

Paula Short

Scheduler and Executive Assistant, U.S. Representative Nancy Pelosi of California

**Oral History Interview
Final Edited Transcript**

June 29, 2011

Office of the Historian
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

“I remember it was scary coming back. Things were definitely, the feel, everything was just completely different. You know, the way that they started setting up the perimeters and more security for people coming in and it was just more than I had ever experienced. At that point I had been on the Hill for maybe about 15, 16 years at that point and although I had seen like a lot of changes, especially after the police officers were shot [in 1998], this just had a completely different feel. They were checking things more, they were looking at you differently. It just was different.”

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Project Abstract

To commemorate the events of September 11, 2001, the Office of the House Historian conducted a series of interviews with former Members and staff of the U.S. House of Representatives. This collection of oral histories provides a multi-layered narrative of the events on Capitol Hill that day, from the morning floor proceedings, to the evacuation of the Capitol and House Office Buildings, to the press conference and impromptu gathering on the Capitol steps that evening.

These accounts reveal how the House responded to the challenges facing the nation in the weeks and months following the attack. Interviewees describe the return to work on September 12, the President's address to a Joint Session on September 20, and the immediate changes in the legislative schedule. Some recall the implementation of new security measures, including restrictions on the mail in response to the subsequent anthrax scare. Several interviewees shed light on the role of Member offices in recovery and support efforts in the regions most affected by the violence. Individually, each interview offers insight into the long-term procedural changes that fundamentally altered the daily workings of the House. Together, the project's collective perspective illuminates the way this dramatic event transformed the nation, from Capitol Hill to congressional districts.

Editing Practices

In preparing interview transcripts for publication, the editors sought to balance several priorities:

- As a primary rule, the editors aimed for fidelity to the spoken word and the conversational style in accord with generally accepted oral history practices.
- The editors made minor editorial changes to the transcripts in instances where they believed such changes would make interviews more accessible to readers. For instance, excessive false starts and filler words were removed when they did not materially affect the meaning of the ideas expressed by the interviewee.
- In accord with standard oral history practices, interviewees were allowed to review their transcripts, although they were encouraged to avoid making substantial editorial revisions and deletions that would change the conversational style of the transcripts or the ideas expressed therein.
- The editors welcomed additional notes, comments, or written observations that the interviewees wished to insert into the record and noted any substantial changes or redactions to the transcript.
- Copy-editing of the transcripts was based on the standards set forth in *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

The first reference to a Member of Congress (House or Senate) is underlined in the oral history transcript. For more information about individuals who served in the House or Senate, please refer to the online *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, <http://bioguide.congress.gov> and the “People Search” section of the History, Art & Archives website, <http://history.house.gov>.

For more information about the U.S. House of Representatives oral history program contact the Office of House Historian at (202) 226-1300, or via email at history@mail.house.gov.

Citation Information

When citing this oral history interview, please use the format below:

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Interviewer Biography

Kathleen Johnson is the Manager of Oral History for the Office of the Historian, U.S. House of Representatives. She earned a B.A. in history from Columbia University, where she also played basketball for four years, and holds two master's degrees from North Carolina State University in education and public history. In 2004, she helped to create the House's first oral history program, focusing on collecting the institutional memory of Members and staff. She co-authored two books: *Women in Congress: 1917–2006* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006) and *Black Americans in Congress: 1870–2007* (GPO, 2008). Before joining the Office of the Historian, she worked as a high school history teacher and social studies curriculum consultant.

—PAULA SHORT—
SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

JOHNSON: This is Kathleen Johnson, the Office of the House Historian. The date is June 29, 2011, and we're in the House Recording Studio. Today I'm here with Paula Short, the former executive assistant and scheduler for Congressman David [Edward] Bonior and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi. We're here today to discuss her memories of September 11, 2001, and also the anthrax scares that took place later that year. To begin today, can you describe some of your memories from the morning of September 11, 2001?

SHORT: I remember it was an absolutely gorgeous day. I had just started my job the day before in Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's office, and, for the first time in many years, I was in the Rayburn parking garage trying to find my spot. And I finally found it, went upstairs. I shared an office with the chief of staff, and we had scheduled Mrs. Pelosi for a bunch of meetings that day. I checked the schedule to see where she might be, and I was trying to find her to see where she was because we needed to make an adjustment on the schedule. That's when somebody said to me in the office that I had called, "Isn't it terrible what happened in New York?" And I said, "We don't have a TV on." It was just a day that we hadn't turned it on. And she said, "Put the TV on, and you'll see." So I did, and it was just about that time that the second plane actually went in to the Towers.

