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Oral History Interview of Katherine Sophie Hayford (OH-026)

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Oral History Interview of Katherine Sophie Hayford

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Interview Summary

Katherine Sophie Hayford, a member of Congressman John Joseph Moakley's congressional staff from 1976 through 2001, discusses her experience working at his congressional office, on the House Rules Subcommittee staff and on House Rules Committee staff. Her interview covers Congressman Moakley's investigation in El Salvador; his ability to develop strong relationships with staff and colleagues; his role as a member of the House Rules Committee; his constituent service; and his legacy of public service and political leadership.

Subject Headings

El Salvador

Hayford, Katherine Sophie

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This interview took place on September 29, 2004, at the Cannon House Office Building,
Room 441, Washington, D.C.

Interview Transcript

BETH BOWER: All set? Okay. This is Beth Bower. It's September 29, 2004, and we're in the Cannon Building, interviewing Sophie Hayford, who was an aide to Congressman Joe Moakley. And I guess I'll start out, Sophie, by asking you, how did you come to work for Congressman Joe Moakley?

KATHERINE SOPHIE HAYFORD: Purely by chance. I'm from Maine originally, and I moved down here when I graduated from college in '75. And at that time, it was a very tough job market; I couldn't find anything in my field, which was counseling, so I ended up taking a job at a savings and loan in downtown Washington. And I was doing pretty much clerical work, and I thought, Well, if I'm going to be doing this work for a while, it would be a lot more exciting to work on Capitol Hill.

So I started looking for jobs up there, and the idea of a Massachusetts congressman always appealed to me, because in Maine I spent a lot of time in Boston when I was younger, and I really liked Boston. That's where I wanted to work. And it turns out that one of my friends from the savings and loan where I worked had a friend who was an intern in the Moakley office, so he found out that the person who was at the front desk was leaving. So there was an opening, and he called me and told me, and I called right away and applied for the job.

BOWER: Did you interview with the congressman, or with someone else?

HAYFORD: Actually, I interviewed with his administrative assistant, who at the time was a man named Nelson Hammel.¹ It was the end of June, so I think it was right before the July Fourth recess. And I believe he wasn't in town when I interviewed.

¹ Nelson Hammel was a member of Moakley's Washington, D.C., staff from 1974 to 1981.

BOWER: What were your first impressions when you met him?

HAYFORD: Well, I was very nervous because the idea of working for a congressman, but he was just extremely—I mean, just the first time I met him, he was so nice. I remember he said, “Yeah, I talked to Nelson, and he said that he’d found the perfect person for the job.” I mean it was entry level, so it wasn’t like it was any real difficult thing, but he made me feel like somehow I was part of—chosen out of a big group. So he started right off, making me feel good.

BOWER: Oh, that’s great. So you started off as the—what was your original job, and then what other jobs did you migrate to?

HAYFORD: I kind of started at the bottom, and worked my way up. I started doing—it was front desk, so I was the receptionist. Giving tours, flying flags over the Capitol, setting up White House tours, which is a pretty common thing for congressional offices. Back in those days—and I tell my co-workers now, it makes me feel so old—every letter that came out of the office had to be hand-typed, and I was a lousy typist. I really fudged my ability to type. But I did a lot—pretty much all of that. I struggled a lot, because it really was hard. He didn’t give me a hard time about it.

And it was just sort of anything—any kind of—it was pretty much clerical that I started out. And then I started getting issues, handling different things that legislative assistants might not have time to do. Then I worked my way up and I worked on grants, and projects, back when there was more money available from the federal government to go to schools—

BOWER: And what years was that, that you worked on project-type things?

HAYFORD: I started working—I started in the office—it was July first, ’76, when I started working for him, and I started—I did front-desk for three years, and then I started working on grants and projects, dealing with a lot of the schools in Massachusetts, particularly the colleges and universities, and a lot of the medical research-type things that were looking for federal grants. And then I moved up—after that for a year, I moved up doing legislative work, and I did

legislative work for him until '86, when I started—he put me on the Rules Subcommittee staff, and then in '89 I became full-committee staff, and I actually physically moved over to the Rules Committee² in the Capitol, in March of 1990.

