

**The Honorable Elizabeth J. Patterson**  
U.S. Representative of South Carolina (1987–1993)

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

**Town Meetings and the Campaign Trail**

Representative Patterson speaks about the issues she faced and the connections she made on the campaign trail and during town hall meetings.

*Interview recorded April 3, 2017*

I really, really enjoyed going in the little stores and going up and down Main Street and doing that sort of thing. Meeting, meeting new people, or going to see other people, old people or people I knew before, not necessarily old. So I really enjoyed that facet of campaigning, once you get started. Sometimes, the first time you get out of the car, you're like, "Gee, you know, I'm tired. Wish I could just go home." But once you get started, it's sort of, the adrenaline starts pumping and you're, you do better. So, once I got started, and, of course, once I was in areas where it was everybody was supporting me, it was pretty easy. You know, right now, the wrangle about town meetings—I had so many town meetings, so many town meetings. And I knew, in certain areas, there was going to be some hostility. I knew—this is strange, how things change. At that time, the "notch baby" issue with Social Security—you all probably—you remember that? That was a big thing. And so notch babies would turn up at stump meetings wanting to know if I was going to fix it. And I would tell them that I was going to do my best. You know, that I had signed on the bill to try to help. But I knew, I knew there was no way to really, to really correct that, but you know they, they would turn up, and then a lot of the people dealing with pro-life would, would come to the meetings, and sort of ask me my stand. And I always sort of threw it back at them, and said, "Yeah, I'm for life. You know, who isn't pro-life?" But they would, they would hassle me sometimes. So, but the town meetings were a good time for me to meet people, make friendships, and, and solidify support, which I really enjoyed.