

## **Linda Steele**

**Deputy Chief of Staff, Representative Bob Michel of Illinois**

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

#### **Casework**

Linda Steele describes how she helped constituents over the phone.

*Interview recorded June 7, 2016*

They would write letters or they would call, and it was my job to try to solve the problems for them. Or to at least make them feel confident that if, if they didn't get the desired result, at least someone really tried for them, and it was a lot easier for me to do that on their behalf because every agency has a congressional liaison office, where their sole responsibility is to deal with people like me. I'm calling on behalf of a constituent in Illinois, and I'm asking you, the congressional liaison person in your department, to help me figure out this problem. Solve it if we can, or find a, a logical acceptable resolution. And one of the great satisfactions of that job was the phone calls that would start out totally hostile. They were so frustrated when they would call, and by the time we'd stopped talking, you know, by the time the phone call was over, they'd say, "Oh, thank you so much, I really—" You know, so, I'd, I'd make a friend on the phone, and then I would follow through as best I could on what—whatever I could do for them. And, it was the most satisfying—it really, of all the years I spent on the Hill, it was the most satisfying job I had, because every day I went to work, somebody's life was a little bit better off. I may not have improved their life, but I'm, I, I certainly helped to improve their attitude about the problems at hand that they were dealing with.