

**The Honorable Eva M. Clayton**  
**U.S. Representative of North Carolina (1992–2003)**

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

**Surrogate Representation**

Representative Clayton describes the responsibilities of being a woman and a Member of Congress.  
*Interview recorded May 15, 2015*

And you begin to also feel that your constituents, obviously your constituents come first. You want to say that because they elect you. But when you come to this body you recognize that you cannot help your constituents unless you also help others. And that as a woman, you found yourself not only coalescing with women here but also national groups who would bring issues to you. I was probably, had as many national organizations coming to me as I had local coming to me from my district, I had, even if they weren't women, I certainly had national women's groups coming to me to talk about issues, that whether they had an auxiliary or a chapter in my state or in my district. So, yes. Once you're here, people begin to see you're not only representing your district, but also representing the area. And women groups certainly took advantage of that. And a larger number of women groups are far more active now, but they were active then. And not only in terms of EMILY's List in terms of money, in trying to raise, but groups who were concerned about health, groups who were concerned about education, pro-choice groups. All of those groups nationally would, would use the opportunity to lobby all of us, as women in those areas, and not limit it to where they were located.