

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

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

**Walter Capps' Background: Part Two**

Representative Capps describes her husband's election campaigns.  
*Interview recorded July 16, 2019*

And he found our particular Member of Congress at that time to be very sort of AWOL, or absent. He wanted to make contact, they weren't available. And he got frustrated, and in a way, I think, was part of this motivation. And he announced at the dinner table at that Thanksgiving that he thought he would run for Congress, because our, our district needed a better kind of Representative. Well, neither of us had ever been involved, particularly. By then we were Democrats, but we weren't involved in the local Democratic scene to speak of. And, and, and, and much to a lot of people's surprise, he won the primary that go around. He didn't win the final. The district had been Republican for 50 years, and he lost to the Republican, but not by very much. And when he ran again two years later, he ran—we got a little more savvy about how to do it, and he won, but a very slim defeat. He lost by a very little, and he won by a very little. And then, as you know from the, probably the history there, he was in office for 10 months, and he died suddenly of a heart attack.