Betsy Wright Hawkings
Chief of Staff, Representative Christopher Shays of Connecticut

Oral History Interview
Final Edited Transcript
April 18, 2016

Office of the Historian
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

". . . [W]hen you become a chief of staff, you go from just having to worry about policy to having to worry about financial management and how we're managing the schedule and the district office operation and in sort of a macro sense, the political stuff. So, it was just kind of more. And I think that's part of the reason why I stayed, too, is that I was always learning. I had a job that I felt made a difference. I was being rewarded at a pretty rapid rate, and he was giving me the flexibility to try to be the mom that I wanted to be."

Betsy Wright Hawkings

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Abstract

Betsy Wright Hawkings worked as a chief of staff for nearly 25 years on Capitol Hill. In this oral history, Hawkings describes her swift rise in the office of Republican Congressman Christopher Shays of Connecticut and the lessons she learned from a career focused on developing leadership strategies for congressional offices. Hawkings describes the way cooperation and compassion united the small number of women in office leadership positions in the early 1990s. She highlights the challenges facing working mothers and the proliferation of opportunities for women in congressional offices over the course of her career.

Hawkings' first-hand account of the pivotal 1994 election and the "Contract with America" adds a unique perspective on the changes within the Republican Party during the 1990s. She developed a strong connection with Shays' Connecticut district—which included her hometown—and was instrumental in mobilizing resources to assist residents affected by the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Throughout this interview, Hawkings provides insight into the provision of constituent services, office management, congressional employment practices, and the challenges of implementing a bipartisan legislative agenda.

Biography

In 1988, Congressman Christopher Shays of Connecticut hired Betsy Wright Hawkings as a legislative assistant focusing on constituent services. One year later, she became legislative director and, in 1990, she was promoted to chief of staff. Her rapid rise was evidence of her leadership and organizational skills, which she applied over the course of nearly 25 years working on Capitol Hill.

Hawkings was born in 1963 and grew up in southwestern Connecticut, where her father was actively involved in local Republican politics. Her first political experience was as a high school volunteer for the George H.W. Bush campaign during the 1980 Republican presidential primaries. Encouraged by her mother to attend college, she financed her degree from Williams College in Massachusetts by working in the banking industry in Manhattan between semesters.

As chief of staff for Congressman Shays, Hawkings was one of a small number of women who held office management positions in the early 1990s. She developed and applied her leadership abilities, organizational acumen, and strategic political skills. She also worked to address some of the issues facing working mothers trying to balance work and family life.

Hawkings experienced the Republican transition to the majority after the 1994 election and the implementation of the "Contract with America." After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the World Trade Center—which resulted in the death of more than 80 constituents from Shays' district—she spearheaded the effort to connect the families of victims with resources and supported the congressional investigation of the attacks.

Hawkings' management skills were influential beyond her office. In 1996, she started working part-time for Congressman Shays so that she could care for her children. From 1996 to 1998, she was also deputy director of the Congressional Management Foundation, producing manuals on effective procedures for new Members organizing their congressional offices. The policy manual she created for Shays' congressional office also served as a model for her colleagues in other Member offices. After Shays' unsuccessful reelection bid in 2008, Hawkings brought her leadership skills to three other congressional offices as chief of staff until she left Capitol Hill in 2015.

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.

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— BETSY WRIGHT HAWKINGS —
A CENTURY OF WOMEN IN CONGRESS

MURPHY: This is Mike Murphy in the House Recording Studio on April 18th, 2016. Today we're happy to have Betsy Wright Hawkings join us for an interview for the Women in Congress Oral History Project. Thanks for joining us.

HAWKINGS: Thanks for having me.

MURPHY: So I wanted to start with your story before you arrived in Washington. Where did you grow up?

HAWKINGS: So, I grew up in southwest Connecticut, Fairfield County. My dad was very involved in politics; he was the head of the Young Republicans. [I] went to high school and college in Massachusetts and worked in New York for a little while after college and, actually, during college—that was how I paid my way through college, was by working in New York—so that was a lot of back and forth. And moved to D.C. in January of 1987.

MURPHY: When you were growing up in Connecticut, did you have an early interest in politics?

HAWKINGS: Yes, it was definitely something that we thought about in our house. It was principally my dad who openly thought about it. I learned later that my mother thought about it, too; it was just his voice that was the larger voice. He was the head of the Young Republicans in our area and had a lot of opinions, and was always very involved in various campaigns. I learned later that my mother also—one thing about my mom was that she really taught me in a very subtle way from an early age that you can sort of do whatever you want, and that was I think, in retrospect, a function of the fact that she

actually had a dad who sort of said, "No, I'm not sending you east to college. You're not going to do anything but get married after college so why am I going to spend that money? You're going to go to the state school." I mean, this was an actual conversation. And she was very subtle but clear about the fact that I could do whatever I wanted. So, he provided the North Star, but she provided the confidence, I think.

MURPHY: So, he was active [in politics] but not an elected official?

HAWKINGS: He was not an elected official. He was an official of the local party organization and was active as a volunteer in campaigns.

MURPHY: And were you particularly inspired by an issue or person or a campaign? Or was it just a general immersion in politics?

HAWKINGS: So, well, there are a couple of interesting stories, one that I like to tell was . . . So, I grew up during the Vietnam War, and again, it was something that was very, very openly discussed in our house. It was the late '60s, early '70s, as I was sort of getting more cognizant about issues, and my father's father had served in World War I, and Dad had served, not in Korea but in the military right around the time of the Korean War, and he was very pro-intervention in Vietnam. And I have a clear memory—two clear memories. One is I was sitting in church when I was probably six or seven, and I don't really remember being that aware of what the minister was preaching about, but there was this moment when my father stood us up—and we were pretty near the front of the church—stood us up and said, "We're leaving" and walked and marched us out down the aisle during the middle of the sermon. And I remember turning to my mother and saying, "What just happened there?" And she said, "Well, that minister is preaching against the

Vietnam War, saying it's un-American." So, that was it, and we didn't go back to that church ever, and this had been where we were all baptized, and that was kind of an interesting experience.

Another one was my father—I remember Dad coming home, it was right around the same time—I can't place one [event] versus the other—but I remember Dad coming home from a YGOP [Young Republicans] meeting one night and sort of all ruffled, not physically ruffled up but just, you know, all charged up and saying to my mother that this particular newly elected Senator from our state who was a good eight or nine inches taller than my dad—my dad was 5'9"—and this Senator [Lowell Palmer Weicker, Jr.] was [a] very tall, imposing figure. And Dad was so outraged that this Republican Senator had been speaking out at their YGOP meeting against the Vietnam War, that he had gotten into it with him and had ended up taking a swing at the guy, which given the eight or nine inches differential between their heights, was particularly interesting and maybe tells you more about how I lasted in politics this long. {laughter}

But, yes, that was another story where I thought it was a little, sort of, appalling on one level, but on another . . . Fortunately, this guy was like . . . I think the guy just basically put his hand on my father's head and let my father swing and miss. {laughter} He knew he didn't have anything to worry about, but it was this model on some level of "You fight for what you believe in." And that was an example that when we were little, my dad tried to set, I think.

MURPHY: So, would you say that he was a political role model in that sense?

HAWKINGS: I think the fact that he was involved [in politics] was a role model, and my mother was also very involved in the community in other ways. I think that they both set that example through their involvement in different causes. And they were both constantly and actively engaged, and that absolutely has been a role model for me and this is kind of the way I did it.

What physically finally got me involved in politics was that in late winter of 1979, George Herbert Walker Bush, who grew up in the same town that I did, came to our local library to do a town meeting and to try to get people involved in his campaign. And at the time I was still in high school, was not old enough to vote, but I just was so excited, frankly by the fact that somebody from our town was running for President, and he sounded reasonable, and I thought this was something I could do with my dad.

And so, I signed up to volunteer, and gosh if they didn't call me and ask me to come down and make calls and stuff envelopes and process checks and so on. And so, when I was on break from school, I was volunteering during Christmas and during spring break and during the summer until the convention and until the Bush campaign became the [Ronald] Reagan–Bush campaign.

And that was my first campaign, and it was my first inauguration. I remember being blown away by the fact that I got an invitation—the beautiful printed invitation to go to the inauguration—and it was a standing room-only ticket, but a lot fewer people attended back then than have in recent years, and so you know, I dutifully—like I say, I went to this high school in Massachusetts. I remember getting on the Air Florida plane—$29, fly from Boston to D.C.—taking off a day from school to come down for the weekend, and in my pumps and pearls and skirt in the

middle of January {laughter} 1981, standing there and listening to Reagan's first inaugural speech. I still have this very clear memory. I was relatively close.

And I was thinking about that a lot recently, because my husband and I were in California recently and we were driving from L.A. to Santa Barbara for the wedding of a former staffer, who—he and his now-wife invited us to their wedding—and we both kind of said, "We should just stop at the Reagan ranch. When are we going to be here again?" Not the Reagan ranch, the Reagan Library [Ronald Reagan Presidential Library]. "When are we going to be here again?"