BOWER: When you started doing legislative work, how was that different from the project work? Was it similar, or—

HAYFORD: It was pretty similar. That was—it was fairly similar. It was a pretty easy transition. I mean it was working with constituent groups and organizations that were applying for grants and things. But I still was doing—I still would do some issues. I mean, at that time I really did take on some legislative issues, too. So that really was a transition. It kind of happened—it probably happened before the year was out, but it was the first three years doing all the entry-level stuff. And then, from there I did other things.

BOWER: So when you went over to the Rules Subcommittee, what were your responsibilities? How were you working with Congressman Moakley there?

HAYFORD: The first thing that I worked on there dealt with papers of the House, and a lot of the archivist associations in the country wanted to have information available, not—what's the word, not that—

BOWER: Restricted?

HAYFORD: Yeah, I mean, kept private for so long. There was a fifty-year standard on everything, and anything that was at all classified—in the earlier definition of classified—there was no limit on how long it could be kept there. No one could have access to it. So that was the first thing that I worked on with the subcommittee, and he was able to successfully lower it to a thirty year standard, and change the definition of what was considered sensitive information from

² The House Rules Committee is responsible for the scheduling of bills for discussion in the House of Representatives. According to the Rules Committee website, “bills are scheduled by means of special rules from the Rules Committee that bestow upon legislation priority status for consideration in the House and establish procedures for their debate and amendment.” (See <http://www.rules.house.gov/>) Congressman Moakley was a member of the House Rules Committee from 1975 to 2001 and served as its chairman from 1989 to 1995.

pretty much anything anyone said was “sensitive”, to anything that was of national security, or dealt with person—a personal issue.

BOWER: And these are the committee papers that stay with NARA [National Archives Records Administration] and the Library of Congress?

HAYFORD: Yes.

BOWER: So that was where you started, and then after that, what did you work on with him?

HAYFORD: Well, before that—and it was a kind of a transition—I worked on the El Salvador issue³ with Jim McGovern⁴.

BOWER: Oh, you did?

HAYFORD: Yeah, I was there—I was in the office with Jim McGovern for a long time, before he became congressman. And that was a big issue. There were—I mean, I also worked on other legislative issues for the congressman at the same time while I was doing some subcommittee work, but El Salvador was that one—I mean, but I was more the—Jim was the lead staffer on that, and I just worked with him on that—

BOWER: But this is in the time frame that it was an immigration issue. And before temporary protected status—

³ Starting in 1983, Congressman Moakley introduced legislation to protect Salvadorans in the U.S. using the “Extended Voluntary Departure” provision that allowed a temporary stay of deportation and work authorization. Moakley was finally able to pass legislation that granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Salvadorans in the Immigration Act of 1990 (PL. 101-649). In December of 1989, Speaker of the House Thomas S. Foley appointed Moakley as chairman of a committee to investigate violence in El Salvador, specifically the November 16, 1989, murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America in San Salvador.

⁴ James P. McGovern (1959-), a Democrat, has represented Massachusetts’ Third Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1997. He was a member of Congressman Moakley’s staff from 1982 to 1996.

HAYFORD: Yes. And we actually had some—we wrote the bill in such a way that it would come to Rules Committee for part of its consideration. It was a way to get the issue before a committee. Because we were having trouble with the Judiciary Subcommittee taking up the issue. So it was sort of a way to get a hook into it.

BOWER: But it took quite a while to get that passed, didn't it?

HAYFORD: It took a long time; it really was—I really admire Congressman Moakley for sticking with it, and now Congressman McGovern was there, working every step of the way. I mean, it was an issue that no one ever would have dreamed would go anywhere, and it took years and years of work. And they didn't give up on it. I don't know if I would have stuck with it—I mean, a very interesting issue to work on, and one that you could get very dedicated to, but it was very much a thankless job. And there was no constituency—natural constituency for it.

