

1 ***SENATOR LORRAINE WOJAHN, D-27***

2 **Interview with Joy Adams**  
3 **15 November 1998 – Tacoma, Washington**

4

5 **EARLY LIFE**

6 I was born in Tacoma, the adopted daughter of a couple who could not have children. My father  
7 was forty-two and my mother was forty when I was adopted, they were older and more settled. My  
8 father was an official with the Northern Pacific Railway, and we maintained our residence in the  
9 state of Washington. I was born in Tacoma, then moved to Auburn, where I lived until I was about  
10 three, then to Seattle until I was 4 ½. We rented the home that was owned by Hec Edmunson, who  
11 the Pavilion was named after. When I was in sixth grade, my father was transferred to Montana to  
12 learn that part of the Northern Pacific Railroad. We were only supposed to stay a year, but the  
13 Depression hit and we stayed five years, so I started my freshman year in high school at Missoula  
14 County High School. Then we came back to Seattle, and our home was in the University District,  
15 so I attended Roosevelt High School. I attended the grade school there too, called University  
16 Heights Grade School, and a Japanese family had contributed a series of Japanese cherry trees to the  
17 school [in gratitude for] the education their children had gotten there. He was a shoemaker that was  
18 about four blocks from our house. I entered Roosevelt as a sophomore, and I'd always planned to  
19 go into bacteriology or some related field in medicine, but I worked on the school paper and  
20 decided to go into journalism, so I changed everything at that point. I never expected to run for  
21 elected office, didn't even give it a thought.

22

23 I was born on my grandmother's birthday – September 17, 1920 – and when I was older I asked my  
24 mother and dad, "Why didn't you name me after Grandma Ogilve?" And they said, "Well, then it

1 wouldn't be fair to your paternal grandmother." My mother's mother was named Mary, and I love  
2 that name, Mary; and my father's mother was named Elizabeth, so I asked, "Why didn't you name  
3 me Mary Elizabeth? It would be more appropriate than Lorraine." And they said, "We had a hard  
4 enough time naming you." They'd adopted a boy first, two years prior, and they decided they  
5 wanted a girl, and my mother was a friend of a social worker in Tacoma, so my parents put their  
6 name in for an adoption, and they were so excited when it was a girl – they didn't know, they didn't  
7 have amniocentesis then – they said they'd always planned to name their daughter Noreen, but they  
8 couldn't think of the name Noreen for the life of them. They wanted to take me out of the hospital,  
9 but the hospital wouldn't let me go until I had a name, so they finally came up with Lorraine and  
10 then the doctor said, "She has to have a Christian name also." So they named me Ruth Lorraine –  
11 that's all they could think of, because Lorraine Ruth didn't sound right – and they got me out of the  
12 hospital the second day. But the "R" has been a nemesis ever since, because it's "R. Lorraine" for  
13 legal papers, and people ask what the "R." stands for. I just go by Lorraine, unless it's a legal  
14 document.

15  
16 My family always taught me that I could do anything my brother could do, they always said to me,  
17 "Don't come crying to us, you can handle it yourself." And they expected me to do that. So I did  
18 not become a tattletale, though I tried it once and it didn't work. I remember the time I stole my  
19 brother's bicycle and rode it, and one of the pedals fell off while I was riding it, and I got off and  
20 started to run and he picked up the pedal and started chasing me with it. Another time, when we  
21 were living in Easton, Washington, my brother was always throwing things, and one time he threw a  
22 bottle and it broke on my head – I was always going to my mother with my head bleeding. [Another  
23 time] there were about six kids in Easton, that's all there were, and there was a hornet's nest at the  
24 bottom of a hill. And all five of the kids all ran down the hill and threw a big rock into the hornet's

1 nest, and I was about three years old, and I was standing at the top of the hill watching, and the  
2 hornets attacked me! So my mother had to make this cornstarch and water [paste] and put it all over  
3 my face and neck. These are some of the childhood things I'll never forget. My brother was not  
4 nice sometimes.

5  
6 I was born in Tacoma, married in Seattle, and came back to Tacoma. My husband died about eight  
7 years ago. He was the architect that did the first corrections to Stadium High School. He put the  
8 tops and moved the library down to the second floor, and put another pool in the basement. He  
9 also designed the additions to Point Defiance and Foss schools, and did a couple doctor's clinics,  
10 and during a real bad time during the 70s he took a job with the United States Air Force, and gave  
11 up his practice. He retired when he left there. There are only three architects in the entire U.S. Air  
12 Force, isn't that something? He was back at Scott Air Force Base, he was stationed in the Azores  
13 for about three months, and he was invited to go to Japan, but it was up in the northern part where  
14 they never see the sun, and so he said no. But he liked what he was doing.

15  
16 I worked in journalism, prior to that I had been a buyer in a department store, and had worked with  
17 the Army Corps of Engineers in Personnel in the Second World War, and from that I was married  
18 and I didn't go back to work right away. But my husband had not graduated from college, he was in  
19 architecture school, so I quit school and went to work to help him get through, and he became an  
20 architect. In fact, the year he graduated he was awarded the American Institute of Architects award  
21 for excellence at the University of Washington, and with it came a scholarship, but he couldn't  
22 afford to take it because of the draft. He could have gone to MIT, but he would have been drafted  
23 immediately if he'd taken it. So he went to work at that time for the war industries and managed to  
24 overcome that. I went to work for the Corps of Engineers in Personnel, and then as soon as he got

1 through that he went back to school for two more years. But between that time I was not working,  
2 I raised children, I went to work at Rhodes – first in Personnel, then as assistant buyer – and then I  
3 went to work for the State Labor Council after that.

4  
5 [We had] two sons, Gilbert Merrill Jr. and Mark Christopher. Our older boy, Gilbert – we called  
6 him Toby – died of Hodgkin’s disease at age 25, so we lost him. As a result of that, we turned all of  
7 his [medical] records over to the University of Washington, and they have found a cure for  
8 Hodgkin’s if caught in time. So we feel that at least we did our part in that area.