JOHNSON: And what did you do from that point?

SHORT: The chief of staff and I were, we were just trying to figure out what to do. We were trying to find Mrs. Pelosi and get her back to the office. It wasn't too much longer after that that we said we need to get the staff out of here, let's just send them home. So and he stood up from his chair, and we were on

the far end of Rayburn overlooking HHS and Bartholdi Park. And he stood up, and he looked out the window, and he said, "Oh my gosh, Paula, look what they did to the Pentagon." And we could just see the plumes of black smoke coming up. He said, "Let's just get everybody out of here." So we did. We went back and told everybody that they needed to leave, just get home and get home safely. So then he and I just stayed until we could find Mrs. Pelosi, get her back to the office, and get her safely on her way.

JOHNSON: What were the Capitol Police doing at that point? Did you see them during this period?

SHORT: I did not see them. I was kind of, our office was up on the fourth floor of Rayburn, so I was really just upstairs, trying to coordinate, find out where she is, see if we could get her back, get her out of the building. So and, in the meantime, my old office called, Mr. Bonior's office. He was the Democratic Whip at the time. And I left his office on Friday, the Friday before, that was my last day in his office. The person who took over doing his scheduling, I called her, and I said, "Have you got Mr. Bonior out of the building?" She just started crying and saying, "I can't find the detail, can't find them, the security detail." So I told her, I said, "Just get him out of the building, and I will find them." Because I still had those numbers in my head. So I just kept dialing and dialing and dialing and finally they answered their car phone, and they said we're pulling up now. And I could hear everything outside, like the sirens going and people running around and yelling. At that point, I heard them say, "Just get in," and they shoved him. And I heard the car door slamming, and a lot of the staff popped in as well. I just heard people yelling, "Go, go, go." At that point, the phone went dead. So I didn't know what happened to them after that until somebody called me later and said where they were.

JOHNSON: Can you talk about what communication was like on that day? You said that you were calling, so, at this point, did people have Blackberrys or pagers?

SHORT: I seem to remember it was like very early on in the Blackberry or cell phone stage. I was calling from my desk on the fourth floor of Rayburn in Mrs. Pelosi's office, and I was calling Mr. Bonior's car, so where the security detail was. I really had no problems at that point trying to connect with anybody. Later in the day, when I was trying to get to my family and everything, I was calling them from my phone while I was sitting in traffic, and I could not get anybody for an incredibly long time. I know I was trying to also find other members of Mrs. Pelosi's staff as well as Mr. Bonior's staff, just to see where everybody was, and I could not get any connections whatsoever. So it took a good couple of hours.

JOHNSON: So, at this point, Congressman Bonior has safely left the Capitol?

SHORT: Right.

JOHNSON: If we go back to Congresswoman Pelosi, what was happening with her?

SHORT: She was, I'm not sure where she went between what happened and when she came back to the office. When she got back to the office, she was being escorted by a couple of Capitol Hill Police officers, and, when she got into the office, she was like, "Okay, everybody go home, I'm going to stay." We were like, "No, no, no." She was running for Whip at the time, and we said, "When you win, we want you to actually be there." She insisted that we leave, but, about that time, the police officers said, "Mrs. Pelosi, we're closing the building, you need to leave." So she left along with Congresswoman Anna [Georges] Eshoo, and we were told that she was going home. But we later found out that—she was on the Intelligence Committee at that time—that they had gathered everybody from the Intelligence Committee and taken

them to a location. I'm not sure if it was the secret location—if they went to another location or not. But her Intelligence staffer was with her at that point, and she called me later that night and said, "I was with her until after they sang ["God Bless America"] on the Capitol steps, and she went home from there."

JOHNSON: You didn't leave the Capitol complex until Congresswoman Pelosi left, is that correct?

SHORT: Yes.

JOHNSON: About what time was that, do you remember?

SHORT: I've been trying to remember, but I'm going to say it was maybe around noon, somewhere around in there. It was—the time to me is just gone. But I just remember waiting on her trying to get her to go. We waited for a while for her. We just closed all the doors and waited for her to come back. So and then trying to get her to leave. She wanted to stay. The police said no.

JOHNSON: Was she in a meeting at the time?

SHORT: When it all happened? Yes, she was in a meeting with another Member of Congress. She was making her rounds. She was going to Members of Congress because she was in the middle of her Whip race.

JOHNSON: When you finally were able to leave Rayburn, what do you remember about what it looked like outside?

