

**The Honorable Lois Capps**  
U.S. Representative of California (1998–2017)

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

**Advice from Senator Bob Kerrey**

Representative Capps remember Senator Bob Kerrey offering her a pivotal piece of advice in the early days of her campaign.

*Interview recorded July 16, 2019*

He followed Walter all the way through, and we got together in Washington after—DC—after Walter was elected. I don't know if he was Senator by then, or I forget where he was in his career. But I remember, because my husband died so suddenly, that there was a—I was in shock. I mean, it was really—I made the decision to run only three weeks after Walter's death. And I, it sort of makes me emotional as I think back on those days—was a—I really had to lean a lot on people I trusted around me. And he called me to, to just offer condolences, but also, he gave me this piece of advice on the phone. He said, "I support your running for Congress. But don't think you're doing it for Walter. You're going to have to do it for yourself." And that, in a way, took me aback. And it was very good advice, because it's absolutely true. It was easier, much easier for me to think about carrying on his legacy than my own, didn't even think I had one, you know? I had to kind of own myself and come into myself. Other people said things like that to me, but that's the one that stands out.