9  
10 My parents didn’t encourage me in my politics at all, because they were elderly – my father was dead  
11 by that time. I was a Democrat, I knew when I voted the first time. My family tended to be  
12 Republicans. My Grandfather Kendall said he would never vote for another Democrat when  
13 Governor Martin imposed the sales tax. My aunt was the Secretary/Treasurer of the State  
14 Republican Club in Oregon – if we had ever talked politics, we would have killed each other. My  
15 parents didn’t really participate [in politics], except when my grandfather got mad at the Democrats.  
16 They always voted, but no one talked about it; I think they were waiting for my brother and me to  
17 make up our minds. I had made up my mind when I was going to the university, I knew I wasn’t a  
18 Republican, and I knew the difference. My brother was in the Army, and they are always  
19 Republicans.

20  
21 My grandfather was an old railroader, and he lived at the old Croft Hotel in Tacoma where a lot of  
22 old railroaders ended up living – they wanted to live in a hospital but they couldn’t, so the next best  
23 thing was a hotel where they could get their meals and everything -- and Lee Croft, the owner of the  
24 hotel, called my mother in Montana and said, “Grandpa won’t eat, because he won’t pay the sales

1 tax.” He was really a rugged individualist. So my mother had to come from Missoula, Montana to  
2 Tacoma, and she went to the grocery store and got a great big brown bag full of tax tokens. And  
3 she went and put them on Grandpa’s lap and said, “Here, now *eat!*” The tax tokens were three or  
4 five for a penny; if it were more, you’d just pay money, but if it was a small item you used the token  
5 to pay the sales tax. And everything was rationed: gasoline, clothing, food, meat, butter, and you  
6 had to use and save your coupons – potted meats, anything perishable or canned. The sales tax had  
7 occurred in the Thirties... So you had to keep track of your tokens and coupons.

8  
9 My same grandfather, while we were in Montana, was still cussed. He came to live with my parents  
10 in Montana after a while, and one day my mother was going to an afternoon tea, and she had bought  
11 a new, lovely beige-and-white outfit with a Panama hat. And my grandfather was out watering the  
12 lawn, and as she came down the stairs from our house, my grandfather looked over and said, “You  
13 think you look pretty cute, don’t you?” And he turned the hose on her.

14  
15 My Grandmother Ogilve, my mother’s mother, used to ride around the streetcars in Portland  
16 advocating the evils of [liquor], because she was a member of the Women’s Christian Temperance  
17 Union, and also advocating for women’s rights to vote. Many years later – she was still feisty –  
18 when she was 83 she fell and broke her hip. They took her to Saint Vincent’s Hospital in Portland,  
19 but they didn’t bother to set her leg, because they didn’t think she’d survive the anesthetic. Several  
20 days later they called my aunt and told her that Grandma had sunk into a coma, and that she should  
21 come to the hospital. So my aunt went rushing down to Saint Vincent’s, and she was walking down  
22 the corridor toward Grandma’s room, and a young priest came out of the room and he was  
23 laughing. And he said to her, “Grandma is all right. I was laying out my vestments to give her the  
24 last rites, and she came out of her coma, raised up in bed, and said ‘Young man, I was born a

1 Methodist, raised a Methodist, and I intend to *die* a Methodist!” She recovered and lived to be 100.  
2 The priest was a little shocked...

3

#### 4 START IN POLITICS

5 As far as civic involvement, I've been a member of the advisory committee to the Tacoma School  
6 Board, I've been a member of the YWCA board, I've been a preschool president; I was deeply  
7 involved in local problems. The Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Tacoma, to help people  
8 deeply in debt come out – I'm still on that board. We collect their check and then disburse it to the  
9 various creditors, and we stop any garnishment proceedings. It's a very good program, it's a  
10 program [to help people] in trouble because of overcharging [credit]. And I was involved in the  
11 Consumer Federation of America, that was organized nationally in 1967, and now it's at the local  
12 level.

13

14 My first political experience was when I was hired as a lobbyist for consumer protection issues by  
15 the State Labor Council, AFL-CIO. And at that point I became interested in politics, not as a  
16 candidate, but as a person telling legislators what they needed to know about the labor movement.  
17 That was in 1964, and at that time I was about forty-five years old. [Consumer protection] was my  
18 primary assignment, but I also helped with other issues. During that time we had a bill sponsored  
19 that reduced the retail installment credit to twelve percent. It's since gone up somewhat, we haven't  
20 been able to hold it at that.

21

22 Another thing we did was outlaw debt adjusters who charged to do what the Consumer Credit  
23 Counseling Service does now. They were charging a fee, and some of the adjusters were adding in  
24 mortgage costs, which is never to be done because it is such a major investment. And so we finally

1 got them outlawed in the state of Washington, which is one of the first things I did when I got there.  
2 We took such a tack at them that they couldn't make enough money, and then we set about creating  
3 the Consumer Credit Counseling Service in Washington, which was done with the Attorney  
4 General's office, who at that time was John O'Connell, and his first deputy was Donald Devone.  
5 We started in Seattle, and moved to Tacoma, and now we're east of the mountains in some cities.  
6 And mostly, we just presented the idea [to local businesses] and the creditors decided that they  
7 would pay in money to help fund this organization to help them get their money back – it's a kind of  
8 reverse psychology, but it works. So they all contribute: doctors, dentists, attorneys, retail  
9 installment credit people, retail stores, banks, you name it. They put down the first investment to  
10 get the organization going, and from then on it was self-sufficient. The Tacoma group is very clean,  
11 and we don't make any money, it's non-profit.

