

## **Linda Melconian**

**Assistant Counsel and Legislative Assistant, Speaker Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill, Jr., of Massachusetts**

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

#### **“Boland Girl”**

Linda Melconian discusses her first experience on the campaign trail for Massachusetts Representative Edward Boland.

*Interview recorded June 7, 2018*

Eddie Boland called my father, because they had worked together in the garage at the newspaper. They knew each other when Eddie Boland was going through—to school and said, “Your daughter—could she be a Boland girl? I’d like to have her come down and be a Boland girl.” Well, what did that mean? Department stores were open till 9:00 in the evenings on Thursday nights, so we would go down there in front of Forbes and Wallace and Steiger’s, the two big department stores—when we had department stores downtown, not in malls. And I would wear a hat and a banner across my chest, and I’d hold a placard, and we’d walk around in circles. And a number of women—and men, but mostly females, young women, young girls—and we’d say, “Vote for Boland” to everybody.” And it was busy. It was active. There was a lot of activity going on. So that was my introduction to kind of organizational politics, rallies, demonstrations—visibility, as we call it today, in organizational politics. So that was kind of intriguing.