

**The Honorable Barbara Bailey Kennelly**  
U.S. Representative of Connecticut (1982–1999)

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

**Whipping the House**

Representative Kennelly describes how to be an effective whip.  
*Interview recorded September 9, 2015*

Well, you've got to know if they mean it or not. They have all ways of saying it. It's just like when you're running for a committee, you know, you've got to get that "yes" and know it's a "yes." And that's so—I mean some of the Members become absolutely professional on us, how not to say yes when you think that they're saying yes. So, I, I wasn't crazy about being a whip. I loved being in the leadership, but I wasn't crazy about being a whip because you're bothering people all the time. You're at them, you're at them, you're at them. You got to tell me, you got to tell me—they don't want to tell you. But, you know, a good whip will find out.