

The Honorable Jill Lynette Long Thompson
U.S. Representative of Indiana (1989–1995)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Growing Up on a Farm

Representative Long Thompson discusses the influence of farm life on her future political career.
Interview recorded June 15, 2017

Well, I think growing up on a farm, I really learned, at an early age, the importance of this democratic community involvement. And one of the stories I like to tell is that when I was in the first grade, my mom—my dad was a precinct committeeman for the Democratic Party, which meant, of course, back in the 1950s, that my mother was taking care of all the registration and the records. And I would come home from school and I could either go out with her and register voters in our neighborhood, or I could go help my dad milk the cows, and I chose to go with my mom to register voters, which was much more fun. I have an older brother who would help my dad milk the cows, and he's a dairy farmer today, and I have had some success in politics, and so I think those early opportunities really do shape what our, our passions ultimately become.