12

13 "Uncle Bob"

14 One time I went back on the Truth in Lending bill, because we had a garnishment bill that was  
15 coming up before the House that I was lobbying. And the Truth in Lending bill had a portion about  
16 garnishment. Before the law changed, an employee of a company could be garnished through the  
17 employer, and they could take all the money the employee had coming, not just the amount of the  
18 garnishment. It was really bad. So if a fellow owed a \$15 bill and hadn't paid it, a [creditor] could  
19 garnish his wages, and the employer became a part of the garnishment. So he had to withhold the  
20 whole wage. We got that changed so they could only withhold a certain amount. We used the same  
21 thing at the state level, because I went to the legislature immediately after the bill passed Congress.

22

23 But when I went back [to D.C.] to lobby and Senators Jackson and Magnusen were there, but they  
24 were not on the conference committee and so they told me who I should see, and they made

1 arrangements for me to talk with Leonora Sullivan, who was the chairman of the Subcommittee on  
2 Banking for the House of Representatives, and I had about an hour to chat with her. And she told  
3 me that the best thing that I could do was to go back to Senators Jackson and Magnusen and ask  
4 them to use the strength of their seniority in Congress to accept the garnishment amendments as  
5 they were. I went back and told them what they needed to know, and that evening I was going to  
6 stay with my friend, who was the head of nursing research at Walter Reed Army Hospital, and was  
7 an Army nurse. She lived in Takoma Park, MD, and she was having a party that evening for one of  
8 the doctors who was being transferred. And we were drinking, and we were happy as larks, and we  
9 got home and I said to Phyllis, "you know, I'm still worried about the conference committee on that  
10 bill. Do you know anybody in the Senate or the House we could call who could help us out?" And  
11 she said, "Well, could Uncle Bob help?" Well, "Uncle Bob" was Bob Mansfield, Speaker of the  
12 House! And so we called him at ten o'clock at night, and he said "don't worry, little girl." And it  
13 passed, it came out clean. And that's an actual fact.

14  
15 Her name is Phyllis Ronning, and she was a lieutenant colonel in the Army Nurse Corps, and she  
16 couldn't get a promotion because there was only one colonel in the Nurse Corps, and until they  
17 made a general [billet] of the Nurse Corps, she could not advance to full colonel. The bill passed the  
18 year I was back there, and two years later they hadn't done it, so Phyllis resigned. And the minute  
19 she resigned they wrote and told her they were going to appt a woman general of the nurse corps,  
20 and they wanted her to stay because she was the representative to the World Health Organization,  
21 and she said no, she'd had it and she wasn't going to wait for them to make up her mind. So she  
22 went and became dean of nursing at the University of Virginia. She applied here to Washington,  
23 and all they would give her was an associate professorship. Her family came from Enumclaw, but



1 she was raised next door to Bob Mansfield, who was a professor at the University of Montana, and I  
2 got to know her when I lived in Montana. She called him Uncle Bob.

3

#### 4 FIRST POLITICAL OFFICE

5 My first run at any political experience was in 1968 when I ran for the House of Representatives in  
6 the 27<sup>th</sup> legislative district, and I won. It was an open seat; George Sheridan had held the seat for  
7 two or three terms, and Harry Sprinker, the County Commissioner, decided to retire, but he didn't  
8 announce it until the Friday before the first day of filing. And I had a very good friend who wanted  
9 to become County Commissioner, who happened to be a Republican. And the party approached  
10 George Sheridan, because he was probably the best-known politician in the Pierce County area, he  
11 had been chairman of the Democrats of Pierce County, and asked him to run, and he said he would  
12 not run unless they found a replacement for him [in the Legislature] with the same ideology. So I  
13 was approached and asked to run. And it was kinda dumb, because I gave up a job earning \$10,000  
14 per year, which was unusual for a woman, for a \$3600 per year job! But my husband said to go for  
15 it, and I did. He was probably more Republican than Democrat, but he sure came around, he always  
16 believed in my ideas. My older son had Hodgkin's at that time, he died just after I was elected. My  
17 younger son was in the United States Marine Corps, in the Vietnam War. So they were all out from  
18 under when I was elected, which is not very nice to say. My friends, some of them were with me  
19 and some of them weren't, because some of them were Republicans. It created some tension, but  
20 we all came through it alright.

21

22 There were three women running, and one man, and Jack Pyle, who was a political writer at that  
23 time, called us the Girlie Team, which he wouldn't dare do now, he wouldn't dare do that. Anyway,  
24 I won by 309 votes. One was Bruce Burns' wife, he'd been a former legislator and was an attorney

1 in town. The other woman was Marian Gleason. She had taken a chairmanship in the coalition  
2 which was formed in 1961 over public and private power, there was a coalition of Democrats and  
3 Republicans who had elected a speaker to abide by their wishes, and Marian Gleason took a  
4 chairmanship under this coalition. But the Democrats were so angry with her for taking this  
5 chairmanship, that they wouldn't support her. She didn't run for the House seat after that, she ran  
6 for the county clerk position, which was held by a [man who] had been there forever, and she had  
7 the audacity to run against him and she lost. And so after that she came back and ran against me as  
8 a Democrat. But she always was a Democrat, I'll always believe that. But those were the days.

9  
10 I remember I had just hired a young man who had just graduated from Western Washington  
11 University as my campaign manager. I agreed to pay him \$1 an hour, and he worked like a Trojan  
12 for that \$1 an hour. He hadn't been able to find a job yet, and he wanted to get into law school, so I  
13 said I would help him get into law school if I was elected, and I'd give him a dollar an hour to boot.  
14 I had two people as my campaign chairs, Ernest Brazil from the Hilltop Church, and a fellow by the  
15 name of Harlan McChord. [McChord] was 83 years old, tall and skinny, he wore a black beret, and  
16 he was a riot. So those were the two, a black and a tall, skinny older man. [McChord] could  
17 remember Eugene Debs and all those things that Eugene Debs had stood for, that all became part  
18 of the Social Security Act when it passed. Debs spent most of his time in prison in Atlanta over his  
19 ideas, they said he was a trouble fomentor and he was in jail most of his life. But he was the one that  
20 started the Pullman strike on the railroad, and he was really the father of Social Security in this  
21 [country]. And Social Security came about because of the Depression, when everybody lost all their  
22 funds in the banks and there was no way to recover. So the country had to do something to  
23 accommodate all those people, and that's how the idea of Social Security became known. But  
24 [Debs] got thrown in jail for doing his bit.

