

The Honorable Linda Smith
U.S. Representative of Washington (1995–1999)

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Helping Hand

Representative Smith shares an example of how colleagues can help one another away from the public spotlight.

Interview recorded September 18, 2019

One night it was pretty early, we were finishing the first budget, the first, my first term, and the campaign reform issue had angered certain people and it got, they took out the things from my district in just in the appropriations process. And I, I couldn't do anything about it. I watched it happen and it was people and they were just making it very clear there were two things. My not taking special interest money and my issue of standing against gifts and trips that I was ending up with paying consequences for. And I was, later that night I was sitting in my office and it was like well, I don't know what I'd tell the cranberry growers, but we've got a problem. And I get this call and it's, "Linda?" And I'm going who is that? And it's late at night and it was Frank Wolf and he said, "I saw that today. Don't worry, I'm going to take care of it." Then he said, "I want you to talk, not talk to anybody about this. I do, I just want you to trust me." And I did and he put the money back in. He used his ability in the conference to fix it, just very quietly put it back in.