

Cokie Roberts

Congressional Correspondent and Daughter of Representatives Hale and Lindy Boggs of Louisiana

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Women and Credit

Cokie Roberts describes how her mother ensured that women were included in the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974.

Interview recorded May 25, 2017

And what happened to most women, at this point in time, was that if you lost your spouse either to death or a chippie, the, you also lost your credit. And, and in her case, it was particularly difficult because there was no death, you know. So, it was, made it harder. And, so she came to Congress in March of '73, and said to Tip—who owed her—she said, “I want to be on the Banking Committee.” And he said, “Well, the Banking Committee is full.” And she said, “I want to be on the Banking Committee.” And so, she was on the Banking Committee. And they were marking up or writing a piece of legislation to end discrimination in lending. And the language said, “on the basis of race, national origin, or creed”—something like that. And, and as she told the story, she went into the back room and wrote in, in longhand, “or sex or marital status,” and Xeroxed it, and brought it back into the committee, and said, “You know, I’m sure this was just an omission on the part of my, my colleagues who are so distinguished.” And, you know, that’s how we got equal credit, ladies.