1  
2 And [my two campaign chairs] were just wonderful. Reverend Brazil passed out things in church,  
3 when he probably shouldn't have, but the other black church, Reverend Bowles' church, did the  
4 same thing. We had a little introductory sheet which I had printed for them that didn't say I was  
5 running for anything, it just said I was a good Christian lady! [laughs] And one day my husband was  
6 doorbelling up on the Hilltop and he was explaining to a lady that Reverend Brazil was very  
7 supportive of me, and the lady said, "Are you Reverend Brazil?" My husband cracked up, and he  
8 said, "No, but he's a lovely man." But anyway, they helped me win my 309 votes. And one day  
9 McChord had a big, clunky old car that he still drove, and he ran it into Clay Huntington's car, and  
10 Clay just threw up his hands and said, "It's okay!" I don't know whether McChord had insurance or  
11 not, but I got out of that one fast. Those are some of the funny things. They were both doing some  
12 campaigning when McChord backed into him.

13 I've been both in the minority and now the majority again. And I saw what happened with the  
14 majority which were Republicans, during the time I was a freshman and Tom Swayze was Speaker of  
15 the House, and he helped me with my bill. He wasn't speaker at the time, but he was chair of the  
16 Government Operations Committee when my bacon bill went through the second time in 1970, and  
17 also my very first bill he helped me do. Now he did not do the bacon bill, he did the bill which *was*  
18 my very first bill, which stated that there should be an application for an absentee ballot in the  
19 voters' pamphlet. There was one in there, but it wasn't statutorily in there, it could be taken out at  
20 any time. So I sponsored that little bill, and I had made some mistakes, and he corrected them and  
21 passed it. He was a great Speaker, real honorable, Republican opposite me.

22

1 Bacon Bill  
2 The first [big] bill I passed was the bacon bill, which said you had to reverse the contents in the  
3 package so people could see the lean and fat. It was my very first bill; and it didn't change national  
4 law, but it forced every state in the union to follow it. I'd been back in D.C. lobbying for the  
5 Wholesome Meat Act when I worked for the Labor Council, and I was there when [it was passed]. I  
6 knew that one of the codicils was that they could not have any [meat] that was hidden, you couldn't  
7 sell meat that was not [visible in the package]. The Wholesome Meat Act passed the year before I  
8 was elected to the House, and I knew what [packers] were doing was against the Wholesome Meat  
9 Act. So I immediately sent notices to the President's Consumer Protection Council, and several  
10 other consumer [advocates] in Congress I'd met while lobbying, and they paid attention to that  
11 [clause] we had in Washington and to the [unenforced] clause in the Wholesome Meat Act, and they  
12 changed the bacon procedures in every state in the union. The Secretary of Agriculture, which was  
13 to enforce the law, called and asked if I would consider extending the time that the bill was to go  
14 into effect, from January first to February first, because he said "There's one [bacon] packer in the  
15 country, and they're all backed up." So we agreed that it was okay, and now you get your bacon in a  
16 [package] where you can see it. So that was my very first bill I got passed, it took me two years to  
17 get it. Bobby Grayson was the lobbyist for one of the large meat packers... and he fought it the first  
18 time, he said it wouldn't work because everybody had a machine that cut the meat, it came from the  
19 same side of bacon. I had all the gals in the House put on clear plastic raincoats, and we went to the  
20 hearing wearing our clear plastic raincoats so they could see what they were getting, and I said that  
21 this was what I wanted to do for bacon. It was so funny! I didn't get the bill that year, Bobby  
22 Grayson beat me. But I put it in the next year, I put it under the Administrative Procedures Act,  
23 and it passed.

24

1 Frozen Chicken regulations

2 The next bill I passed, I was in the minority at that time, I entered it as a minority Democrat in the  
3 House. Frozen chickens could not be sold as fresh, because from Arkansas we were getting these  
4 boxes of frozen chickens, and [the grocers] would thaw them and put them out as fresh chicken.  
5 And it couldn't kill you, but it could make you mighty sick if it were bad. So the first bill that I put  
6 in assessed a \$25,000 [criminal] fine for each chicken. That was before we got into the legislation  
7 that took into consideration civil penalties. So I sent it back to the Code Reviser immediately and  
8 said "We can't do this, it wouldn't work! It'll never pass, it will get the screaming attention of every  
9 meat market in the state." So we changed it to a civil penalty, and they stopped doing it. We really  
10 saved the chicken industry in the state of Washington, because Pederson's was having trouble  
11 competing, Pederson's was in my district.

12  
13 Civil Marriage Bill

14 I was the first woman, and the first non-lawyer, to be appointed to the Washington State Judicial  
15 Council. I was there for about six years. I was able to ferret out some things through them, that's  
16 when we did the marriage and divorce bill, which caused a lot of frustration. The bill originally  
17 called for a civil marriage, in which people would apply for a marriage license, and at that time they  
18 had to disclose if they'd been married before, if they were divorced, the number of the divorce, how  
19 many children they had, how many children they were supposed to be supporting, all the disclosure  
20 you need before entering a contract, both sides had to do that. And then when they went back to  
21 pick up their marriage license [three days later], as in Europe, they were considered married without  
22 having to go through the formalities. That raised hell in the Legislature. The people who killed it  
23 were the florists – they wrote this nasty letter saying, "vote for that bill and you'll never go back to  
24 the Legislature." They were incensed. You know, a lot of people would [still] have a big religious  
25 wedding, but they would be considered [civilly] married at that point. All of Europe does that,

1 France and even the Catholic countries, you can have a civil or religious marriage, but you have to  
2 have the civil first. Anyway, I couldn't believe it. One day while the bill was still in the process, I  
3 had a fellow come into my office who had a clerical collar on, and I thought it was a priest. I said, "I  
4 know what you're here about," and he said, "I don't think you do." And I said, "Well, you are a  
5 Catholic priest, are you not?" and he said, "No, I'm from the United Brethren Church, and I want  
6 to congratulate you on your bill. It makes a tremendous amount of sense, because when I have to  
7 marry people, and half of them come in, and I've never seen them before, but they want to be  
8 married in the church, and I never see them afterward. And the other third are pregnant, obviously  
9 pregnant. I don't like to have to do that." So he liked it, but it got taken out in the Senate, so we  
10 just have the no-fault divorce bill now.