BOWER: And why—do you have a perception of what it was about the issue that we—people—the members were resisting, in the Judiciary Committee, and—

HAYFORD: Well, I think there was a fear of letting immigrants who come to this country illegally stay here, and trying to make them realize that they were really endangered if they went back. But you know, there were many millions of Salvadorans here, and so I think it was a fear of sort of a blanket-amnesty type of thing.

BOWER: And on the senate side, it was Senator DeConcini⁵ who was sponsoring a similar legislation. And so, did they work together on that, or—

HAYFORD: Yes. I think Joe Moakley was much stronger on it by far than DeConcini, but at least he was an ally over there. And it was—also, Senator Kennedy⁶ was pretty involved, too.

⁵ Dennis DeConcini (1937-), a Democrat, represented Arizona in the United States Senate from 1977 to 1995.

⁶ Edward Kennedy (1932-), a Democrat, has represented Massachusetts in the United States Senate since 1961.

BOWER: So then the murders happened in 1989, and that changed the congressman's role in reference to El Salvador, because he became the chairman of the task force.

HAYFORD: One of the things that is interesting is when we were able to get our sub-committee hook, we held a number of hearings on El Salvador, and on the extended voluntary departure. And one of the people who came to speak was Segundo Montes,⁷ I think—anyways, he was one of the priests who was later shot. So he actually came up and testified before our sub-committee, and that made it even more of a personal—but I remember him, because I remember he didn't speak English, but I do remember waiting in the chairman's office with him. He was a very nice man, and he came all the way just to talk about how it really was dangerous in El Salvador, that if people went back, their lives would be in danger.

BOWER: Do you think that that had an impact—and putting aside, obviously, Congressman Moakley, and now Congressman McGovern—did that have an impact on the members, that somebody that had actually come and testified to them about people being murdered, then himself was murdered?

HAYFORD: Yes. It definitely did on Congressman Moakley and now Congressman McGovern, I mean, it was—when someone that came all the way up and is in front of you in a hearing, and then—and the murders were so horrible, and there were really graphic photographs, and you see this really kind, decent person just murdered like that. It certainly wasn't the only reason, but it was a reason.

BOWER: Yeah. Did you travel to El Salvador?

HAYFORD: No, I didn't.

BOWER: Did the congressman's ascending to the chairmanship influence at all his ability to work on that legislation?

⁷ Segundo Montes (1933-1989) was one of the six Jesuit priests who were murdered.

HAYFORD: Yes, definitely. His becoming a subcommittee chair helped him to—the whole issue of El Salvador in general. And him being on the Rules Committee—I’m trying to think, I can’t even remember what year the priests were shot—

BOWER: 1989.

HAYFORD: Okay, so it was right when he—he became chairman in June of ’89.

BOWER: And they were murdered [on] November 16, 1989.

HAYFORD: It definitely made it a way for him to get—to push this to the forefront.

BOWER: So now you were the staffer on the Rules Committee—Subcommittee—and what was your next assignment?

HAYFORD: Well, I went over to the full committee after he became chairman.⁸ I was actually—’89—when he became chairman I came to the full committee. I didn’t really physically—I worked on it, but I was sort of back and forth. But it was really full-time in March of 1990.

BOWER: And for those of us who aren’t initiated, what’s the difference between the subcommittee work and the full committee work?

HAYFORD: It’s very different. In the Rules Committee especially—because on the subcommittee that I was on, we really dealt with rules of the House, process and procedure specifically to the House. Things like archiving papers and rule changes. The full committee you’re dealing with issues with bills that major legislation work comes to the floor. And when you’re a professional staffer on that committee, you handle whatever. Like I had Education Committee—my committees have changed some, but I think—education—I had Post Office, and

⁸ Congressman Moakley was chairman of the House Rules Committee from 1989 to 1995.

