first wave.

01:01:05,200 --> 01:02:44,350

Lees: Mine's a little bit different. Issues come and go, and some of them are big, and some of them are small, and we certainly saw a lot of them in the time when Travaglini was president. I just hope we set a tone for what civility can be in politics as two leaders from two parts of the, different parts of the state, two different parties, that have some very different feelings on certain things, but that you could get along and you could work together, it was never personal, and I just, I tried all the time to make sure that at least, you know I may be against something, and but at least we were positive about how we did it. And I remember a couple times members getting up or speaking to me after the session, they thought I was a little tough on them, as, you know, asking questions on the minority side, and I know I spoke with, every time would I speak to Trav about it and I said I want to be recognized immediately when this next session starts because I want to get, if anyone ever felt that I slighted them in any way, shape, or form, other than on an issue that I didn't, I can disagree with them, then I would not accept that and I would apologize, and I probably did that, I am embarrassed to tell you, twenty or thirty times in my time here. But you know what? That, I wanted to live by that, and he and I did that. And I think that's really something that needs, every politician and everybody in their life needs to be thinking about regularly, treating people like you like to be treated yourself.

01:02:44,350 --> 01:02:46,350

Travaglini: Well said.

01:02:46,350 --> 01:02:48,680

Allison: What would you say is your biggest disappointment?

01:02:52,880 --> 01:03:34,930

Travaglini: I don't know. Honestly, I don't recall being disappointed because we had so much fun, we certainly created a lot of energy, we maintained the chemistry and the cooperation of the body, I got out unscarred. I'm very happy where I am. I'm normal again. I'm a husband and a father. And I'm doing very well. I don't have any regrets. As a matter a fact, my life has been so good if I can come back I want to be me again. (laughter) Hey, Brian you want to come back as you again?

Lees: Hey, we left on--

01:03:34,930 --> 01:03:38,000

Travaglini: We can do it all over again.

Lees: --we left on our own terms on that.

01:03:38,000 --> 01:03:41,780

Travaglini: Yes we did.

01:03:41,780 --> 01:03:51,790

Lees: I agree. I didn't have, I was probably a lousy Minority Leader in many ways because we never increased the numbers that we should have to get better and if there was ever any disappointment, once in a while on election night--

Travaglini: That's a fair point.

01:03:51,790 --> 01:04:00,940

Lees: --just being able to get--

Travaglini: Fourteen, get to fourteen when you'll really play.

Lees: --one or two members or three, right, and then it can really--

01:04:00,940 --> 01:05:07,090

Lees: But, my problem was, just what my last point was, I got to be friends and respected many, if not almost all, of my colleagues. It was, the Minority Leader has to do this and as part of the being the Minority Leader as the president is and you got to go out and campaign for some folks and sometimes, we're in a district of somebody that you're almost as close to as you are a member of your family, they sit next to you in the chamber, or they become friendly with you and you're on a committee together, or something like that, but, you have to explain to them, that's again part of the thing, but other than that disappointment occasionally not adding to the numbers, there wasn't any because, again, I wanted to always have people feel that I tried to do my best, as Trav did, we tried to be respectful to each other, and we were never, ever going to disrespect anybody. And we were going to treat them the way we wanted to be treated. And I believe we left, both of us, almost at the exact same time in that way.

01:05:09,090 --> 01:05:13,650

Allison: Any suggestions for how the Republicans might increase their numbers?

01:05:13,650 --> 01:05:30,860

Lees: That's up to the current Minority Leader, Bruce Tarr is the current Minority Leader, he does a good job. Richard Tisei followed me. They're great people, as is Brad Jones in the House. They'll have to make that decision, but how we lived our lives is now public record I guess.

01:05:30,860 --> 01:06:19,010

Travaglini: I think it's a tribute to the citizens who vote in the Commonwealth that they realize and they have repeatedly elected Republicans for governor in an overwhelming Democratic legislature. So Brian's disappointment in getting to fourteen is offset by having the main occupant of the corner office being a member of his party. That levels the field and it gives him some leverage because we may be able to pass something in this branch, he can make things, or the Minority Leader can make things awful difficult getting passed by the executive, that changes the whole dynamic and the discussion. And he was pretty good at that.

01:06:19,010 --> 01:06:21,600

Lees: Thank you. Very kind.

01:06:22,200 --> 01:06:31,310

Allison: Now what advice would you have to people looking to serve in the State Senate, or to be president of the Senate, or even to enter public life?

01:06:31,310 --> 01:07:48,550

Travaglini: I think that serving in elective office is a privilege and that politics is a noble profession and it's so unfortunate that it is viewed in the eyes of the general public in such a low fashion. And people look at somebody who runs for elective office as they couldn't get a job any place else so that's what they did. It's so far from the truth. If you really want to make a difference, if you really want to show that you can acquire power and use it for those who will never have it, this is the place to be. And if you're not interested in making a lot of money while you serve, then you can do a lot of good because it can be a lot of fun, and if you're having fun at something, you're going to be good at it. I never met anybody who was miserable do anything good with their time, their energy, or their efforts, because they were so angry all the time. And I used to say that to my friends up here, be happy. Because when things are fun and people are happy, good things get done.

01:07:48,780 --> 01:08:58,900

Lees: Just, if you really believe that you can make a difference, get out there in the arena. That's that old Teddy Roosevelt expression, people that are sitting on the sidelines, it's a very honorable profession. But also realize you need some life history, you need some history in life when you get here. I think sometimes if people become elected at such a young age, they haven't seen certain things, and make sure you keep in touch with your district and the people that you represent. Some people forget that. And if you don't go home or you don't go to events and you don't learn what, what it's like to be somebody that you represent, then it's hard to represent them, and I think that's what's happened a bit in Washington, and people were so very surprised about the presidential election last year. I wasn't that surprised about it because there's somebody that was kind of getting it and going out and talking to some of those folks. Right or wrong, you may disagree or not disagree, so I think that's important, and enjoy it when you're here, but also realize there's a time to get elected and there's a time to leave.

01:08:59,400 --> 01:09:01,969

Allison: Very good. Anything else we should talk about? This is--

01:09:01,969 --> 01:09:02,380

Travaglini: No, good.

01:09:02,380 --> 01:09:04,100

Lees: Nope, it was great.

01:09:04,100 --> 01:09:04,819

Allison: Thank you both.

01:09:04,819 --> 01:09:06,829

Travaglini: You're welcome.

01:09:06,829 --> 01:09:12,739

Lees: Thank you, Bob, for being here and I'm honored to have been here with the former Senate President, one of the finest public servants I've ever met.

01:09:12,739 --> 01:09:14,980

Travaglini: You said it just like I wrote it.