And we went, and I was just remembering that moment and also the moment 24, 25 years later after his death, when I stood actually very nearly [in] the same spot with my son, who was 12 at the time, and you may remember when Reagan died, people came from all over the country. There were people who got in their cars in Ohio and Kansas and drove all night to bring their kids to stand in line to pay their respects to President Reagan in the [Capitol] Rotunda. And it was very hot, it was a terrible heat wave. The line just crisscrossed all the way across in front of the Mall, and it just kept going and going and going, and people just kept coming and coming and coming, so they had to extend the hours to basically go through the night before the service, and finally closed it down at 5:00 a.m. But there were some of us who were there on and off all night. I brought my son for several hours. We handed out water bottles to people who had come dressed in suits and ties, and—not all of them but a lot of them—and they were just dying in that heat, even after dark.

And I remember thinking to myself, I didn't really realize it at the time, but —and I certainly didn't agree with President Reagan on everything—but the hope that he gave this country and [that] I remember feeling about my future and my country's future was something that really I think stuck with me. And so when I came to D.C. in 1987 and for a while was—I had left Wall Street, which had helped me pay for college, and had been working for a while raising money for a private school but really wasn't feeling like I was in the game, in the action. That was something that I think probably drew me back to the Hill, this feeling of being able to make a positive contribution and this feeling of hopefulness for the country and my ability to have a role in that. I don't know that it was terribly a conscious thought, but being at the [Reagan] library recently and thinking that through, I really . . . I saw the thread and its relevance in my life.

MURPHY: Right. And you participated in this campaign even while you were in high school?

HAWKINGS: Right. Before I was old enough to vote. I was not able to cast a vote in 1980, which again [made it] all the more shocking to me that I would get this invitation because really, I didn't deliver a lot of money. I processed a bunch of thank-you notes and deposited a bunch of checks and made some calls and stuffed some envelopes, but the fact that I would get that invitation at the age of 17, when I clearly could not have voted for them, was just really remarkable to me.

MURPHY: Did that affect your thoughts about career aspirations, college education?

HAWKINGS: I think it did. When I went to college, my plan was to be a political economy major, to go to law school, and to be involved in government. I'm

not sure I would have said politics, but I would have said government. And probably more likely as a lawyer. I thought maybe—I wanted to be someplace where I could mix it up. I used to tell people that what I really wanted to do was to be a D.A. [district attorney]. And then I had to leave—I ran out of money. I had enormous debt because I had attended [school] for a while when the bill hadn't been paid. I had to make a lot of money to pay off that debt to the college before I could return. I was fortunate to get enough—to get a job on Wall Street and to work for a year and be able to pay that debt off and then sort of qualify basically to be an independent agent and not dependent on people's tax returns being filed that weren't getting filed.

Anyway, long story short, when I did go back to college, I thought, "What I want to do—I'm going to be able to go to Wall Street for a career because I did [work there]." I kept working there in the summers, in the winters when we were on break, and I was just able to go right back to that. And so I thought, "If I'm paying all this money for this education, I want to make sure that I'm doing something that I'm never going to have the opportunity to do again, and stretch my brain in ways that—I don't need a political economy degree if I've already got the Wall Street career, right? Let me think about how I stretch my knowledge and learn to think in different ways." And so I ended up majoring in art history, and that was a completely different thing.

MURPHY: Just a little different.

HAWKINGS: Yes, but I loved going to class.

MURPHY: What kind of work were you doing on Wall Street?

HAWKINGS: It was a back office job. There was a movie called *Working Girl* [1988] a few years ago. I was Joan Cusack, right down to the little tie and the tennis shoes. That was really before computers. There would be one computer in the room, and I was working on a trading floor, basically as support to the traders. So filling out a lot of forms, moving a lot of paperwork, reading the computer, and quoting rates, but not doing anything that had an enormous amount of responsibility attached to it.

That grew over time. I actually ended up, because—and this was really my first woman mentor—there was a woman who got me as her intern sort of in . . . she saw the work I was doing that first summer, right before I went back to school. And when I went and asked to come back as an intern, a paid intern, or paid temporary spot, whatever; she said, "I want her," and she had me. She then sort of struggled with what, what to do with me, and I ended up reading commercial loan agreements and writing the outlines for them. I never became a lawyer, by the way. But I'm reading these legal documents, and I'm writing outlines of them for use by the commercial bankers, and it turned out that unbeknownst to me, I was getting them done faster and sometimes more accurately than the other people. And they ended up—the people that were in this little group that reported to my friend Jane—and she had . . . anyway, we became friends, she became much more than a mentor to me. But it was she, who in a professional environment was the first person to really believe [in] me and promote me and to say, "Don't let anybody tell you you can't do that because you're embarrassing all these other people, whether you realize it or not." And I had no idea.

MURPHY: So you took that experience, and then you went back to school, and then you—

HAWKINGS: Went back to school and kept going back and forth. We would have three weeks at Christmas and then the month of January, which was a sort of January term, and I would get a sponsor from the college among the college professors, and I would sort of take them something that I wanted to study. Like one year it was . . . the bank that I worked for had an art collection, and the longtime chairman of the bank came from a family that were longtime patrons of American art. And he clearly used this art collection to build a culture and emphasize the culture that he wanted the bank to have, and others followed suit but bought different kinds of art in different ways. And so, that was one paper that I wrote one January. There were other examples, but . . . and then I was able to work and make enough money to pay for school at the same time.

MURPHY: Right. And when you returned to school, you said something about—

HAWKINGS: Yes, so that was interesting. So, after a year I had made enough money, and I really thought if I don't go back, I never will. And this was my mother's great concern. She and my father were in the process of getting divorced, and she was . . . she, who had never . . . who had come one quarter shy of graduating was terribly concerned that I would never get my degree if I didn't go back. And so, we kind of looked at it, and we figured out the numbers . . . and again, this is after me sort of figuring out a way to be financially independent because I needed to . . . the way the financial aid worked, it would—I was never going to qualify, for a variety of reasons I won't bore you with, I was never going to qualify for [financial aid]. Anyway.

So I went back to—I drove up to college, it was about a three-hour drive. This was probably the last, well, second-to-last week of August, right

before—two weeks before school started. Met with the deans. The dean said, "Well, you withdrew in good standing, so it's fine, as long as you can work out the finances." Great. Trudge upstairs to talk to the head of financial aid, and he heard me out and said, "Well, maybe we can work something out, but," he said, "can I just ask you," he said, "why are you doing this to yourself?" He said, "Why is getting a Williams [College] education so important to you?" He said, "You are just going to graduate, get married, work for a couple of years." And he was trying to be helpful . . . I know that in his way . . . I start with the presumption that he was trying to be helpful, but "Why would you kill yourself to get this education that you can't afford, that you will bear the burden of debt for years, when you're just going to work for a couple of years and then get married and have kids and drive carpool?"

And I remember just being outraged, not that he was being discriminatory, but that he was telling me that I couldn't do something that I wanted to do. {laughter} And basically I carefully bit my lip long enough to be able to articulate—without crying in front of him—exactly why I wanted to do it, and why I hoped he would agree that it was worthwhile, and how I really actually thought that I had shown over that last year that I was a really good bet. If I had gone through what I'd gone through and was coming back to him, that I would reflect pretty okay on the college. The chances were good, maybe better than they were when they accepted me the first time, that I would reflect well on the college. And he kind of said, "Well, we'll think about it."

And I was like, "All right." Left the room, ran down the stairs, ran into one of the deans who was not the dean I had previously met with, just by chance as she was coming out the door, and she said—I mean, by this point

I'm just convulsed in sobs—she said, "What is wrong with you?" And I told her, and the next day I had a full financial aid package, including some merit and a job on campus. I had to still keep working and contributing, of course, but it was not like they gave me a free ride. But they figured out a way to make it work. And I went back that fall, and I finished. I did the next three years in three years, and Chase [Chase Bank] helped a lot by taking me back. And then I went . . . After I graduated I did have some debt, and I had a job offer to work for the bank and go through their training program, and that seemed a layup; there was no reason not to do that. But gosh, I went back, and at that point I'd been doing it for five years, and the thing that the art did, which I guess was what I had hoped it would do, was get me to think more creatively and less linearly about—it's funny, I was just thinking about this the other day. I was talking to a group of younger staffers at the organization where I now work—and I think it got me to think more about connections and patterns and less linearly about just driving, driving, driving in a linear way towards a goal. That has served me well.

But I just was done with the bank, and ended up meeting the guy that would become my husband. He lived in Texas at the time, and he took a job working on a congressional campaign basically as a result of having met me because it would get him closer to—the guy was going to win, and it would get him closer to D.C. So, then I moved to D.C., and we got married, and that was when I took the job raising money for the private school.

But what I found was that in D.C.—we got to know people, made friends, went to parties and all, and people would meet me, and they would basically look right through me because David [Hawkings] was the one who

was working on the Hill, right? And they would like literally not even listen to the answer of "What do you do?" before they moved on. And that, combined with the fact that there was this new Congressman that was elected about a year after we moved here—a little bit more than a year—led me to think, "Well, maybe I should try the Hill for a couple of years. And particularly if we're going to be here for a while, I should probably know how this place works."

So, I set about trying to get a job with this newly elected Member, Congressman [Christopher H.] Shays from Connecticut, who was my hometown guy. His predecessor had died in office very unexpectedly. Stewart [Brett] McKinney, [who] passed away through complications from AIDS, was the first Member of Congress—or I think probably the only Member of Congress to date—to have died of AIDS. And it was right at the beginning of when the AIDS epidemic was really emerging.

Anyway, Chris kept all his staff on initially because none of them had any idea this was coming. Many of them had worked for him for a decade or longer, and it was a good staff, very focused on customer service. So, he didn't have any turnover, but I kind of kept at it—and I will say my husband's boss also kept at it. {laughter} And I think finally, just to make my husband's boss stop asking him, Chris agreed to meet me when he had an opening.