Civil Service, which was a committee at the time. I can't remember, because it did change. It's evolved over the years, too.

But you're sort of responsible for anything that deals with—if there's a bill—if there's a higher ed reauthorization bill, on the majority staff your responsibility is to get all the materials back on; to follow the whole markup in the Education Committee; see what amendments are out there; be in touch with the staff there and how they want this to come to Rules; how they want to be considered in Rules; and ultimately on the floor. And prepare all the briefing materials for all the members of the committee, all the majority members. And actually, we send it out to all members, majority and the minority.

BOWER: And is that an example of one way that Congressman Moakley was a very successful chair of that committee, that he included minority as well as majority members?

HAYFORD: He did. Now, some minority members were more willing—it got a little more partisan towards the end, and I think a lot of that was the Newt Gingrich⁹ influence, which was kind of fighting things. It went pretty smoothly for the first part when I was there. And then as the membership changed, and some of the members came around, I think their role was to kind of complain a little bit more about what they felt was an unfair process, and stir things up a little bit.

BOWER: In 1994, when things changed again, when the Republicans were voted into the majority, and the congressman became the ranking minority member, did that change your status in the committee?

HAYFORD: Yes, it did. Actually, it was a really tough time because the staff got cut. A number of really nice staff people had to be let go. It just changed everything. It changed—it became a whole different job, but it also—a whole—you're used to having a say in things, working with the committee that's bringing the bill forward, and having some influence on it.

⁹ Newt Gingrich (1943-), a Republican, represented Georgia's Sixth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1979 to 1999. He served as Speaker of the House from 1995 to 1999.

Help preparing—talking to them about what should be allowed on the floor, and going to really not having any of that. Really working more with individual members, and what they wanted to try and offer to the bill.

BOWER: So how did Congressman Moakley adjust to that change? Because that's a pretty big change.

HAYFORD: It's interesting. I remember when it happened, and some of the people that I knew—people outside of Congress—were saying, Oh, I bet it's just a shock. How's he going to manage without that big, beautiful office, and all that power? And I remember talking to him about it one day, and he said, "I don't care about the office, I don't care about—." He said, "The worst part about all of this is having to fire people who are really good at their jobs, and worked really hard." And there were several staff people. That just—it really killed him.

It made me feel good, just to see that that was what mattered to him. But it was a change, I mean, it was a big change. And the new Congress—Republican Congress—that came in, they'd been in the minority for forty years. And I think—not necessarily towards him—but I think there were a lot of hard feelings built up elsewhere in the House, in other committees. And it was like, We're going to come in, and we're going to show them. A little bit of payback, and pushing their agenda through. There wasn't any room, really, for negotiation or working together. It just kind of disappeared, and I think that was something that really bothered him. I think he felt like he had always tried to reach out.

If a bill came up, and there were things that were important to Republican members—particularly ones on the Rules Committee—he was always more than willing, and wanted to work with them to see if he could accommodate their requests. I mean, when you get something really controversial, and it's a totally black-and-white issue, you have to go in the direction of your party, and all that. But other things, I think he always felt there was room compromise and maneuver, and I think he felt like that was all gone, when they came in. And to some extent, I do, too.

BOWER: He was, as I understand it, well-respected and popular among his peers.

HAYFORD: He was, very much so.

BOWER: And can you, having watched him for twenty-five years, comment on what it was about how he worked in Congress that made him successful across the aisle?

HAYFORD: Well, he always was somebody who—he used to quote Tip O’Neill¹⁰ a lot, but I think a lot of the things came from him. He used that as an example about really getting to know people. I think he was—I think O’Neill said when he came in, “Learn two things: Learn the members, and learn the rules.” And he did both of those things, and he just got to know people.