11

12 Mayoral race

13 [I ran for mayor in '77 and] I lost by about one vote per precinct. I ran against Mike Clark. There  
14 was the liberal wing of the party did not want him because he was not a good Democrat, so I agreed  
15 to run against him.... He was the nemesis of everyone in Tacoma by the time he left office. He  
16 told developers to build apartments down where the Dome is now, by the old Hawthorne School,  
17 and then they had to move them when they built the Dome, and now they're all these horrible  
18 apartments up on Mackenzie Hill that were moved from there. One series is pretty good, but the  
19 others are awful. They made money hand over fist. He was a developer's true friend, a true friend  
20 of bankers, [but] not a friend of constituents in my opinion. He left the area, but I guess he's back  
21 in Tacoma now. He let it be known that he wanted to run for Senate, and I told the members of the  
22 Senate – no one likes Pam Roach – I said to anyone who would listen, "You give him money or any  
23 encouragement and I will personally doorbell for Pam Roach!" They backed off! He is amoral, I  
24 believe, and I don't think we can have amoral people [in elected positions].

1

2 State Board of Health

3 It was my bill, which took me six years to get, which removed the Department of Health from the  
4 Department of Social and Health Services, because I felt health was a pure science, and social  
5 science is not a pure science. And it seemed as though every problem that occurred with DSHS was  
6 a social problem first.

7

8 In about 1981, one of the members in the House, [Mike Kreidler,] attempted to remove the State  
9 Board of Health, which is a constitutional office, [but] he attempted to do it without repealing the  
10 constitutional amendment, so it was an end-run around the [state] Constitution. It took all the  
11 duties of DSHS and gave them to lobbyists and providers to make all the decisions regarding the  
12 social and health services of the state. I believe that the ability to write [rules and regulations] should  
13 come from the local level, because local [boards of health] know what they need. And this would  
14 have said that DSHS would make decisions on how much money was spent, and on what it was  
15 spent, without recognizing what the Board of Health was doing, and advising them as to what was  
16 needed, because what's needed in Yakima is not necessarily what's needed in Tacoma. And they  
17 need to do their own thinking on these things. So we got our bill out: the major bill that took away  
18 everything was ninety-two pages long; I sponsored a bill that was six pages long, replaced the Board  
19 of Health, gave them more ability to function because they had no budget, and gave them the  
20 impetus to continue. And we won, which was another story in itself.

21

22 I worked to [push this bill], and the chair of the committee was very much with me, so he moved my  
23 bill out. It got through the Senate while the other bill was still malingering in the House, and we  
24 sent our bill over. And then I met with Charlie Moon, who was an old-time Representative from

1 Monroe who knew how the place worked, and Dennis Braddock, who is now the chairman of the  
2 State Board of Health, only he was a freshman legislator from Bellingham. And I knew that Dennis  
3 didn't know the ropes well enough, but I figured that Charlie would, and so I took them both to  
4 dinner and explained to them what I wanted done, that I wanted to hang the Senate bill on the  
5 House bill, because it was up for hearing in the Senate. And they both looked at each other like [I  
6 was crazy], but they agreed to do it. So the next day I had the amendment all written, and I went to  
7 the Assistant Secretary of the Senate, Sharon Case – who had been my secretary when I first started  
8 – and told her what we wanted to do, and I asked her if this were the proper way to do it, because I  
9 didn't want anything to go wrong. And they assured me that the bill would be called up, and then  
10 they would wait for the amendment. So anyway the bill got called up, and Dennis Braddock stood  
11 up and explained what the amendment did, and how it would help local government, as opposed to  
12 what this ninety-two page bill would do. There were about forty percent new freshmen,  
13 Republicans and Democrats, and they went with him. So he won by a substantial margin, and my  
14 bill was amended on [to the old bill]. And House leadership was adamant, they had wanted the  
15 Kreidler bill. So the bill was sent back to Rules committee, they didn't bump it like they usually do.  
16 So I went to the president of the State Labor Council, Marvin Williams, who was a friend of mine,  
17 and I told him, "You have to be at the Rules Committee meeting in the morning, because this bill  
18 has gone back to Rules, and they're going to kill it. You've got to be there, you've got to tell the  
19 Speaker what you want before the meeting, and you've got to glare at him the whole meeting!" And  
20 he did, and the bill came out, and it passed. And that's the story of the State Board of Health, which  
21 is doing remarkable things now in conjunction with the Department of Health.

22  
23 So after that we decided that there was a need for the Department of Health, instead of it's being  
24 part of DSHS. [DSHS] still has health in it because of Medicaid, but everything else is moved out,



1 all the rules and regulations and all of the administrative code dealing with health [is now under the  
2 jurisdiction of the Department of Health]. And so that battle was won. And when we finally got  
3 the bill six years later, one of the gals was Cathy Lynn, who was a senior at Gonzaga who wanted to  
4 go to law school. She was there when we passed the bill, and I had her come down to get her  
5 picture taken, along with me and Myra Delaney, my aide, and Evie White. I think there were four of  
6 us there to get our pictures taken when the bill passed, it was really exciting.