And so I was hired. He had one opening, and he hired two people to fill it. I made $17,000 a year as a legislative assistant. Peter [Carson] and I each made $17,000 a year. I learned after the fact that the strategy had been [to] hire both of us and basically see who won after three months. After Election Day they'd keep one of us on. I didn't know that at the time. We both

walked in at the same time, and we didn't know each other, but it became clear to us pretty quickly what was going on, and we became really close friends. We have very different strengths and we were both LAs [legislative assistants]. We worked side by side, and one thing led to another, and there was more turnover, and I was promoted to legislative director. But Peter was my alter ego; I mean he has a very generative, creative mind, and I was kind of more the taskmaster and the list maker, and I would see those connections, but he was the one who was constantly coming up with fresh, new ideas. And so we were a good team.

And so when our chief of staff retired—she had had a baby and had planned to come back and took three months leave, but ended up just deciding that she didn't think she could juggle it all. I was promoted to chief of staff, and Peter became legislative director, and we had that partnership going until 1996.

MURPHY: So, this is over the course of two or three years that these changes are happening like that?

HAWKINGS: So, yes, let's see . . . I started in August of '88 on the Hill, and I became legislative director in January of 1990, and I became chief of staff at the end of 1990. And you know, there were like five women, I think—not a lot of women chiefs of staff at the time and not a lot of real young chiefs of staff. That's something that has really changed. There used to be people who would make their whole career here; it was not uncommon to have the chief of staff be somebody who'd be on the Hill 15, 20, 25 years, and I think that's much less the case today. Then in early '96—

MURPHY: Before we get too far—

HAWKINGS: Sure, sorry. {laughter}

MURPHY: {laughter} No, that's good, that's good. You said you really wanted to get that job on Shays' staff.

HAWKINGS: Yes.

MURPHY: You applied, you had your husband's boss making inquiries.

HAWKINGS: Right.

MURPHY: Was that the only place you wanted to work? Only for a Congressman from Connecticut?

HAWKINGS: Well, I think that it's the place that I thought I had the best chance of getting a job. I really wanted to work on the Hill. It was the place that I had the strongest connection to. You know, it was home. It's still home. My mother still lives there. And I felt like I knew the district and so that would be the easiest shot. I sent letters to other places, but that was the place that I thought was the most logical to really drill down on.

MURPHY: You liked the local connection there.

HAWKINGS: Yeah, I liked the local connection, and obviously I knew the area, and I liked the idea of working for the place where I grew up.

MURPHY: And when you entered that workplace, what kind of reception did you receive? And even before that, I could ask you in what ways do you think your previous work experience differed or shaped your new experience in Washington?

HAWKINGS: So, I think that there is a similar story to my becoming legislative director to the story that I told about the bank, in that I always jokingly say I didn't become LD [legislative director] because I was the smartest person in the room. I became LD because I wrote the most letters. And we had a huge backlog of letters when Chris came into office, and because the office—when a Member dies in office you can't respond to any legislative mail, and so there was a huge backlog of constituent inquiries. And then he was a new Member, so people were writing him, and they [the letters] were at the time handwritten. We started off by getting 200 letters a week. It quickly grew to 1,000 because we were responding to all these people, and his default setting was nobody gets a form letter. And we worked on that over time, but it was not uncommon to have an eight- nine- 10-page response go back to somebody, telling them basically every thought he had ever had on that subject. {laughter} And every bill he had ever written.

But I think because I had never had a job for another Member before, it was easy for me to hear this was what he wanted, and this was how he wanted it done. I didn't know any better. By the way that approach to mail is strongly discouraged by pretty much every management organization, but I didn't know any better at the time, so I was like, "All right, I'll do what he wants." And I just started pounding out the mail, and I figured out a formula to make sure that we were using approved language so that he didn't have to read every letter, but also made sure that we tailored the letters so that people knew that someone had read the letter. And he signed everything, and he read the first and last paragraphs. So, anyway, I just figured out how to pound a lot of those out.

MURPHY: Did you get feedback from constituents on that? Did they like that approach?

HAWKINGS: I think people—he really never wavered from that fundamental principle of doing as few form letters as he possibly could, and over time, through the Internet we got more and more form letters. He came to be okay with responding to a form letter with a form letter, but particularly when people—I mean we were getting 200 handwritten letters from constituents a week, and this was before anthrax [in 2001], so we would get them pretty quickly. People would sit and write, back and front on two or three pages the stuff that was concerning them, and he felt that his response needed to reflect and respect the time that his constituents had put into that correspondence. And of course we grew into issues, into working in issues, too.

But that fundamental commitment to customer service, really, was the basis for the way we ran the office, and I think as the district became more and more Democratic—but he was a Republican—was the linchpin to our success in staying in office for as long as he did. It's something that I took with me working—after he left office and I continued on the Hill, it was something that I took with me. I always kept finding myself working for Republicans in Democratic districts and really bringing that sort of commitment to customer service and outreach as kind of my calling card, and it reflected what those other Members knew they had to do. And so I was somebody who could help them do it.

MURPHY: And how do you think that experience helped you get that position of legislative director? What were your responsibilities as legislative director?

HAWKINGS: Well, initially it was really running the mail program—that's what it was in a freshman office. And that then grew into what—the first bill he introduced was a bill that was in my issue area, so that probably helped,

too. I had been able to help him draft a bill on competition in the cable industry—about which I knew nothing—and it wasn't the be-all and end-all of the bill, but we figured out how to get some of his language into a larger bill that then-Telecommunications Subcommittee chairman [Edward John] Markey was marking up.[1] I think that when that happened—I mean certainly that was in large part due to Chris' efforts and outreach, but it was also due to solid staff follow-up and relationship building. So, that probably helped, too.

MURPHY: Why was that in your issue area? Business related?

HAWKINGS: It was how I'd been assigned. No, it was really just, I mean, you know . . .

MURPHY: You had different responsibilities.

HAWKINGS: It was what I had inherited from the previous person, and I had issues that I knew something about, which I think was part of the reason I got hired. Banking—I was responsible for banking issues and budget issues, and it was during the savings and loan crisis of the late '80s that I was hired, and we had a significant portion of the district that was involved in the financial industry in different ways. So, I think that helped me get hired as well.

MURPHY: And when you entered the office in the House working for Congressman Shays, did you find it to be a welcoming environment for women staff?

HAWKINGS: Yes, it was. The woman—the previous chief of staff was a woman, a couple years older than I, but the woman who left after she had a baby. The district—

MURPHY: What was her name?

HAWKINGS: Her name was Barbara Demmon.

MURPHY: Okay.

HAWKINGS: And he was all about who got the work done. Is all about . . . we remain very close friends. And I think somebody who would do the work the way he wanted it done and he could trust to be his agent, and get it—that's the whole thing with a freshman. They're elected, and they have this really close relationship with the electorate, and then they're stuck in Washington several days a week, and that can't help but create a little bit of distance from when you're on the campaign trail 24/7. The relationship with your constituents changes a little bit. And at the same time, most candidates are elected, at least in part, because of their own personal philosophy, and you can't lose that, or you have a larger problem.

And so I think what I was able to do for him was show him that I would make sure the work was done the way he wanted it done, so he could delegate a little bit—because that's the hardest thing for a freshman Member to do is to delegate and trust that someone can be their agent and manage the things the way they would manage them if they had 48 hours in their day.

MURPHY: So you found yourself in a real meritocracy?

HAWKINGS: It was, yes, there was, and I say this about the Hill still: There's always more work to do than there are people to do it. So, yes, I do think in my experience—which everyone . . . every woman that I know was not fortunate enough to have—but my experience was that it was a meritocracy, and if I got more work done, then that was going to be rewarded. And again, there was something in it for him, too, right? Which was that he

could trust that I would proofread and make sure it was English. {laughter} So, there was a benefit to him as well. But he didn't, he really didn't care if it was a man or a woman, and he also, I think wanted to make sure that once he found and trained good people—that was an investment of his time, and he didn't want to lose people in whom he had invested because that would be a further waste of his time, right? There would be a lag getting that next person up to speed. So, again, there was something in it for him. It also was the right thing to do. And that's how I ended up staying there 20 years. {laughter}

MURPHY: And when you first entered the office, did you have any mentors in that capacity showing you how to approach the job?

HAWKINGS: I would say that they evolved over time. There really weren't a lot of women chiefs to turn to. I had mentors in the role of chief. I did not have mentors really, initially, who were women. My biggest mentor was Chris. I deeply respect, continue to respect the way that he approached the job and when that's the case, you get up early in the morning psyched to go to work, and you're happy to stay there late because you feel like what you're doing is making a difference and [is] meaningful and valued. And like I say, I was promoted pretty quickly. Again, not something that a lot of women had the experience of.

I'll never forget, right around the same time that I was there, there was this woman who was I think a—I forget what position she was, but she worked for a Member from California who ended up losing—in part because of this—but who basically told her she needed to wear sweaters—tight sweaters—and skirts and stockings and high heels to work. That that was what she needed to do in order to get ahead in his office.

MURPHY: And she told you about this?

HAWKINGS: No, it was in *Roll Call*. {laughter} And he was a one-termer. That was shocking, but not unheard of—and what was more shocking was that somebody would go to the press with it.