And he told me once—because sometimes I’d see him talking to some member that most people really didn’t get along with, on either side of the aisle. And he’d be there laughing it up with them, and I would ask him about it, and he’d say, Well, you know, you find something that they’re interested in, and you talk with them about that. He always seemed to try and find a way to talk to somebody, in a way that other people wouldn’t. I mean, it really impressed me. And he also was just by nature a really friendly person. He would walk through the Capitol and say hi to everybody, and that always made me feel good, because as a staff person.

You do get a—there are plenty of members that it’s almost like you’re invisible. But I mean, no matter—if the people in the cafeteria, or the people polishing floors, or whether it’s the Speaker of the House, or a chairman of the committee, he always would be like, hey, how’re you doing? I mean, he always liked to look people in the eye and say “hi”, and give them a smile. I mean, that was just his way.

BOWER: But he was also—was he a tough negotiator? Or, I mean, he also had what he wanted to accomplish—

¹⁰ Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill (1912-1994), a Democrat, represented Massachusetts’ Eleventh and, after redistricting, Eighth Congressional Districts in the United States House of Representatives from 1953 to 1987. He served as Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1977 to 1987.

HAYFORD: When he wanted things—oh yeah, when he had his priorities, and he was adamant about getting—he wasn't stubborn to the point of all or nothing, but he was very, very firm when he wanted things. And he did things for people, but he always would kind of go back and say, "Okay, I helped you with this, but now I need you to help me with that." But he always gave as much back as he got, too, and I think that's why he was successful.

BOWER: That's great. What do you think was most important—some of the most important things to him in his career? If someone asked him, "What did you accomplish?" Or what did you see that were the things that he felt most strongly about?

HAYFORD: Well, El Salvador, I think that was one of his personal achievements that he really felt made a huge difference. Which I do too. But he worked on a lot of things. He worked really closely with the whole medical community in Massachusetts, and I think he felt like that was—he got so much, he did everything he could to help them to get research grants, to help in ways that they needed. I think that was immensely important. And the colleges, schools up there—education was really important to him.

He was—the way he grew up—not exactly poverty, but pretty close to it. He grew up in the projects, and what got him out of it and made a difference in his life was education, so he saw early on that that was a way to help people, a way for someone to get—. The other thing he felt, I think, as strongly about as anything was jobs. He looked—that's when I think—people talk about poor—they talk about things like that, to him that always meant, you're doing something good, but most of all, you're getting jobs for people, and jobs that go somewhere.

But he always talked about things in terms of jobs, and when he was down here and he ran the committee that they called a Patronage Committee, but it was a Personnel Committee around hire for the post office that was here, and folding over different things—he always tried to—there were kids in Boston that needed something, needed a break; he'd help them get a job down there. So I'd say jobs and education, and healthcare.

One of the things that he did, too, that I don't think many people realize, is that he was one of the very first sponsors of the Americans with Disabilities Act. And he did it in terms of employment, not that he had a problem with any of the other things, but that was just the first thing that he did. He had an intern who was—trying to think what—I can't think of the illness he had, but anyway, it was something that really bothered him, that this kid who was qualified couldn't get a job because of his condition, which was considered a disability.

So he introduced the legislation that would say, if you're otherwise qualified, you can't be discriminated against with regard to employment, because of a disability. And Ted Kennedy, Jr. came down and testified before the Education Subcommittee—it was the very first time he came to testify before Congress—and it was on Joe Moakley's bill. And that was back—I believe in the early eighties. But it's just—you know, he—

BOWER: I didn't know that.

HAYFORD: He also was like a—played a major role in the nutrition labeling bill that eventually became law. He had his own bill, and he worked with Chairman Waxman,¹¹ who was chairman of the Health Subcommittee where that bill came from. But that was a big issue to him. And then, beyond that—after that passed, he introduced legislation to make the advertising go along with the labeling, because in many cases they'd advertise something as being low in fat, and it would have a lot of sugar.

It wasn't consistent with what you had to do on the labels, and he had legislation—the legislation didn't become law, but because of his legislation, the Federal Trade Commission re-wrote their requirements, or their guidelines, for companies. So it was something that—

BOWER: So you didn't need the legislation once you did that.