7

### 8 Displaced Homemaker Bill

9 Another bill I sponsored that's been really successful has been the displaced homemaker bill, which  
10 was done prior to the Department of Health bill. It was done my first year in the Senate, but it  
11 didn't pass until '79. That's a bill that establishes a displaced homemaker [program], which is given  
12 money to provide funding for [local]displaced homemaker programs. A displaced homemaker is  
13 defined as a woman who has lost her husband either through death or divorce, who still has a child  
14 living at home who has not reached his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and who is too young to receive Social  
15 Security. It was very narrowly defined, and there were to be two [large] programs established and  
16 then smaller programs within the [means of the budget]. So usually Seattle and Spokane get the two  
17 major programs, that are done either by a community college, a voc-tech school, or by a YWCA.  
18 Anyone can have [a program] that puts forth a third of the funding for it. So that has been going  
19 ever since. We started on \$365,000, which was nothing, and we told them they could not spend  
20 more than 15% for administrative purposes. We put it under the higher education coordinating  
21 board – DSHS wanted it, but I didn't want it under an operating agency because it could get lost, it  
22 had to be in a small agency. DSHS wanted it, Labor and Industries wanted it, Education wanted it,  
23 [but] we said no, [you're] too big, it won't work. That's been going since 1979, and the stories that  
24 come out of that are incredible.

1

2 One of the reasons I sponsored it, there was a woman living on Mercer Island, whose husband was  
3 transferred to Washington D.C., and her son had just been admitted to Harvard University. So her  
4 husband had gone to D.C., and she was left behind to sell the furniture, pack up what she wanted to  
5 take, and sell the house. She had accomplished all this, and she was about to leave for D.C. when  
6 she got a call from her husband, telling her he wanted a divorce. And she came and talked to me,  
7 she said "I was a basket case, until I found this program at Bellevue Community College called  
8 Displaced Homemakers, and I went there and it's so great!" So we did the bill, based upon the facts  
9 that she had given us. By the time we ran the bill, this was several years after [her experience], and  
10 she had a job as a graphics designer for Boeing Company. She was a college graduate and had  
11 college credentials, but she had never worked outside of the home. And that really was the impetus  
12 to push [for the programs], and so now there's hope for women who lose their husbands, especially  
13 those whose husbands divorce them for a dolly. So they can become what they want to become,  
14 and [we] encourage them to do it. And what we did was to encourage the programs to bring in  
15 women advocates for law, medicine, nursing, dentistry, all these other things, and financial advisors  
16 and attorneys, which they do. They contribute their time to the workings of this program as well....

17

18 Trauma Care Legislation

19 Last year I got the trauma bill through, but it got cut back substantially by Mike Carrell, who's trying  
20 to make a name for himself. He damn near killed the bill. The bill called for a \$15 fee on car  
21 [purchases], because car [collisions] are responsible for about sixty percent of the trauma in the state  
22 of Washington. [An]other thirty percent is guns and bullets, and ten percent is other things. So it's  
23 very logical. I got the automobile association to agree to lobby for my bill. [A \$15 charge] wouldn't  
24 hurt anybody, it's a reasonable request I think. And he went for [a \$250 surcharge] on speeding

1 tickets. Well, speeding tickets, we don't get the money for local, city and county, those go to the  
2 [local jurisdictions]; [the state] only gets [revenue] from State Patrol tickets. My bill raised \$36  
3 million over a two-year period; his bill raised \$20 million over two years, which is not enough. But  
4 we finally ironed that out, but it was a bitter battle. . . . He rewrote the juvenile justice bill, and he  
5 screwed it up so badly – he didn't put any money in it! If you sponsor a bill, you put the money in it  
6 and let it fly.

7

### 8 Sprague Building Funding

9 I think it was the 1994 session when the Sprague building was being turned into the United Way  
10 building, and they needed about [\$750,000] to do it, and they asked me to sponsor legislation. And  
11 Art Wong was the chairman of the Capital Committee in the House, and so I said yes, I would. I  
12 put the amount right in the bill -- \$682,000 – and Art Wong said no. It was crazy, but we worked it  
13 and got it past the Senate in the budget, and then he had to back down. So we got \$682,000 for the  
14 Sprague building. In addition to that they were able to use the unused tax credits to sell them. Now  
15 I'd saved the tax credit [provision] the year before that, because Art Wong had tried to repeal the  
16 sunset on the credits that could be accrued. He was for it, I was against it; we sent bill after bill over  
17 to the House that would repeal the sunset, and he caught every one and killed them. So one day,  
18 toward the end of the session, I went to Senators [Alvin] Williams from Seattle, Ann Anderson from  
19 Bellingham, and [Patrick] McMullen from Skagit, so it [would] look like Skagit wanted it with the  
20 help of a Seattle person. I asked them to sponsor an amendment to hang on this bill, and they  
21 agreed. They sponsored the amendment, hung it on the bill, and it passed over to the House, and  
22 Art Wong said “this is the kind of bill you have to worry about”, but he didn't catch it, and his staff  
23 didn't tell him either. So we kept our mouths shut until the Governor signed it, because only the  
24 three of us knew. The Governor found out when his attorneys were checking the bills, and Art

1 Wong then found out and asked the Governor to veto the bill. But Mrs. Gardner was in Italy, and  
2 she found out, and she called her husband and said “don’t you *dare* veto that out!” And he didn’t!  
3 He laughs about it, even to this day. Anyway, the [people who owned the] Sprague building were  
4 able to sell their tax credits to Pierce County Medical for \$750,000, so they were actually able to get  
5 about \$1.5 million from my efforts.

6  
7 You’ve just got to keep thinking all the time. I usually don’t get credit for what I do, and I don’t  
8 care, because as long as you keep mum, and work with the people and try not to grab the headlines,  
9 you’ll be successful.

10

#### 11 WOMEN LEGISLATORS – AND OTHER CHANGES

12 If [Georgia Gardner] wins, that will be nineteen women and eight men [in the Senate Democratic  
13 Caucus]. Men don’t listen – they listen, but they don’t hear! That’s my interpretation anyway. And  
14 that is all the result of the few women that started in the Senate when there were no women [in  
15 1975]. That’s after the Equal Rights Amendment, which we were a part of, and the community  
16 property agreement, which has all changed, giving women the right to sign on a contract for a major  
17 investment. A man could sign away his wife’s [money] at any time without her signature. Women  
18 did not have credit in their own right, we did that in ’75, we established credit for women in their  
19 own right if they were in business.