MURPHY: That's interesting.

HAWKINGS: I mean, it was a scandal, but not because it happened, but that it was public.

MURPHY: And was there a kind of acknowledgement of these kinds of practices but an assumption that this wouldn't leak out of the walls, sort of?

HAWKINGS: I think I lived in a pretty rarified state for a pretty long period of time. I had a couple of experiences that were sort of, reminders. One story that I tell is, I had been chief of staff for probably a year, and a constituent who came every year for a fly-in with his association—and now that I think about it, it was also the Republican town chairman of his town and therefore a close friend of the office who I had known at that point for probably three years—came in with his fly-in, and I was waiting to take them in to meet with Chris. They're all sort of guffawing and chatting and he's introducing me to a couple of people that I hadn't met before, and he kind of looks at me and he says, "You know, yeah, chief of staff," he said. "You're cute and everything, but what makes Chris Shays think you can do that job? Ha-ha, ha-ha." Great group. And he kind of went like this [pats head] on my head and I said, "I don't know, sir, but I guess I am." {laughter} So, I was about a year into it at that point and, again, didn't really think about it in terms of discrimination, but just kind of thought, you know, "idiot."

But it made me feel like I just wanted to work that much harder to prove myself—and I kind of knew I had to, I think. Somewhere—although I'm not sure that I would have been articulate about it at the time, in fact I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have been. Still, at that point, a lot of this stuff, when you're working really hard, and you're in an environment where stuff is happening, and you're having an impact, I'm not sure you always slow down to see some things like that until after you're out of the environment. And that was the case for me.

I look back, and I realize gradually there became more women chiefs of staff. When Tom [Thomas Dale] DeLay became—when majority changed and Republicans took over in 1995, Congressman DeLay, who became Whip, had his senior policy person and his Member services director—two of the top three or four jobs in his office—were held by women, and I would definitely count those as mentors, and they used to get a group of [women senior staff] together. Paula Nowakowski, who was Speaker [John Andrew] Boehner's Member services director and ultimately chief of staff, would also get the groups of women senior staff together, and I have a clear memory of being in the Whip's conference room—this would have been probably '93, '94 . . . it probably would have been '95. And we all fit around this table that sat 20. And there were empty spots. And certainly everybody couldn't have come to that meeting, but there were probably 15—10 to 15 of us there, max. And just, well, it's now probably 18 months ago, Lynnel Ruckert, who was Whip [Steve] Scalise's chief, and Parker Poling, who is Chief Deputy Whip [Patrick T.] McHenry's chief, got all the women chiefs that they could find together, and we took up the whole third floor of the Capitol Hill Club. Now granted, that's been 20 years, but that's a whole lot better picture.

MURPHY: And at that first meeting, what did you talk about?

HAWKINGS: Good question. I know that we talked about how to balance everything that we were trying to balance. You know, in that case it was like family, and by that point we had our first child, and I was really struggling to balance how to be the chief of staff I wanted to be with how to be the mom I wanted to be. And Chris gave me as much flexibility as he could, but for this particular child, {laughter} it was not enough, and I was already feeling like I wasn't sure I was going to be able to manage doing the job the way I wanted to do it. It wasn't so much that his demands were . . . it was that I was setting the standard, which in fairness he knew I would do, and that was part of the reason he kept me on. But we were talking about how to juggle all those things, and then it was also talking about just legislative strategy, so it was this combination of things.

MURPHY: What does that involve, though? Do you mean legislative strategy among fellow chiefs of staff that are working towards a common goal?

HAWKINGS: Well, and how they could support their Members and yes, in that case there was probably some sense of "How do we support the team? How do we move the "Contract" ["Contract with America"] forward? What do we need from individual Members?"

MURPHY: So these were all Republican women?

HAWKINGS: But also, "What are your challenges that you're facing? How can leadership help you?"

MURPHY: So these were all Republican—

HAWKINGS: It was all Republican women, senior staff, yes.

MURPHY: And this recent meeting, same thing?

HAWKINGS: Yes. But that was much more social.

MURPHY: That's interesting. So, the numbers could have been bigger, then.

HAWKINGS: Yes. Now, since then, what also happened was that once Speaker Boehner became Leader Boehner in, gosh, I think it would have been 2005, Paula started doing those groups again.[2] But she did them for all the chiefs, so that everybody could be on the same page and so that the chiefs could hear what the Members were hearing in conference. And then they particularly did working groups for Members who might be endangered Members, and they did weekly meetings for those—but those were just all chiefs, not just women. She periodically did the women's meetings, too, and then those became more social because the legislative function was happening through regular weekly meetings.

MURPHY: But it's interesting—

HAWKINGS: Just kind of to herd the cats and get everybody on the same page, but also build relationships. It was always, "Here's what we need you guys to do, but by the way, let us know what we can do to help you and your boss. And that's why we're here." That was always a hallmark for Boehner.

MURPHY: But that earlier meeting, you were discussing legislative strategies among women chiefs of staff.

HAWKINGS: Yes.

MURPHY: Why the need to do that solely as women's staff? Or was it just another opportunity—

HAWKINGS: Well, I think the first goal was to build the sisterhood. That's my memory, anyway. I wasn't the convener, but that was what was valuable about it to me, put it that way. Meet other women chiefs and senior staff who might not otherwise meet, because at that point I was still working for a relatively junior Member, not a member of leadership. I was spending most of my time in the office making sure our constituents were taken care of, not out and about going to events and stuff. So, I went home early because I had a child at home. So, that was really valuable to me because it gave me an opportunity to build relationships outside the office and outside the district that ended up serving my boss well, because then I had those folks to go to, to ask advice, to ask for help on legislative strategy, to ask for help getting our issues heard.

MURPHY: And, you kind of anticipated this question, but we've been talking about the ways that women Members and staff face particular scrutiny. Even from the beginning, when Jeannette Rankin entered the House, considerable attention was paid to her dress and her demeanor. Do you think that changed over the course of the time you were in the House, from your starting point to when you left?

HAWKINGS: In terms of attention to appearance?

MURPHY: Yes, appearance and the way these expectations about gender and appearance affected your ability to do your job.

HAWKINGS: It's interesting. I think it has changed over time—not necessarily for the better—and that may be because I'm more aware of impediments now in hindsight than I was at the time. I mean, when I first became Chris's chief of staff, I was just a ramrod going through the wall, and we were pretty

successful, so there kind of was not a lot of evidence suggesting that I was wrong. My appearance or what I wore was never something that he commented on at all until, actually, after he left office, when he saw me one time and I didn't have my sort of trademark—I had this one necklace that I would wear practically every day, which was a double strand of pearls—and he commented like, "Gosh, I leave office, and everything changes. Where are your pearls? I don't even recognize you." But it was not something that he was spending a lot of time focusing on.

And I think that I still see in the media a lot of focus on what Members—women Members—wear. I mean, Frederica Wilson, when she was elected and she wore the cowboy hat, that was a big deal. Could she wear it on the [House] Floor? Could she not wear it on the floor? You see it with Members, too, right? I mean Members—male Members—bolo tie or no bolo tie? Right? {laughter} So, but sleeves or no sleeves, this seems to come up about once every four years. {laughter} Fortunately, as a staffer you never have to worry about what to wear on—rarely do you have to worry about what to wear on the floor. So, it's not as much of an issue for the staff as it is for the women Members.

But I remember Nancy [Lee] Johnson, former Congresswoman Johnson, always used to say, people—when she would take the floor there would be this sense of . . . that we were not in for a short speech. And I think that was true. But what she would say was that as a woman, you always needed to show that you knew your stuff twice as well. And I think in Chris' office we all needed to know our stuff backward and forward, because he was going to grill us. But he didn't grill me any differently because I was a woman or because I was a man. He was equally hard—you know, men and women cried. {laughter} But I know that Congresswoman Johnson and others felt

that they needed to show that they knew their stuff on the floor twice as well as any—that the best defense was good offense. I think that as the number of women Members and staff has increased, that's less of an issue for most Members than it was.

Now there is the one Member that I worked for who had clearly stated in his policy manual that there would be no open-toed or sling-back shoes worn to the office. And I had a problem because I had both. I ended up just deciding that I was going to wear them anyway, but it was a problem for him, and it was like a tension point. {laughter} Who knew?

MURPHY: {laughter} So, coming back to your work as chief of staff, what kind of additional responsibilities did you have as you moved up? Because your responsibilities increased pretty rapidly in your . . . and what was the change? What kinds of new challenges did you face as chief of staff?

HAWKINGS: So it was always just kind of more. I mean, like now, when you become a chief of staff, you go from just having to worry about policy to having to worry about financial management and how we're managing the schedule and the district office operation and in sort of a macro sense, the political stuff. So, it was just kind of more. And I think that's part of the reason why I stayed, too, is that I was always learning. I had a job that I felt made a difference. I was being rewarded at a pretty rapid rate, and he was giving me the flexibility to try to be the mom that I wanted to be.

At the same time, I was having this professional success and professional recognition, and it got to the point where I didn't feel that I could be—particularly once we had the majority, and he became a subcommittee chairman, I didn't—and that's another thing that changed. Then we had an

Oversight—a subcommittee chairmanship to integrate, and you know, he used to say, "I need to have one person who's thinking about all this, and that's you," meaning me. And it became harder and harder for me to . . . And it really wasn't him driving it, it was my guilt that I couldn't be the kind of mom I wanted to be and do the job that I wanted to do, and so I ended up going part-time for about—oh gosh, I guess it was about five years.

