

**The Honorable Patricia Saiki**  
U.S. Representative of Hawaii (1987–1991)

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

**Representing the United States Abroad**

Representative Saiki describes her 1988 visit to Tonga and other travels abroad representing the United States.

*Interview recorded September 20, 2018*

And they designed a beautiful American eagle—very delicately built—and I had to carry the doggone thing in a separate seat next to me all the way to Tonga. But it was a beautiful thing. I picked up a few key people from the Pacific along the way. The President of American Samoa and the President of Fiji—I picked them up along the way and attended President—King, King of Tonga’s birthday for a whole week and was treated like a queen. Because—I was treated not just because it was me, it was the President of the United States. I—they wanted to represent—have the President of the United States feel like a very special person. And I happened to be the one that was representing him. It was a marvelous trip. The other visit that I represented the United States House of Representatives was at Emperor Hirohito’s funeral when I traveled on Air Force One with President Bush to attend the funeral of Hirohito. So I’ve had experiences that go beyond the congressional, go beyond the administrative, go beyond the personal—and I’ve enjoyed every minute of it.