20

21 We did the Equal Rights Amendment, and the credit was a big one. My hairdresser at the time, she  
22 had two shops and she bought a third shop in Puyallup, and she called in a sign painter to paint the  
23 sign on her door. And before he started to paint, he said “I’ll have to have your husband sign this.”  
24 And she said, “My husband has nothing to do with this. I have two shops, this is my third shop.”

1 The guy wouldn't do it, so she fired him. When she told me, I told her that the law said he couldn't  
2 do that anymore. So she called in another sign painter, and he did it. And that's a fact, I'll never  
3 forget it. She was an Oriental lady, and she was so angry. Her husband had a car repair service, and  
4 his was separate from hers.

5  
6 I was a sponsor of the Equal Rights Amendment, and I chaired the committee when the credit bill  
7 went through. In fact, a CPA who was a long-term member of the Legislature was on that  
8 committee – it was a nineteen member committee, a big committee, and the bill went out with the  
9 signature of every committee member on it – and he remarked that this was the best credit bill he'd  
10 ever seen as a CPA, it did everything it needed to do. It was developed by the women lawyers, a  
11 very good bill.

12  
13 The advent of all the new rules and regulations have occurred since the women have come over.  
14 We opened the Rules committee to the public. It's tough to make conference committees public,  
15 because we have to meet at such odd times, so it's almost impossible to do that. We invite the  
16 public, but no one knows when it's going to be, when we can get together. So it's pretty bad.

17  
18 But I remember when we opened the Rules committee to the public. It was all gloom and doom,  
19 that it wasn't going to work. In fact it was so secretive that in the senate, they had a little piece of  
20 paper about [three inch square], and on it, it said 'yes, no, yes, no, yes, no' in a round, so they'd circle  
21 the one they wanted and folded them up and tossed them in a little container in the middle of the  
22 table. They'd toss them in the middle of the table, and then the presiding officer, who was always  
23 the Lieutenant Governor, would say "Pass the biscuits." And his staff would count the votes. One  
24 time Senator [William] Gissberg, chair of Judiciary, had asked Reuben Knoblauch to vote for his bill,

1 and he told him what it was. So when the result was counted, they said “nine no’s”. And Senator  
2 Gissberg said to Reuben Knoblauch, “You promised to vote for my bill!” And he hadn’t even voted  
3 for it himself! So funny things happen. So anyway, we finally opened it up. I was in the House, and  
4 they had the Sergeant at Arms and the State Patrol escort us across the street to the House Office  
5 Building, because they were afraid someone would threaten us. They had one of the hearing rooms  
6 open, and we got in there and nobody was there. Everyone knew when and where it would be, and  
7 nobody bothered to come. It was incredible. So after that session, hardly anyone came to the Rules  
8 committee, it was just something to gripe about. But now it’s open, and anybody can go. But they  
9 can’t lobby from the chairs, and I doubt we’ll ever make the room any bigger than it is....

10

11 I think [the presence of women] has, and will [continue to] change the Legislature. There’s some  
12 things that won’t get done, because some members will not be carried kicking and screaming over  
13 the threshold of new ideas, while others will accommodate them. And I think we do have some  
14 people who will accommodate: Shirley Winsley is one that is very good, Senator Horn is good on  
15 some issues, Senator Prince.

16

17 I’ve been on the Health Care Committee forever, I chaired it when it was called [Health and Human  
18 Services]. I’ve chaired the Commerce Committee, and I’ve chaired the Financial Institutions and  
19 Insurance Committee. This time I’ll be vice-chair of Rules, and I would like to be vice-chair of  
20 Health, but I don’t know if I can get it. I fought hard for Pat Thibaudeau to [chair] that committee,  
21 because I thought she was most qualified to chair that committee. And I’ll be on Ways and Means.  
22 I could only serve on two committees last time, two committees and leadership. And I had to give  
23 up Ways & Means, [because] by giving up Ways and Means then I could be vice chair of Health and  
24 Long-Term Care, and on Rules. But Republicans would not appoint enough committee members to

1 offset numbers, so we could have appointments to committees. Republicans only wanted two  
2 committees; three is average for a [Senator], though some chairs only want one. I'd never had less  
3 than three until this last time, and it kinda bothered me, because I felt like I wasn't doing enough. I  
4 was listening to everybody, but everybody I talked to wanted, we couldn't do, mostly for  
5 money...there were some things that got done, but not a lot.

6

7 Juror Pay

8 One of the other things I remember when Slim Rasmussen was there, and the Senator from Yakima,  
9 Terry Woodall... and Slim Rasmussen had sponsored a bill that would increase the wages of jurors,  
10 and it got on the floor. Senator Rasmussen got up and gave his speech, he was sitting in the back  
11 row, and he explained why it was needed, that they weren't getting paid enough money, and that it  
12 was a crime the amount we offered jurors. And Senator Woodall was getting madder and madder  
13 by the minute, you could tell. He jumped up and stuffed his microphone in his [breast] pocket,  
14 because he always did that and then he would talk with his hands, and he was waving his hands, and  
15 he said "Yakima County cannot afford to pay their jurors any more. We don't have enough money  
16 to pay our jurors any more." And he said "Besides that, most of our jurors are women and they  
17 aren't doing anything anyway." He said it! In the record! He wouldn't dare do that today. And  
18 then Senator Rasmussen stood up looking real innocent with these big wide eyes and said, "I think  
19 that Senator Woodall has just impugned my motives, but I don't know how." These are the funny  
20 things that happened in the Legislature. These are bits and pieces of things, and I think that was  
21 before I was in the Legislature, I think that was the year before when I was lobbying, because I was  
22 sitting in the gallery and I almost fell out of the gallery!