Peter [Carson] was promoted to chief of staff, which he richly deserved. Then Peter left to go downtown to work for a public relations firm at the end of 2000. I had continued to work part-time doing sort of special projects and both district-focused special projects and also special projects that Chris had that sort of required a level of understanding of him, or patience, or whatever, that was harder for the regular staff to integrate given everything that they were trying to do. And we made a terrible hire to replace Peter, and the guy lasted three months, and then there was no chief of staff for three months, and I couldn't—I knew Chris well enough to sort of have a sense of why he wasn't proceeding with trying to hire somebody.

And I finally went in and I said, "Are you just waiting for me to come and talk to you about how I could come back as chief of staff and still juggle the mom thing a little bit better?" And he's like, "Yeah, that's what I was waiting for." I was like, "All right, well, we could have saved three months if you'd just told me that." {laughter} At any rate it enabled him . . . Rather than promote somebody—because there were several people who were more-junior staff who wanted it, and he didn't want to lose any of them—it enabled him to not have to make that choice and bring somebody back who had had the job before.

And he gave me even more flexibility than he'd given me before. By that point our older son was in school full-time. He was, gosh, in third or fourth grade by that point, and our youngest had started preschool, so we were sort of over that first hump. And so, I went back.

And September 10th, 2001, was my first day back. My first day back as chief, and I hadn't even moved into the chief of staff desk yet, which was my old desk, but I was terribly concerned about not projecting this sense of . . . having climbed back over some of the newer staff, and I thought, "I'm just going to hang for this first week in my . . ." what basically was like an intern desk. I can do that job fine from here. It was kind of back in the corner, out of the way, but I thought, "Next weekend I'll move everything in, and that way people don't feel like I've got my boot prints on their back."

And the second day back, I walked in to this desk that was in the corner, and I turned on the TV, and a plane had just hit the World Trade Center. And I went in to Chris because I knew he was prepping for a hearing. We had a hearing scheduled in our subcommittee at 10:00 a.m. that day, where the Pentagon was coming to tell us—he had jurisdiction over terrorism preparedness in this subcommittee and he had pointedly gotten that added when he became chairman of the subcommittee in early '99 because he felt this was an emerging issue. And there had been legislation that he didn't individually author, but [that] he helped author and did hearings to build the case for, to charter commissions on the . . . there was one in particular, to study and make recommendations on how to reorganize the U.S. government to be more prepared to respond to the terrorist threat. And we were having hearings that day, specifically to have the Pentagon come and

report to us on the progress they had made—not made—{laughter} on responding to that threat.

And so I went in to him, and I said—and remember now, we represented the southwest corner of Connecticut, so bedroom communities of New York—I said, "Did you see this?" And he said, "Yeah, that's kind of crazy." We all thought that it was a small plane at the time. Then the second one hit and we both looked at each other and went, "This is very, very bad." I think we both had a sense of what it was, and I said, "You're going to have a lot of constituents who lose their lives. Should we be holding this hearing?" In other words, should we proceed with business as usual? And he said, "It's not business as usual, and that is why we need to have the hearing. I'm absolutely committed to having this hearing." Well, not long thereafter, the Pentagon was hit, and so we ended up not having the hearing because they were obviously there doing what they needed to do.

But that was really . . . that was the focus then. Our government's response to September 11th was really a prime focus of the next seven years that I was his chief of staff because we did have 81 constituents who died. Either he or a senior staff person went to every funeral that we knew about that we could find—not to be front and center, but just to be there and tell the family that we were there for them. His message invariably was, "Here's my chief of staff's cell phone number, here's my chief of staff's home number. If you can't reach me, call her. There's nothing more important to our office than helping you." And that started with casework because there were families that had lost their prime breadwinner, but they couldn't collect on life insurance because there was no body in many cases. Or at least not for a long time, and so how do you prove death if there's no body?

And so, figuring out what were the ways that we could go about that and how we could help them navigate that process, working with the coroners' offices to help facilitate both access to and notification of—there were families who got 16, 17, 18 calls when little bits of their loved one were found. How to help them figure out that this was a different kind of process, and they needed to rethink how to do that.

The building codes. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is its own entity, and it is not beholden to either the state of New York or the state of New Jersey and, as such, was not subject to the building codes of either jurisdiction. So, part of the reason that the buildings fell so fast was that the steel beams were not encapsulated in fire-retardant drywall. Now they would have been, and actually the building—in response to the '93 bombing, the process for doing that had begun, but it hadn't gotten up as high as—and the buildings still would have fallen, but they wouldn't have fallen as fast.

And some companies had begun to drill on their own [on] how to get out of the building, but not everybody was required to, and so not everyone had—and certainly hadn't on a regular basis. And so [we were] working with some of the families who took that issue up as their own and making sure they had a fair hearing. And ultimately, working with some of—there were some constituents who took Chris at his word and started calling me and saying, "What can we do? Basically my loved ones . . ." In one case, a husband; in one case, a child's life—"This loss needs to be translated into something good." So, they poured themselves, understandably, into trying to make sure it didn't happen to anybody else. And I remember, they were calling the Members who were chairmen of the committees of jurisdiction

in the House and the Senate side in leadership, and they weren't getting any response, in many cases couldn't even get a call back.

I remember right before Thanksgiving, Mary Fetchet called me—and as instructed, the intern always put these family members right through to me—and I remember her saying, "Betsy, I just don't know what to do. I don't know what to do. Why doesn't anybody pay attention?" And I said, "Mary, the sad truth is you're not their constituent, and most of Congress thinks this is a problem for New York." She said, "How can I change that?" And I said, "Mary, I'm sorry to tell you this, but you are going to have to come to Washington and walk the halls and get in their face." And that's what she did, and so did Beverly Eckert, and so did so many others.[3] Their cause became establishing a commission, and then once we got the commission passed, making sure that the commissioners were people who would do credible work that would stand up to scrutiny and not just be a whitewash. And then making sure that the commissioners got access to the information that they needed to do that work, and to make sure that the report was a meaningful one. And then to make sure that as many of the recommendations were enacted as we could. They were the face of that effort, and to the extent that we had any success, it was because of their effort.

I have this one clear memory of when the bill to enact a number of the recommendations was basically sitting on the shelf, and we couldn't get it on the—we'd had hearings, but we couldn't get it to the floor. They were here—the families were here, they were here in some cases every week, but very regularly, and they would usually camp out in Congresswoman Carolyn [Bosher] Maloney's office, and she and Chris were hand in glove on this issue. Obviously, she's from the Upper East Side of New York, she

had a lot of constituents who lost their lives as well. And her chief of staff and I became and remain very close friends.

MURPHY: What was your role in this process?

HAWKINGS: So, my role was just to make sure, I mean . . . all of it, right? I was working with Maloney's chief on the legislation. I was writing the letters to the Port Authority. I was going to Port Authority meetings. I was going to [9/11] commission meetings. Basically wherever they wanted me and whatever they needed, it was my responsibility to do as much as I could to make sure they got it. And to make sure Chris was doing as much as he could to make sure they got it.

And anyway, we weren't getting the hearing we wanted for the legislation and Congress had, in theory, finished its business before Thanksgiving, but all the Members had to come back for the White House Christmas Ball—or the ones who wanted to go. And there was a significant drafting error in a tax bill that was so significant that it didn't meet the test for technical corrections, and they had to re-vote on the bill. So, we took that opportunity, and the families came down, and we went to the White House, and we stood right outside the White House gate that all the Members were going in with their spouses in tuxes and full-length clothes in December. And they just stood there with pictures of their loved ones saying, "Please pass the commission bill."[4] Now we wouldn't have had that opportunity if Congress didn't have to come back into session anyway, but for that reason and others we were able to use the rules to get a vote, but that was part of the effort to, to get the vote, and it passed.

MURPHY: Who came up with that idea?

HAWKINGS: The idea to go down to the White House was mine.

MURPHY: {laughter} You should put that in there. {laughter}

HAWKINGS: It was interesting. There was somebody who got sent out to basically keep tabs on what we were doing, and we were very peaceful. The thing is, we wanted the administration—we felt that the administration had done everything that it could do at that point. The administration had only been in office nine months—less than nine months—and they were making changes, but I don't think anybody . . . any other President would have made the changes any more quickly. So, we were sort of naively trying to partner with them, but yes. Somebody came and kept tabs on us the whole time we were there. Very subtle, in a trench coat. We had no idea who he was and what. . . {laughter} But he knew who we were. He came out and said, "Are you Betsy?" And I was like, "Okay, whole new show. {laughter} Now I've got a file." All right. {laughter}

MURPHY: Well, so I wanted to talk about September 11th. I thought that was a really interesting story, but before you came to returning to the full-time chief of staff position, you worked on a number of pieces of legislation in the '90s that I wanted to talk about. And then, maybe also talk about your role when you were working part-time and you worked for the Congressional Management Foundation.

HAWKINGS: Sure.

MURPHY: First of all, some women we've interviewed talked about how working on the Hill affected their family life significantly, and the responsibilities with children, like you spoke of. You found this to be an issue—as we've already

talked about—but what were Congressman's Shays' office policies on family leave?

