

## **The Honorable Barbara Boxer**

**U.S. Representative of California (1983–1993) and U.S. Senator of California (1993–2017)**

### **Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress**

#### **Early Lessons**

The Honorable Barbara Boxer reveals some of the lessons she learned as a child including the significance of the right to vote.

*Interview recorded November 29, 2018*

My mother was born in 1911. She didn't even have the right to vote when she was born. When she got it in 1920, she, she cherished it. And the one thing that she drummed into my head was how precious that vote was, and she always took me with her to vote. And she said, "Honey, this is what America's about, and your vote is secret, and everyone gets—and, you know, I don't even tell daddy how I vote." I remember she said that to me. "I don't even tell daddy how I vote." So I did learn this critical importance of voting. I did know that America essentially took my ancestors in. My mother came when she was nine months old to escape anti-Semitism in Europe, so I was very aware of that. And around the kitchen table, there was a lot of talk about, you know, the concentration camps and how great America was to beat the Nazis. And so, I was very aware of all the issues, civil rights, very much aware. And Jackie Robinson played for the Dodgers, and I lived six blocks from Ebbets Field, and my dad told me how incredibly brave he was. So I would say that I was extremely aware and sensitized to many, many issues.