SHORT: The one thing I, like I said, I parked in Rayburn, and I came out, and I could go the way I normally go. Normally I go out, take a left, and go right over across the South Capitol Street Bridge. I couldn't do that. They made me go right, and I had to make a big circle around the entire Capitol complex. I just

remember all the police officers lined up, like every two feet or so there was a police officer standing there guarding like the Capitol grounds, the Capitol complex. And I remember at one point sitting in traffic on the South Capitol Street Bridge. I finally had gotten to my dad, and I had to tell him to hold on because all the sirens, there were sirens like going into town. I was listening to the radio, and they were talking about where they thought that the other attack had occurred downtown, at the State Department.

JOHNSON: That was one of the rumors that had spread.

SHORT: Yes. I figured that's where they were all going. I remember the police officers just lined all around the Capitol complex, and I'd never seen that before. And it was just really kind of, that's when it kind of hit home that something—you knew something terrible had happened, but to see that, as they were protecting everything, and it just was really kind of scary.

JOHNSON: You had mentioned that Mrs. Pelosi was on the steps that night when, on September 11th, when the Members met for their impromptu press conference, and then they sang "God Bless America." Did you get to watch that on TV?

SHORT: I did.

JOHNSON: What are your memories of that night?

SHORT: At first I was really scared and nervous. It was like please just get away from there because I just thought that things were going to keep happening. But I also remember it being very moving, and I wished I actually could have been there to take part, to be there. But I live very far away, so there was no way. But yes, I thought it was appropriate, it was the right thing to do.

JOHNSON: The House was back in session the next day on the 12th. What was it like for you coming back to the Capitol?

SHORT: Actually, I didn't come back that day. They asked everybody to stay home at least for that day until we could figure everything out. I think the chief of staff was with her and probably her Intelligence staffer was with her.

JOHNSON: You came back then on the 13th?

SHORT: I came back, yes, the day after.

JOHNSON: What do you remember about being back at the Capitol so soon after this dramatic event had taken place and knowing that the Capitol might have been a target?

SHORT: I remember it was scary coming back. Things were definitely—the feel, everything was just completely different. You know, the way that they started setting up the perimeters and more security for people coming in, and it was just more than I had ever experienced. At that point, I had been on the Hill for maybe about 15, 16 years at that point, and although I had seen like a lot of changes, especially after the police officers were shot [in 1998], this just had a completely different feel. They were checking things more, they were looking at you differently. It just was different. It's kind of hard to describe. After driving in all those years and being treated one way and then you drive in the next day, and it's like completely different.

JOHNSON: What was the mood like in Mrs. Pelosi's office that week?

SHORT: It was very, very—it was somber. People just—we were in shock. We just didn't know like what was going to happen from there on out. We, at the

same time, were trying to think, she was running for Whip and what that meant for us as far as trying to keep things on track.

But at the same time, we had this incredible thing that we were dealing with where we lost so many people, our security was threatened. It was—we were just trying to cope with like everything that was going on at that time. So it was a lot for, and we had a small staff at that time. I think here in DC, I think there might have been like seven or eight people. And everybody was young except for the chief of staff and I. Everybody else was very young, so trying to keep them calm as well.

JOHNSON: Did people look to you because you had been an employee for the House for a while and maybe just as a source of strength or maybe even for advice because you had seen other events, not like this but other events that had happened?

SHORT: Yes, I think so. The chief of staff for Mrs. Pelosi at the time had been on the Hill even longer than I had. So and he was very good. He held everybody's hand when it needed to be held, and, at the same time, we knew we had certain things that we needed to get done. Because we also had constituents that needed things. One of those planes was headed towards San Francisco, so we were trying to figure out if we had constituents on there, if we needed to deal with the families. So there was a lot that we were all dealing with, and I think to have the chief of staff and me there, who've been around for a while, I think it helped them a lot.

JOHNSON: I know it was almost 10 years ago, and this might be hard to recall, but do you have a specific example of something that Mrs. Pelosi might have done in the weeks afterwards, specifically, like you said, with her constituents back home in California?

SHORT: Oh, boy. Off the top of my head I can't remember anything that she did specifically for people in San Francisco.

JOHNSON: As her scheduler, how much did that affect what she was doing, her day to day responsibilities, the attacks?