23

1 When I first started, men would apologize for voting against a bill I sponsored. It was horrible!  
2 Now we can challenge each other any way we want to. It's more equal. You take it like it is now,  
3 it's the philosophy behind it all, and our philosophies, of course, are different. If I could find  
4 someone whose philosophy is not strong on a certain issue, of the other party, I go to them and ask  
5 them to be a sponsor on my bill. Because I know that because of their personal philosophy, they  
6 will be supportive, and their support can bring in others. And you know the things they won't  
7 touch. I had a bill that came out of Women in Government, which is a national organization [of  
8 women legislators], which was a disclosure bill for HMOs, what they will and won't take care of, and  
9 I asked Senator Wood to sponsor, and I became second sponsor. But now that she's lost [her  
10 reelection campaign], I'll take the bill back under my aegis.

11

### 12 Osteoporosis Proposals

13 And then I have two osteoporosis bills [for the 1999 session]. One of them is a simple little bill that  
14 allows the Department of Health to collect money from any outside source to educate women on  
15 osteoporosis and the fact that it can be stopped, it can be arrested, and there's medication that  
16 works. Before that, until three or four years ago, the only medication was hormones, and many  
17 women cannot take hormones, or choose not to. And now there's several items on the market that  
18 will control it, stop it, arrest it, and some will go back and correct a little bit, but not a lot. But they  
19 will stop it. But most of them have to have a bone density test first, but they have a test that they  
20 can do on the heel, and it costs \$35. And if it finds problems, they can go ahead and do [the more  
21 extensive test]. And we've found that women as young as thirty-five are beginning to develop  
22 osteoporosis, and they don't need to. That young. Normally it hits women about sixty, badly, and  
23 men about seventy. It's about fifty percent of the women and twenty percent of the men, and  
24 you've seen them, they're all stooped over. And the broken bones, the hospitalization, the nursing



1 homes that these people end up in, living a lesser quality of life, is not worth it. We can save money  
2 by being aware of these treatments. And one of the other bills mandates that they do the bone  
3 density test [on the heel]. One of the nature foods stores in Olympia has a program to do that, they  
4 charge \$25 for the test. So it's being made available, and I don't think it's too much to ask to make  
5 that a mandated benefit, because it's such a gruesome thought to get that. So that's one I'll sponsor,  
6 I'll try. I think I'll change it from osteoporosis to women's health issues, to make it broader. I think  
7 a lot of pharmaceuticals would donate, they compete with one another, but it's not lobbying,  
8 because [the Department of Health] can't pass laws anyway. There should be rules and regulations  
9 written for that, about who they can and can't take money from, but I think that some of our  
10 women's groups would probably contribute money to the state for education....

11

## 12 **CURRENT STATE OF POLITICS**

13 Those are some of the good things that have happened. The good things are few and far between,  
14 though, especially with a loose majority because some of them are extreme right-wingers, some are  
15 moderate and some are in-between, so there was never any gelling or coming together of ideas.

16 There was very little possibility of any Democrat voting for any Republican bill.

17

18 [There really is a sense of honor among legislators]. I think it holds true, except with a great portion  
19 of the religious right. I think they are so imbued with the abortion issue that they will never change.

20 We lost a lot of them in the last election, they were not able to sell there wares anymore. So the  
21 Senate is now controlled by the Democrats, who by and large are not exactly liberal, we're probably  
22 moderate, but at least we're rational.

23

1 I didn't pay for any of my elections, I had fundraisers. And I've been told for several years, you  
2 never put your own money out for an election, you don't dare. You can't do it, because you need to  
3 have people who will support your nomination and your eventual election. So I've never put one  
4 penny into a campaign. My first primary was going to cost \$1300, and the general was going to cost  
5 \$2300. We raised that, and it came out exactly right. And there was none of these \$100,000 jobs for  
6 a \$28,000 a year job, or for a \$3200 job. I spent just about that on my [first] election, \$3200. Other  
7 election were a little more or less, but always [with an eye to] the initial payback. These \$300,000  
8 and \$400,000 campaigns leave me cold, because it tells me that someone has accepted money to do  
9 some special favor.

10

11 I do think politics has been changed by the money, I surely do. And I think the Disclosure Act  
12 probably brought part of it out. We did a disclosure act in the House while I was still there that I  
13 thought was very good. It said you could raise as much money as you wanted, but you had to  
14 identify it. And then future Legislatures and the courts agreed that you could only raise so much  
15 money, but that was thrown out as unconstitutional. So you can raise as much money as you want,  
16 but you have to say where it comes from, though there are ways of getting around that.

17

18 You know, the Linda Smith proposal that was an initiative got around that, by denying the labor  
19 movement from putting in any money, except \$575 for the general election, ... but business could  
20 put in anything they wanted to. It's a bad bill. She is a wicked person, and I don't say that about  
21 many people. She's the only one that comes to mind as truly wicked. Her word is no good. She  
22 took me on in the Legislature. We had agreed on a position, and then she reneged, and she got up  
23 and made a speech about how good it would be. And I got up and suggested that she had reneged

1 on our agreement, and I said, "Not only am I not voting for this bill, I ask everyone in the Senate to  
2 vote against this bill." She lost. See, nobody could trust her, ever.

3  
4 Would [I] do it again? Sure, if I had the chance, but I just took a chance. I knew I liked to lobby,  
5 I'd probably be retired by now if I were still lobbying. But I've enjoyed my life, and I like what I'm  
6 doing. I love [this job], I love it. I keep thinking I'm not going to run again, but I don't know what  
7 I'll do when the time comes, in two more years. I'm seventy-eight years old, and I feel it, I really do.  
8 I can still do it because I like it, but if I weren't totally in love with what I'm doing, I would get out.  
9 I'll be eighty when I get through [this term]. I don't know how I'll feel, but I love what I'm doing  
10 and I think I'm doing it right, at least that's my opinion. I get things done that need to be done, I  
11 don't tackle what I can't handle.

12

13

[END]