HAWKINGS: So, when he cosponsored the Family [and] Medical Leave Act, which had been a campaign promise in '87, and he did cosponsor it. He realized that if he was going to co-sponsor it, he needed to have a policy of his own, which came in handy less than a year later when Barb [Barbara Demmon] got pregnant and by then he had one in place. It was to at least provide what the federal law that he had cosponsored would provide, which was 12 weeks unpaid. And then, he had this option to use paid vacation and flextime and what have you. But we had a policy for leave before Barb got pregnant, and we sort of tried to always do that. Like if we're going to cosponsor a bill, we need to make sure that we're able to do it.

And so Barbara got leave when she had Katie. I had leave when a year and a half later I had Harry, and I was able to take . . . I had eight weeks paid, and then I used remaining vacation time to work four-day weeks, and my husband did, too. So, Harry just was with a nanny three days a week, because David would take Mondays, and I would take Fridays. And I think—that's an important thing to note, too—is that my husband wanted to be a parent, also—and a present parent—and that probably always made my job easier. We've always been able to split things up. He would take the boys to school, I would do pickup, so that I could go in early and then he could stay late, as they got older.

But anyway, so he had that policy and he also cosponsored a bill along the way that had been written by former Congressman [William Edwin] Dannemeyer of California, who was a much more conservative Member than Chris was. And I think did it for slightly different reasons, i.e. to show

that these regulations were onerous. It was to apply all the laws to Congress from which Congress had exempted itself, which included by that point the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the civil rights laws, the OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] requirements, the Veterans Reemployment Act, etc.[5] Congress has exempted itself under the theory that the regulatory body, the EEOC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission], due to separation of powers, could not have jurisdiction over Congress.

And Chris cosponsored that bill, and when Mr. Dannemeyer retired at the end of, I think, '92, Chris said, "Can I introduce this?" Dannemeyer said, "Sure, take it," so we redrafted it. Built a little bit more legislative language into it, and not just "Congress shall abide by these laws" and listing them, but beginning to think about how would we, how would we address the valid concern of separation of powers through some sort of enforcement mechanism within the legislative branch. How could that work? And what would be meaningful enforcement that wouldn't be completely subject to political pressure and would have some teeth or some credibility? Understanding that everything everywhere is political, and that certainly an agency within the legislative branch could be subject to that type of pressure.

And that bill then became . . . again, the reasons that some Members supported it were different. Some wanted to show that the regulations were onerous. Others felt that they needed to live by the laws they wrote. Chris was close to then-Whip Newt [Newton Leroy] Gingrich, and when the conversations around the "Contract with America" started, Chris saw an opportunity—he always sees an opportunity—and he made the pitch to Newt that Congress needs to live by the laws it writes and that in the wake

of the House banking scandal, this would be something that could capture, could resonate with the American people. And sure enough, Newt poll-tested it and found that it really did register off the charts. But until that point, when Chris was trying to get cosponsors, inevitably the reaction that he would get would be, "Oh, I couldn't possibly live by those laws." And so he would say . . . and he got it from both sides of the aisle. It wasn't just . . . I mean it was an equal opportunity hate. {laughter}

There were Members who were strong, strong advocates of equal pay, for example, who said that they absolutely, positively could not be living under that law, it was way too onerous. And Chris would say, {laughter} "Do you see the connection here?" At any rate, it ended up getting included as the number one point in the "Contract with America." It passed, really, within the first few days of the new Congress, and it was H.R. [House Resolution] 1 in 1995.

MURPHY: And in both of those cases, the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Congressional Accountability Act—

HAWKINGS: Congressional Accountability Act, yes.

MURPHY: In both of those cases, I imagine your office being in a position of having to convince both sides like this. What kind of process did that involve?

HAWKINGS: Yes. Well, with regard to the Congressional Accountability . . . any legislation we introduced, we always had a Democratic cosponsor, and that was just—Chris had been a state legislator for 13 years before he came to Congress. He was—I think, maybe with the exception of two terms—always in the minority when he was in the state house, so there was probably a practical aspect to this, too, which is make sure that you can get

a Democrat on board because maybe they'll help make sure you get a hearing. And he brought that with him to D.C., and that was how we did things.

But there was another practical aspect, which is if you can't get somebody to cosponsor it from the other side of the aisle, you're not going to be getting the votes from the other side of the aisle. And if the goal is to actually pass the bill and have an impact, then you're going to want to be getting votes, so you need to start by having the conversation about, "Oh, you won't support this. Well, what can we tweak? Is there something we can do to adjust it?"

And actually, the redraft of the Congressional Accountability Act happened because the other Members that we were working with on the other side of the aisle sort of said, "Maybe we can add . . ." The first time, in early '93, before it was part of the "Contract," Congressman [Richard] Swett from New Hampshire and Congressman [Paul F.] McHale [Jr.] from Pennsylvania both kind of said, "Maybe we could put a little enforcement, some kind of reference to enforcement," and it made it a stronger bill. And it meant that when we went to draft the bill that was ultimately going to come to the floor under the "Contract" we had it that much further along in the process. But we always had a "one for one"—like we couldn't add a Republican on our bill unless we could add a Democrat, and we couldn't add a Democrat on our bill unless we could add a Republican. There were a few exceptions to that, but there was never a bill we dropped that didn't have as an original cosponsor a Democratic Member.

MURPHY: But how did—I still find it hard to believe that this was the first provision in the "Contract with America."

HAWKINGS: It was.

MURPHY: No, I know but, {laughter} how did it become such a prominent part of this? Was it the polling? That it polled well? Was it a coalition that was built?

HAWKINGS: Well, I think that was part of it, but what resonated was our message which was that Congress will write better laws when it has to live by the laws it writes. And there have been, certainly—the Office of Compliance, which was the agency that we set up within the bill to be the adjudicator, I think would be the first to tell you that they have had to navigate the landscape of political pressure, that it's not a perfect system. But it's better than what was here, and there are protections for staff, whether they choose to pursue them or not. There is a law that says that the Fair Labor Standards Act has to apply to Congress. There is a law that says that you have to reemploy your vets. There is a law that says that civil rights violations are not legal. In this and prior to that, particularly in the wake of the House Bank scandal, there was this even greater sense that Congress . . . Congress was called "the last plantation" for some symbolic reasons and some very real reasons.

And I think the American people knew that Congress shouldn't be banking at a bank—and Chris fell victim to this unknowingly—but it made sense to people that Members of Congress shouldn't have a check routinely floated for two weeks until they had the money in their account and somebody who was calling their office and saying, "Hey, Congressman, you need to get some money in here." And that was only a few.

I think there were really only about 20 who did that on a regular basis. Others of them, sometimes the money . . . they just weren't paid on time

and so the bank held their money until their deposit came in, and they actually weren't allowed to have the check deposited in any other place other than the Sergeant at Arms' bank. Like, Chris couldn't—when he was elected, he couldn't get his pay deposited to his bank in Stamford [Connecticut], it had to go to the Sergeant at Arms, and then he could transfer it out, and so there were some that were . . . But still, there were like 27 of them who were floating the check for two weeks or more on a regular basis, and that clearly resonated with people as Congress having a different set of rules than they did, and the Congressional Accountability Act was a clear sign that the new Republican majority would change that.

MURPHY: And you were part of this process and your office was part of this process of promoting this "Contract with America." Would you—

HAWKINGS: Well, there was a point at which it was a whole lot bigger than we were. But I mean, but he was—

MURPHY: But he was in on the ground floor—

HAWKINGS: But he was part of developing it. He was part of developing. There was a core of three or four Members who started talking with Newt a year and a half out. And then, at some point it became clear; I thought, "Gosh, we could really do this," and then it took on a life of its own.

MURPHY: So, as chief of staff, what input did you have in that process?

HAWKINGS: My main job was going to the meetings and making sure that we did all the things that he promised {laughter} that we [would] do. That was always my job. I would say my job also—I mean, the first day that he promoted me to chief of staff at the end of 1990, he said, "Your job is to make sure, number

one, that you tell me what I need to hear and not just what I want to hear; and number two, that we've always looked at an issue from 360 degrees and that we know what our opponents are going to say, not just what the people who agree with us say, because on any given day half my constituents are going to disagree with my vote." So, that was kind of always my job, whatever the situation.

And with regard to the "Contract," I think that the goal—I wasn't involved in any of the polling or anything like that. But the goal was to make sure that this bill would resonate with as many people as possible and that it wasn't a partisan bill—and every issue that was in the "Contract" actually polled at 65 percent or higher with the American public. It was not just something that resonated with Republicans. There were some issues that were a little bit more ideological than others, having to do with environmental regulations or housing subsidies or what have you, but they all polled above 65 percent.

MURPHY: And was that part of your everyday work, this developing strategy? Like thinking about ways of promoting legislation?

HAWKINGS: Yes, I had to balance it. I had to make sure that the office—my number one job was making sure that the way we operated was above reproach. That we were always walking the walk, that our financial management in the office exceeded what was required. That . . . we had a policy manual early on. A lot of people asked me for our policy manual, so I think at some point maybe . . . I don't know how many other offices had them, but a lot of other offices used ours as a template. As time went on, and particularly once we took the majority and then we were under scrutiny that we wouldn't have been in the minority, and there was this constant sort of search for

hypocrisy, and when Members were talking more and more about running the Congress like a business, then some of these questions came to be asked. So, there were offices who would come to us and say, "Hey, do you have a template I can use?" And I would shoot it over to them.

MURPHY: And that would be within the party?