SHORT: I think, at first, it had a lot, it had a huge effect on what she was doing. And then I kind of think everybody, I think everybody on the Hill sort of felt this way, it was best to get back into what we were all there to do, which was serving the constituents and doing our jobs here. So I think it was pretty fast that everybody kind of got back into the swing of what we were here to do. The first couple of days, obviously, canceling all her appointments, not being able to get her a flight back to San Francisco, those types of things. Once we got through the initial phase of what had happened, I think everybody just felt like we need to get back to work here—we need to do what we're supposed to do.

JOHNSON: Did her office receive more phone calls either from constituents or from the public or the press, basically wanting to know what her individual response was going to be or urging the House to do something in response to the attacks?

SHORT: I remember getting more phone calls. I don't remember it being an overwhelming number of more than what we normally get. And the press, I'm sure that there was quite a bit going on, but I don't recall like it being crazy.

JOHNSON: Across the country and on Capitol Hill, there were many commemorative and patriotic displays to try to honor the victims from September 11th. Do you remember anything like that at the Capitol?

SHORT: Other than them singing that night, I really can't think of any.

JOHNSON: Some people talked about flags that were hung in various places in the Capitol or ribbons or pins that people wore. I don't know if you remember anything like that in Mrs. Pelosi's office or something that you might have done.

SHORT: There was a point where, I don't remember if it was this instance or not, but that we did all have pins, flag pins. But I don't remember if it was like tied with this event or if it was another event in my head. But I do remember us all wearing flag pins, yes.

JOHNSON: The day after the attacks you said you didn't come into the Capitol at all. Do you know anyone that took part in the candlelight vigil? It was mostly staff, Capitol staff that were down by the Capitol Reflecting Pool. Do you remember anyone that participated in that or talked about that event?

SHORT: I think a couple of folks from Mr. Bonior's office that lived on the Hill. I seem to remember them going to that with—I think there were maybe two people who went to that.

JOHNSON: And you talked about how you were in this transition period between Mr. Bonior's office and Mrs. Pelosi's office. How much contact did you have with Mr. Bonior's office, and can you talk about maybe how his staff reacted to the attacks?

SHORT: I had a lot of contact with them. They told me that whenever the second plane hit that—and they were trying to get Mr. Bonior out of the building, two of his top people went with him. Everybody else, they said they just ran out of the building and went across the street and stood in front of the Library of Congress. And they said that they apparently had taken Mr.

Bonior to police headquarters first, and they said that once they got, once somebody had contacted them and said he was safely at police headquarters, the staff decided to go to this one person's place who lived on the Hill just three or four blocks away. Then they called the chief of staff, actually went with the younger kids to this person's apartment, and then they called her and told her that they had taken him to the secure location. Somewhere in there he went to his apartment. They said yes, he went to his apartment, but I don't know what happened.

But he eventually was, apparently, at the secure location with one of our staff members. So, I think, at that point, everybody was able to kind of go home, so they all disbanded at that point. I talked to them later that night when I could finally get a line just to make sure that everybody was fine. And I'm not sure if they came to work the next morning, but I remember talking to the person who had taken my job because we were trying to figure out what we needed to do with his appointments and things like that. It was just her second day. She was my assistant before, but it was just her second day and to have it be like just gone. She was panicking, so I spent a lot of time with her on the phone and helping her.

JOHNSON: Did that remain for the weeks after as well?

SHORT: Yes. Definitely.

JOHNSON: What are your personal memories of Mrs. Pelosi in the weeks after the attacks on 9/11?

SHORT: I remember her—she was very concerned, obviously, with what was happening. She was supposed to go—I think she was supposed to go home, and I just remember not being able to get her home, obviously. But, with her

staying here in the office, she was trying to go around and talk to people and just be there if people wanted to chat. But she also had a lot to do because, like I said, she was on the Intelligence Committee. She was with them a big part of the time. They had meetings. They were up on the fourth floor of the Capitol. So there were times where she would go up there for hours, and we just wouldn't see her at all or hear from her. Her staffer, her Intelligence Committee staffer, would call us and just say, "They're doing XYZ, you're not going to see us for a while." And, of course, that meant besides what had happened, canceling all the appointments.

JOHNSON: I wanted to just go back to some of the, some discussion about the evacuation on September 11th. With Mr. Bonior's office or Mrs. Pelosi's office, do you know if there was an evacuation plan that was in place before 9/11?

SHORT: No, not that I remember. And that was, I think that was the scary thing.

JOHNSON: Were you involved in the contingency plans if something like this were to ever happen again for Mrs. Pelosi's office or what the office would do in case of an emergency?

SHORT: Yes, definitely.

JOHNSON: Without talking specifics, can you just describe a little bit about the process and how much time that might have taken for your work, and what you were doing for that process?

