

## **Kathy Gille**

**Executive Floor Assistant, Representative David Bonior of Michigan**

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

#### **How to Whip a Bill**

Kathy Gille outlines the process of whipping a bill.

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Another example of a really fantastic whip operation that we had was during the 1993, I guess it would be, budget vote. Clinton's first budget, which, when it came down to the final budget vote was—came down to one vote. And we went—a rule of—especially when you're whipping in the majority, you do not bring a bill—and you're—when you're in the leadership—you do not bring a bill to the floor unless you already have the votes lined up. And that's what the whip operation is about, is helping you understand where those votes are, if there are changes that need to be made in the legislation or compromise. I mean, usually that's done at the committee level, but, you know, there might be some kinds of compromises or some more time that's needed or some new messaging strategies or something. So, the whip operation gives you that data that you need to know about where the, where the, where the Members are laying. And you lay it out in a, in a format that's, you know, five columns of people who are no, the people that are leaning no, the people who are undecided, people that are leaning yes, and people that are yeses. And then you put together a task force and it's usually these people who are with you that—among the yeses, you go and talk one-on-one to each of the Members that are undecided or probably leaning no or leaning yes. You try to bring them over into that yes column. That's essentially how you whip a bill. And in the House, at least on the Democratic side, side—well, we did it with a task force. I think the Republicans had a different, a little bit of a different system.