HAWKINGS: I'm sure that I gave it to Democrats, too. I mean, back then, like I said, we had working relationships with a lot of Members. I had friendships—still have friendships—with a lot of folks on the other side of the aisle. So, no, not exclusively. And it was more by word of mouth, and there was just kind of a sense of . . . Chris probably—knowing Chris—probably talked about it on the House Floor a fair amount, too, among his colleagues and saying, "You know, you really ought to get one of these and call my chief." {laughter} But I think his point was to protect the institution, to make sure that the institution was living up to its best ability.

MURPHY: And was part of that—and really, you talk about the focus on bipartisanship—and was part of your job to find potential allies and develop those relationships, to have these kinds of mechanisms to promote legislation more along those lines?

HAWKINGS: Sometimes, sometimes. I mean, that certainly . . . Who came first with regard to the 9/11 work, I don't know. I don't know whether it was Ben [Chevat] who called me, or I who called Ben.[6] We had worked together on [issues related to the] census and other issues before. Chris and Carolyn [Maloney] had worked together on other issues. I hadn't really known Ben all that well because for a while there I really wasn't doing much legislation. I was doing more, like I said, special projects. Outreach. Special mail. In

'98, one of the things that I worked on was how we would respond to calls for impeachment that were coming from within the conference, and then the impeachment process, and I spent a lot of time talking to him about that because I had some pretty strong feelings about it, and by that point, you know, he had sort of created this monster, if you will. I was long past not telling him what he needed to hear. {laughter} This was something that I had learned to do fairly quickly, and he didn't always like it, but he heard me out. And so I don't know whether it was Ben who came to me, or I who went to Ben and said, "Hey, we ought to work together on this. Let's pool forces." But sometimes yes, sometimes no. He was pretty busy identifying allies, too. I couldn't say that I did that. You know, sometimes yes, sometimes no.

MURPHY: And this . . . his unique, we could say, unique political position over the course of the '90s and the first decade of the 21st century, even within his party, I think [in] some way viewed as a moderate and—

HAWKINGS: Some would say a squish.

MURPHY: {laughter} And how did that affect your ability to do your job? Did you think that it was an advantage or a disadvantage?

HAWKINGS: Oh, well there were times when it was both. Once he became a chairman, he had a pretty wonderful ability to raise up issues that he thought were important, and did a lot. He didn't always raise up issues that people liked and I would get the occasional "What the hell is your boss doing?" call from various quarters. I would get the occasional call from some of my Democratic friends, "Ha-ha, love to see it, {laughter} go in peace. {laughter} Better him than me."

I think—well, there were a couple of times when people really didn't understand what he was doing. One would have been campaign finance reform. Another would have been when he voted against a budget when he was vice chairman of the Budget Committee because it did not cut spending enough and all the savings was in the out-years, and he just felt like we were totally—he had been there in '95 and '96 when then-chairman, now Governor [John Richard] Kasich had balanced the budget. He'd been one of the top lieutenants, really doing heavy lifting on controlling entitlements and controlling the growth of entitlements—not cutting it, but reducing the rate of growth so that Medicare would not go bankrupt or Social Security would not go bankrupt—and making needed changes, which if they had done everything they tried to do, today we'd be in a much greater place of solvency. But that was—the political reality wasn't there, but my point is, he had done the heavy lifting, and so in 2002, 2004, as vice chairman, he just wasn't the—and this was where he was trying to be a fiscal conservative, and that was always how he staked out his position in the party was, "Regardless what you think of me on social issues, I'm a true fiscal conservative." And his record bears that out, and so he was anchoring at that point a conservative point of view within the Budget Committee and was not able to have the impact that he wanted and ended up voting against the bill in committee. And was promptly told that he was no longer vice chairman. {laughter}

But, he said, "I understand. I understand because that's part of [what] the job of leadership is, but it's just not a position that I can support and still claim that I'm a fiscal conservative, and that's what keeps me in this party." So, he was pretty reliable and consistent in those ways. Nobody should have

been surprised. People weren't happy, but they shouldn't have been surprised.

MURPHY: Reading about and remembering this period, there was always—I mean you couldn't find an article where his moderate stance wasn't mentioned in the late '90s and the early part of the next decade. But when you began in the office, was there a sense that he was less tied to this nomenclature?

HAWKINGS: Well, I think he was always seen as a maverick. What ultimately propelled him, I think, other than just shoe leather, what helped him win the special election in 1987 was that he had gone to jail for seven days. He was a member of the judiciary committee in the [Connecticut] general assembly. Actually, I think he was the ranking Republican and he had been made aware of some pretty shady practices by some attorneys who were the legal guardians of a wealthy constituent. And her family had brought [up] the fact that they were essentially writing themselves checks that this elderly lady didn't know about. And so he ended up pursuing it; ended up in court; ended up standing up in court, refusing to sit down, objecting; ended up being held in contempt. And just to teach him a lesson, the judge, who could have sent him to any, you know, local jail sent him to the Bridgeport, Connecticut, criminal jail, which was an interesting place for him to find himself, having grown up in Darien [Connecticut], which was a very different sort of community.

But it's interesting. He was there for seven days because he would not apologize, and for the rest of our time in Congress, it got to be fewer and fewer, but we would always have like one call a year from somebody saying that they knew Chris from jail. He was a personal friend of Chris' from the time they spent in jail together, and he wanted to talk to Chris and he

would always take the call. {laughter} But yes, he ended up—Senator [Joseph I.] Lieberman, who was state attorney general at the time, ended up figuring out a way to get him out of jail without him . . . Because he would not apologize, and that was what was being insisted on, but it became this great embarrassment for the state that he was in jail and was refusing to leave. {laughter} And so the state attorney general got involved—separate from Chris and actually over Chris' protestations—made a motion to have him released based on a particular codicil in state law.

So, he was released from jail against his will. And anyway, that gave him the notoriety and the public name recognition, so that when there was this open seat, he had this clear reputation to run on and leverage, and then he simply just outworked the opponent. And nobody took him seriously, and nobody saw him coming until it was too late.

But he had a story to tell, and it was a true story, and it was a story that he continued to live. And my job, in part, was to make sure he continued to live that story, right? Because you come to Washington and suddenly, you know, everyone thinks that everything that comes out of your mouth is brilliant and you're the best-looking person they've ever met and everything you say is funny, and you have thousands of new best friends and having on your staff . . . You always have your family, who's telling you what you need to hear. But when you're in D.C., if your family isn't, you have to have people on your staff that . . . I think that was my most important job. I mean there was the strategic piece and I learned that, but I took him at his word from day one that I needed to do that, and I think that is still sort of the essence—he's not in Congress anymore, but I'm still his chief of staff, he just doesn't pay me. {laughter} And I wouldn't have it any other way, but that's still the relationship that we have.

MURPHY: And it seems like you developed a lot of skills over this time. And during the period when you were working part-time for Shays, you were working for the Congressional Management Foundation?

HAWKINGS: I was working as a sort of consultant in helping them. I was editing books. They put out a variety of books to help congressional staff run their offices better. There's a book called *Setting Course*, which is intended as a how-to guide for new Members, but also at least half the book is hiring practices and budgeting practices and things that are at least as much targeted towards new chiefs of staff as they are to Members. They did, for many years, the salary study that is now I think done internally in the House . . . but they would survey offices and develop norms for . . . because again, none of this stuff was disclosed. What's the average salary for a chief? What's the average salary for a legislative director? How many are men, how many are women within each job description? And they would go all the way down from LAs to staff assistants.

MURPHY: Did you play a role in setting that agenda in the—

HAWKINGS: At the Congressional Management Foundation? I mean, I had a voice. We had an experienced executive director, and so I wasn't at that point really looking to—I mean, my agenda was their agenda. I was helpful to them because I knew the Hill really well and had worked there for so long. But I edited the salary study one year. I edited *Setting Course*. I definitely pushed, pushed for a redo of a book called *Frontline Management*, which was basically management for the district offices, which are even more disparately organized than . . . And there are even fewer norms for district offices than there were at the time for congressional offices. I always say there are 435 different ways to be a House Member, and everybody's a little

bit different, but it's a totally different skill set—or at least it used to be, I think that's changing. Different skill set for district offices than Washington offices, and the functions were equally important, but there's always a tension between the D.C. office and the district office—or almost always. What are some strategies to reduce that tension? That was something that I definitely brought an understanding of and they had done this book a number of years prior, and I edited . . . kind of my last project for them was editing a new version of that book.

MURPHY: And when Congressman Shays left the House, you worked for several other Congressmen.

HAWKINGS: I did.

MURPHY: And they were at different stages of their career. So, were there things that you wanted to bring to those offices from your experience? Or did you feel like you had to learn some new things because they didn't have the name recognition or the place in committees?

HAWKINGS: Well, I think the last two I would . . . I mean you would have to ask them, but my understanding of it is that the last two were freshmen who knew they wanted an experienced chief of staff who could help them hit the ground running, knew they would have serious challengers in their first re-elect, and wanted to make sure that they were staffing in such a way that we would be committing as few self-inflicted wounds as possible. And somebody who'd been around the track a few dozen times could help them do that.[7] And I think that was kind of what I brought to the table there.