SHORT: Figuring out like what we were going to do?

JOHNSON: Yes.

SHORT: Time-wise I don't, I mean, we started immediately, like trying to figure out like who was going to do what, who was going to make sure staff was out of the building, who was going to take care of Mrs. Pelosi. Making sure we all have a list of everybody's home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, desk phone numbers. We just tried to do that all right away, so I would say probably once we got back to work. I'm going to say we probably spent a good couple of days trying to get that all organized and who was going to be doing what.

JOHNSON: Did you ever feel that working at the Capitol might be too dangerous after the 9/11 attacks and then also after the anthrax scare? Was there a thought that ever crossed your mind that you just didn't want to be here anymore?

SHORT: I had days where it was like, I'm not sure I want to be here. Just having people talk about things that could happen, seeing all the extra security when the President [George W. Bush] was around or one of the dignitaries that came, did a Joint Session. Sometimes things were tighter than other events, and there were just sometimes you just say, "I'm not sure it's worth it." Because one thing that Mr. Bonior's staff kept saying was if it wasn't for the people on Flight 93, the building might not be here, and they might not be here because they were up on the third floor with no evacuation plan in place, you know. So you just keep thinking of those things that, it's true, there's a very good, there was a very good possibility if it wasn't for those people on that plane that that building would not be standing there right now. And with the people on the third floor with no warning system. It's kind of, it's scary.

JOHNSON: Before moving to anthrax—I wanted to ask you a few questions about the anthrax period at the Capitol—I wanted to ask if you remembered anything about the Joint Session that took place on September 20th. So this is when

President Bush came down to speak to Congress. If you watched the Joint Session or if you just have any memories of people discussing it.

SHORT: I remember I wanted to go home. That was one time where I did not want to be anywhere near that building. So I just, it was too soon afterwards, and I just, I had just thought if they really wanted to do something that this was a good chance. So it was the first time everybody was gathered inside that building. It was kind of, it was scary, so I remember going home and watching it from home. And I remember being very relieved when it was over, and I saw everybody filing out.

JOHNSON: With the anthrax scare, this took place a little bit, about a month after the September 11th attacks. I guess the first thing I wanted to ask you was how much this disrupted the work in your office?

SHORT: Well, our office was closed for a very long time, and I don't remember exactly how long. And they told us that they were checking her mail and stuff coming in a little more because she was running for, like we said, Whip at the time. She gets a lot of hate mail anyway, so and I remember them telling us that they were checking her mail a little more carefully. So our office was closed longer than a lot of the other offices—I'd say the bulk of the other offices. So and staff could actually not work. They gave us a little room in the Capitol, tucked away, and it was Mrs. Pelosi, the chief of staff, her LD [legislative director], and me. We were the ones who were going in and out of that office. Her Intelligence staffer was up in the Intelligence staff, but the other staff, we just told them to stay at home, and we would call them back whenever we needed them, so when they could get back in the building.

JOHNSON: On the heels of 9/11 and having to evacuate the building and with all the security that you talked about, did you experience or other people in Mrs. Pelosi's office have any kind of emotional fatigue at this point?

SHORT: I know I didn't. I was just, I think I was still like in a state of shock. I realized what had happened, but I knew I also needed to just keep moving, that I had to take care of her, I had a job to do. So I think it was down the road a bit, not like right after, but I think it was down the road a bit when we were finally able to take a breath where I seem to remember. But the other folks, I don't remember anybody being, like having any major reactions to what had happened.

JOHNSON: Was there anything that you remember either specifically in your office or throughout the House for staff members that might have just been in need of help at this point because of the attacks and then also because of anthrax, and they were fearful or depressed or having some sort of emotional fatigue?

SHORT: I had heard of other people that they just said they were going to leave the job, or in terms they were leaving, they didn't want to be anywhere near here. They thought it was, that it was time to go home, or switch jobs. Nobody that I actually knew, it was just all hearsay that you had heard people saying they're not going to take the chance anymore, but they were going to find something else. But I guess that was, I can't say it was anybody that I knew.

JOHNSON: From what you recall, were there any major changes in office procedures as a result of either the 9/11 attacks or the anthrax scare?

SHORT: The mail, the mail being scanned. That's the biggest one. Scanning every piece of mail that comes into this complex, which is huge, and it taking forever. At first it took a very, very long time for the mail to get caught up because it was new to everybody doing the scanning. So I remember people,

telling people—I mean, we're still telling people it takes a while—but I think back then we were telling people if you mailed something on one day we might see it a month or so down the road because it just needed to go through all the process, which we were all very happy about. It was not good for some constituent services, but we all knew that it needed to be done.