¹¹ Henry A. Waxman (1939-), a Democrat, has represented California's Thirtieth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1975.

HAYFORD: Yeah, and it would have been good to have the legislation, but this was a very good middle roadway to go. Because he fought long and hard with the grocery manufacturers, and the individual companies. But he did it in a way that—

BOWER: Now, where did that come from? Like you mentioned where the ADA [American with Disabilities Act]—there was an intern; that he saw the impact of not having that protection on that person, so there was a personal connection there. Something like the nutritional labeling, is that something that constituents brought to him, or an organization?

HAYFORD: Well, he got interested in the whole nutrition thing. Part of it was Jean Mayer at Tufts, he didn't—Jean Mayer did not come to him to do a bill with nutritional labeling, actually. After it got going Jean Mayer was writing him like, "Wow, I didn't know you did this. This is great." But I know that we used to—every year, I used to meet with the dieticians who would come down from the district. You know, a lot of them in the hospitals or schools, and just talk about nutrition issues. And he likes to tell the story about one day, he's waiting for his wife to come out of the grocery store, and he's been waiting and waiting.

And of course, you probably can't—between you and me I can't imagine them doing a lot of grocery shopping, but he was saying that it took her a long time. And she's like, "Well, I can't understand these labels. I don't know what this means." Because they're trying to eat a little healthier, among other things, and the labels just didn't tell you that. So I think he actually—now that I think, part of it's coming back to me, because it's been a while. He spoke before I believe the Massachusetts Dietetic Association at one point, and I think it was something that they pointed out to him too. So it all kind of evolved.

And that was the legislation that I worked on, which I really was interested in myself, so I mean, it was—but it was something he did a lot with, but it wasn't necessarily real well-known, but he was able to change things. Sort of working with organizations, working with the committees, working with the people who didn't want the bill. The Advertising Association didn't like it at all, because they didn't want to have to be restricted with what they could do. And you felt like—you had good arguments about wanting to get information to people, but being afraid if

they had to tell in a way that he felt that they should. But it was something he did. I think there are some boxes up at Suffolk that have—

BOWER: Oh, yes. Because I've seen that, and it's like fire-safe cigarettes.¹² When I saw all the boxes of fire-safe cigarettes, I said, "Okay, what's going on here?" And the nutritional labeling was another piece that I found very interesting, and I actually had gone through some of those papers. And I'm thrilled to know that that was something that you worked on, because that explains the context for it.

HAYFORD: If you ever have any questions, please call me.

BOWER: Oh, definitely.

HAYFORD: I sort of threw everything in a stack, so it's not really—. (laughter)

BOWER: How will you personally remember Congressman Moakley?

HAYFORD: It's hard not to get emotional. Well I mean, everything I have, he did for me. So—

BOWER: Thank you. The mission of the Archive and Institute is to continue his legacy of public service and political leadership, by encouraging young people to pursue life in public service. And we'd like—do you want to take a break?

HAYFORD: No I'm fine. I'm just checking to make sure I don't have any—no, I'm actually okay, it's just I haven't thought about it for a long time.

BOWER: I know, I understand. I mean, everybody—

¹² After a family in his district died in a fire that was caused by a cigarette, Congressman Moakley obtained passage of the Cigarette Safety Act of 1984, which established Congressional committees to determine if a fire-safe cigarette was technically feasible, and the Fire-Safe Cigarette Act of 1990, which required the government to develop a test to assess how "fire-safe" a cigarette was. As of 2008, there was still no federal law mandating fire-safe cigarettes, but sixteen states, including Massachusetts, have regulations in place.

HAYFORD: Well, he was that kind—he affected people very deeply.

BOWER: Yeah. But we just are looking for any advice that you might have, about how we might carry on his legacy.

