

## The Honorable John Dingell, Jr., of Michigan

### Getting to Know Each Other

Recollections of the relationships built between Members of Congress.

*Interview recorded February 3, 2012*

When my dad came here he had one room on the fifth floor of the Cannon Building. It was called the Old House Office Building. He had one secretary, one typewriter, and one electric fan. And they gave him—there was no air conditioning—and they gave him one round-trip ticket back and forth between here and home. And he would load the family in the car, and we'd drive down here. And when the House would adjourn, he'd load the whole family in the car and we'd drive back home. And so the wives got to know each other. The kids got to know each other. The kids got to play together. The kids sometimes would go to school with each other, they'd date each other, they'd get married across the aisles. We don't have that anymore. The Members are too busy. Now you've got a plane ticket back home, and so they're, they're, they're kind of looked down upon if they come down here and spend too much time here. But that coming down here and spending time and getting to know each other made the Members work together and get to know each other. And so the trust that was necessary to have a functioning organization came to be. And we had things like the House Gym, where the Members, the Members would go to work out. And great friendships were made. A few enmities, but great friendships. And so the, the Congress worked much better. And you had, you had certain morays that were very important.