JOHNSON: As far as you know, did the office do anything different to try to reach out to constituents since mail delivery was so difficult at that point?

SHORT: I can't remember what we would have done. I can't think of anything how we would have done that, so.

JOHNSON: You talked about security and the increased security. After the anthrax scares or just in the months following later in the year or beginning in the next year, did you notice anything else with the security, anything different that developed over time?

SHORT: Things evolved a lot of different ways. And the security was very, very tight, like right afterwards. It stayed tight, but, you know, they just set up different procedures depending on what building you went in to. I mean, the Capitol is obviously a lot more tight trying to get in there, but I do remember the cops starting to use the gloves. They were definitely checking everything. Before they would check things but not as well. I mean, they were checking everything. A lot of the buildings did not have the magnetometers until then either. The police roaming the halls a little more frequently, so I remember that, and the police cars. And eventually, all the road things going up, being sealed off around the complex. So when you go to the garage, they check your trunk. Before, a lot of times, they never checked the trunk. So needing your ID more frequently. Just roaming around, making sure you always had your ID. There were plenty of times that when I first started working down

here you had your ID, but you didn't have to carry it with you. After these events, you had to carry, your ID has to be on you, carried with you. So you go in and out of a building you have to have it.

JOHNSON: Did you feel the increased security hindered your job at all or might have somehow interfered with the work that was being done for the House?

SHORT: I don't think so, no. I mean, people used to complain at first that there's long lines. And once they figured out that staff could actually go around it because you had your ID and just the people coming in the buildings actually need to go through security, let staff go ahead because we have to come in to work, that kind of eased up. But I know most people say we're just very grateful that they're all down there—they're at these doors protecting all of us who work there and doing the best that they can. Because anybody could walk into those buildings with anything.

JOHNSON: I just had a few more questions to end today. The first one is with your memories of September 11th if there were one or maybe two visuals that you have in your mind that you think, no matter how much time passes, will stick with you, what do you think those would be?

SHORT: One is whenever we saw the smoke coming up from the Pentagon. I have that vision of the window in our office looking out over Bartholdi Park and in the distance just like black smoke just billowing up. The other are the police officers just lined around that building where normally people just walked and visited, and just to see them shoulder to shoulder, protecting that entire complex was, I will never forget that.

JOHNSON: How did you feel about the recent news with the killing of Osama bin Laden?

SHORT: I was very happy. I did not—I was not fond of the celebrating and things that were going on. I just did not think that that was appropriate, but obviously very, very happy that he's gone. I don't think the threat is gone. So I think there's probably other people out there that want to do bad, so we still need to be on our toes.

JOHNSON: It's been almost 10 years since the attacks on September 11th. Do you feel like you have any sort of different perspective now that time has passed?

SHORT: As far as?

JOHNSON: Perspective of the events and then also the effect that it might have had on the House.

SHORT: No, I don't think so. I mean what happened that day and how everybody reacted and then they realized that we were all here—we serve the public, and we're all here for a reason. And we all have to get back to work and do what we're supposed to do. I don't think that's going to change no matter what happens. I think the people that are here realize that that's why they're here.

JOHNSON: Looking back, do you think that there's, is there anything that you wish your office and Mrs. Pelosi's office or the House in general, anything you wish that they could have done differently in response to the attacks on September 11th?

SHORT: That we could have done differently? Other than wishing that it didn't happen, and everybody didn't have to deal with it, but I think that's a bigger thing that we really have no control over. One thing that came from that is that we, I think we all understand that this is now, it's out there, and we need to be prepared for it. And as one person kept saying, practice saves lives and

makes things go smoothly, and that's just what everybody needs to keep doing.

JOHNSON:

The last question that I had for you today was just the effect that you think September 11th may have had on your life. How do you think that it's impacted your life?

SHORT:

Well, same thing for, I'm just going along enjoying my life and having fun, and I realized—I'm from Pennsylvania—and every time I go back home to Pittsburgh, I go by that site. And I see the sign, and it just reminds me every single time I make that trip of what happened. And I'm a little more leery when I fly, when I travel a lot, when I take the train or fly. Just you look around, and they tell you to be observant. And then it's like, am I really going to notice anything? I don't know. And as far as my job up here, I don't think it had any effect on me. My job I just, like I said, I was here to do a job, and once everything, once the shock kind of wore off and realized we needed to keep working, it's what we did.