

**The Honorable Elizabeth Furse**  
U.S. Representative of Oregon (1993–1999)

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

**“It’s a Very, Very Tough Life on Families”**

Representative Furse explains the challenges women Members face when balancing family life with a congressional career.

*Interview recorded June 8, 2017*

When I came to the Congress, both my children were grown and then my grandson was born during it. It’s a very, very tough life on families. I don’t, I would never have run for office if I had small children at home because you just wouldn’t have the attention for them, but my kids were really, really terrific. And, they were helpful in the campaigns, they supported me when I would be, you know, tired, and they were great, and then my grandson was born and that, that was wonderful, but it’s a very, very tough life on families, unless they all move to Washington, D.C., and women generally didn’t. The men, their husbands stayed where they were, and the woman traveled back and forward. And maybe I’m generalizing but that’s the way I saw it. And so I think it’s even harder on women, especially if they have younger families, than it is on, on, on men, to do that job. And when you get home, you’re not your own person. You know, your staff have organized all sorts of things. But my kids were older and I, I felt that was a great advantage, and they were terrific about the whole thing.