HAYFORD: Well, another thing that he did that actually—I guess at the University of Massachusetts, the John McCormack Center—he got the funding for that. And I remember working with a guy that came down, and talked to us. And he actually got the—two different, separate appropriations—he got it authorized, and then he got appropriations for that. And it was supposed to be about encouraging careers in public service. And one of the things that occurred to me at the time was, how do you really get that across to people, what that really means, and where do they start?

And that's what I think the hardest thing for someone like me—I never really looked at public service, and I never really thought about it. But now, I look back, but I think, how do you get someone who's looking to start in—particularly when the perception of people in politics is so terrible, which is really a shame, because everybody who's here is here because they really feel like they can make a difference, and maybe they have different ways that they can go about doing it. But it's a lot of work to get here, and it's a lot of work to stay here. And people don't do it for the reasons that I think the public perceives that they do.

But also, how to sort of start locally, what you can do, what it means. But that is a good career, it's a good career and it's a rewarding career. And I mean, I was thinking like—you were probably in Boston when they had the funeral, and all the events building up to it. And I was really overwhelmed; it was amazing to me, this man—because I was always here.

I went up to Boston some, but the effect that he had, that it could be—the way people reacted to all of that. And it was like, that's a pretty rewarding way for your life to be. And he certainly didn't have a lot of money, but what made him happy was just feeling like he was making a difference.

BOWER: And perhaps, by being able to tell people about what his qualities were, especially to the people who didn't know him well—because there was a reason he was so effective, as you've been saying, in how he did things.

HAYFORD: He wasn't perfect. And he had his moments, and he had his agenda at his own times, but he still—he really went into this. Just because he saw how life could be for some people, and how hard it could be for other people, but also trying to figure out ways that people could get a chance, who might not have the same as everyone else.

BOWER: Someone who we've talked to, talked about how he was about hope.

HAYFORD: Yeah. And I know something else I thought of, that he said. When he became chairman of the Rules Committee, I'm trying to think—I remember what he said, I don't remember the context of it—but I remember I was talking with him about it, or it was going to be—I was congratulating or something, when it was official. And he said, "Being chairman gives me the ability to say yes instead of no." Because most people, it's like you have power, but power is doing something with it. And I think that's the difference that I see with him, than what I see now.

BOWER: Mm-hmm. That's how things have changed.

HAYFORD: Yeah, like I think he felt like if people came to him with concerns, then it was like, this is the place to do it. And it was about individuals. It may have been about institutions like schools, or even a hospital or a medical facility, but it was about, "Okay, how do we make this work better, but not necessarily for the entity, but for the people that would be served by it?" And that's something that I—I don't know, I think I have become jaded, being here for ten years, in the minority. I just thought about the difference. Fixing things, like fixing something like a food label, and looking at that.

Like, “Okay, this is a problem.” We have these different groups that will come in and talk about it, and okay, so you go and you do something about it. Even like a fire-safe cigarette, or someone who’s got a disability but they’re still perfectly capable of working. And how do they get past those prejudices and get somewhere? Or job training programs, or—that’s what I think he really did. I learned early on that when he would ask a question, “How are you doing something?”, you couldn’t say, “Well, I can’t.” You just never said that with him; it’s like when you try, and you find some way to do something that someone’s asking. I mean, you at least really try. So I should think about that more now. (laughter)

BOWER: Well, that’s great. Is there anything else you had wanted to add? We really appreciate you talking to us about him.

HAYFORD: I’m sure I’ll think of things when I get back—I’m trying—you know, it’s been so long that I was with him, I keep forgetting about all the different—he really did so much. But it wasn’t because he wasn’t on a committee and chairman of a committee that produced a particular product or area. He didn’t necessarily always do things but he always had things in whatever would go. Like, there was hardly a bill that came through the House that he didn’t have his finger prints on in some way. Or have something in there like, “Well, do this, but I want this language added in here,” or, “I want this fixed for something in my district,” or, “I want this.”

BOWER: Oh that’s great. I didn’t realize that. Well thank you very much, Sophie, we really appreciate it.

END OF INTERVIEW