The Member who brought me back . . . I left in 2008. There were no jobs for Republicans, particularly not my Republicans, with Republicans losing

the White House, and then a large number of Republicans lost that year in Congress. So, there were a lot of Republicans on the street, and the Republicans who were elected were very conservative. There were not a lot of jobs for somebody who had worked for somebody as moderate as Chris. So, I left and worked for a nonprofit for a little less than a year and a half. But there was a Member who had known Chris and had worked with Chris and who had been in office by that point probably . . . I guess he'd been in office about six or seven years.[8] So, not a brand-new Member, and a Member who was looking to . . . what he said to me was, increase his impact.

He had just been made a chairman of a subcommittee, so he wanted somebody who understood what it was like to be a Republican in a Democratic district, manage the subcommittee agenda in a way that wasn't going to be so partisan that it wouldn't resonate with your constituents. In other words, play it down the middle, do good work, don't use the subcommittee to grind a partisan agenda out. And that subcommittee had a clear point of view, but it was one that the district clearly supported, and we did very effective outreach. He did very effective outreach and oversight and actually, on a couple of issues that he was pushing at the time has been proven right.

MURPHY: So, you were a good fit for that kind of unique situation.

HAWKINGS: I was trying to help him make some good hires and help the office function well. He had lost his longtime chief of staff who had been his chief of staff since he had come to Congress.

MURPHY: Well, I want to end with a few questions. Thinking back over the course of your career, were there any women Members that served while you were on the Hill that you interacted with frequently or admired?

HAWKINGS: There were and are. I mentioned former Congresswoman Johnson, who is just like the Energizer Bunny and just keeps coming and coming and coming and coming and coming. And that's a model that I respect a great deal, and she's still very engaged in the process, even though she's retired. Former Congresswoman [Deborah D.] Pryce would be another example of that—different style but very thoughtful, and people always listened to her when she spoke.

Former Congresswoman [Constance A.] Morella, who again, in spite of the fact that she's been retired for a number of years, has stayed engaged in the issues, and she was somebody who represented a district that was even more Democratic than ours. And she was not in line with the party on most issues, but people respected her because of the thoughtful way she communicated. And occasionally I have a good day and hopefully can do that—not nearly as well as she does—but she's a very thoughtful, patient, kind communicator, and I think that that helped her a lot.

Former Congresswoman [Jennifer Blackburn] Dunn of Washington state, former Congresswoman Tillie [Kidd] Fowler, both now deceased, but who were real trailblazers. There were a few of them who were elected in the early '90s in seats that had never had women Members, in states that had never had women Members—or had had very few, and people kind of sat up and took notice. And their chiefs are people that I still know—actually in both cases men, but people I still know and work with, and they were

real examples—at least they were an example to me, the way they conducted themselves.

MURPHY: And there was an increase in the number of women Members in the early '90s. What kinds of changes did you observe in the experience of women Members from the late '80s to, let's say, the end of the last decade?

HAWKINGS: Well, I think there are still some notable exceptions to this, but I think they are more . . . I think there is still a men's network on both sides of the aisle. What there also now is, is a women's network because there's enough women to have a network. {laughter} And I think that there's less of a sense of women Members; there's less of a sense of separateness. Particularly among the younger Members, you see a lot of times . . . you'll see them travel in a pack. They're just friends. And I also think that what I see, particularly in some of the more recent couple of classes, which have had more women in them on both sides of the aisle, is they travel in a bipartisan pack sometimes, too. Not always, but more than I would have seen them do 10 years ago.

I think that there's a more concerted effort to make sure that women who are in line for chairmanships are given their due. When we took the majority in '95, we had one woman chair, and that was of the Small Business Committee.[9] I don't know how many subcommittee chairs there were, but it wasn't many, in part because there weren't that many women who were in a position of seniority to take those positions. That certainly has changed. Again, on both sides of the aisle, ranking and . . . over time that has an effect. I don't know that you could point to one point where there was a tipping point, but over time that has an effect, and then for new staff who come in, you know, they didn't experience it any other way.

MURPHY: And was there anything unexpected, or something that surprised you about your time in the House?

HAWKINGS: Something that surprised me. Well, I think one of the main things was when Chris lost in 2008, I had been so focused on doing my job and being a mom that I didn't ever approach doing my job consciously trying to build a network. And I should have, but I was just trying to keep everybody fed and clothed. And I didn't get up and sort of think about this in terms of building a network that I would eventually need to use or need to leverage. But I found when he lost that I had one, and it was interesting because as I started to think about "What do I do now? I need to get a job, my husband's a journalist." {laughter} Waiting for just the perfect thing was not an option. And there were some people who forgot my name literally overnight. There were also some people who I had no idea were part of my network who called me up and said, "How can I help?" And that was an interesting lesson, and I have since then been more self-consciously trying to maintain a network. You learn that you meet people on your way up and your way down, and if you treat everybody the same, then you don't need to worry. {laughter}

MURPHY: That's good advice. {laughter}

HAWKINGS: And then, I think, building the network and treating everybody the same. Then one of the things that's been fun for me, is at this point I have four former staff who are chiefs of staff. And sort of thinking about, hopefully, I mean just from the Shays office, and hopefully the way that Chris led the office, the way that I tried to support him leading the office has a ripple effect.

MURPHY: I was going to ask, what are you most proud of about your time in Congress?

HAWKINGS: I think, well, there are a few things. Certainly the 9/11 work was important. Just in terms of people who felt their country had not served them well, being able to create a meaningful response to that—that legitimately helped the country. We maybe didn't get everything done that we wanted to, but we got—and certainly it wasn't fast enough for those constituents, but it was a meaningful response.

I think certainly the "Contract"—the Congressional Accountability Act, because I do think it was a rallying point, and whatever else happened afterwards, the process of having there be a changeover and having a new group of people look at how things had been done for 40 years inevitably meant that things were . . . that there was change, and most of it—not all of it, but most of it—was good change in terms of the management of the House, and there were just some sloppy management practices or complete lack of management practices that didn't live on after there was a change in majority. And I think the Congressional Accountability Act played a role in that.

But beyond that, what makes me the happiest is that I still get invited to former staff's weddings. {laughter} I mentioned going to the Reagan library. That's with a young man who interned for me in Shays' office who worked for me in a subsequent office, who had a then-girlfriend, now wife who was really having a really unfortunate experience with, in the office that she worked in with some pretty openly disgusting practices by the guy who ran this D.C. office. He kind of came to me not long after, I mean it was probably, I don't know, the summer after I started—a couple of months

after I started—and said, "Can you talk to her?"—and I had never met her before. He's like, "You've got to talk to her. I don't know what to tell her." And I didn't even know what it was I was talking to her about. But he said, "Can she come talk to you?" "But, of course, anything for you." And she came over, and I just took this young woman into the office, and she dissolved in tears. Anyway, they call me their D.C. Mom. {laughter} At this point, they're not that much older than my oldest son.

But that—and I think hopefully my kids tell me that they have—there's always this question I think for many working moms of "Is it worth it?" Is my time away from my kids, is there . . . I mean, and every woman has to—I think every parent has to figure this out for themselves—but when I was a new mom, it was every woman had to figure this out for themselves. And everybody's balance is different, and what works in one family doesn't work in the next family—and I wish women would just stop judging that. But going back to my experience, I always was worried, "Was the fact that I was doing this job going to make me a less successful mom?"

And I never really felt like I got it right. I felt like I was constantly cheating both, but I knew that I was so insecure as a parent that I had a pretty good idea of what success looked like on the Hill, and so the fact that I could do that one thing right gave me the confidence to go back and try and be a better mom. {laughter}

But I had this experience not long ago where I didn't always—my mother was always very supportive of me. I had other female relatives who were pretty judgmental. And I had this experience not long ago where my younger son heard me expressing sadness to my husband about the fact that so-and-so thought I was a terrible mother. This younger son, who still lives

at home, called the older son, who's now out of school, self-employed, fully self-sufficient, pays his own student loans and his car bill and his rent, and—you know, gone. And he called me up, he said, "I just want to make sure that you know that you were the best possible mother. Here's all the things that your example gave to me." And anyway, it was just kind of a sweet moment, so it made me feel like maybe I didn't screw the whole thing up. {laughter}

MURPHY: I don't think so. That's a great note to end on. So, thanks for joining us today.

HAWKINGS: Thank you. Thanks for the opportunity. The one thing I want to say is that every day I came to work here, I felt like it was the honor of a lifetime—and I think if you don't feel that way, you shouldn't work here. And I always did.

MURPHY: That's good. Thank you.

HAWKINGS: Sure. Thanks.

MURPHY: Thanks.

NOTES

[1] Congressman Ed Markey chaired the Telecommunications and Finance Subcommittee of the Committee on Energy and Commerce from the 100th to the 103rd Congress (1987–1995).
[2] Elected Majority Leader in 2006, John Boehner served as Minority Leader from 2007 to 2011, when he became Speaker.
[3] Mary Fetchet and Beverly Eckert mobilized the families of the 9/11 victims to pressure Congress to pass the 9/11 Commission Act.
[4] "Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007," Pub. Law 110-53.
[5] The official title of the Veterans Reemployment Act is the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994.
[6] Ben Chevat was Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney's longtime chief of staff.
[7] Hawkings worked for Congressman Bobby Schilling from May 2011 to January 2013 and for Congressman Garland H. (Andy) Barr IV from December 2012 to January 2015.
[8] Hawkings worked for Congressman Michael R. Turner from March 2010 to May 2011.
[9] Congresswoman Jan Meyers was the chair of the Small Business Committee during the 104th Congress. Also during the 104th Congress, Congresswoman Nancy Johnson chaired the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.