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Oral History Interview of John Daniel (OH-036)

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Oral History Interview of John Daniel

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Interview Summary

John Daniel, a member of Congressman John Joseph Moakley's congressional committee staff from 1989 through 2001, discusses the career of Congressman Moakley. His interview covers how he became a member of the House Rules Committee staff; Congressman Moakley's relationships with his colleagues on Capitol Hill; how the political climate has changed since Moakley was in office; the issues he worked on as a staffer for Congressman Moakley; and Moakley's legacy of public service and political leadership.

Subject Headings

Boston (Mass.)

Daniel, John

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Moakley, John Joseph, (1927-2001)

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This interview took place on September 30, 2004, at the United State Capitol Building, Room H204, Washington, D.C.

Interview Transcript

STEVEN KALARITES: We're here on September 30, 2004, in the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., for the Moakley Archive and Institute Oral History Project with John Daniel, former Moakley staff member. Thank you, John, for agreeing to participate in this.

JOHN DANIEL: You're welcome.

KALARITES: We know that it's a busy time, and we're very happy that you could find some time in your schedule. We'd like to begin with just a little bit of background on where you're from and how you got into public service.

DANIEL: You'll probably be able to tell by my accent that I'm not from Boston. I'm originally from Tennessee. I moved to D.C. in 1983. I grew up in a small town, rural Tennessee. I worked in—affiliated with local government there, but my interest was in environmental issues. And I came to Washington in 1983, and obtained a job working on the Rules Committee¹ as a staff assistant doing pretty much whatever they asked me to do. Running papers, making copies, setting up hearings, all those kinds of things.

After six months or so, they gave me issue areas, and I started working in agriculture, the park system, general environmental issue areas. And I started working for Senator Claude Pepper,² or as we all called him, Senator Pepper. He gave me an opportunity to work—actually, I didn't come to Washington with the intent of working in Congress. I came up with what I thought was

¹ The House Rules Committee is responsible for the scheduling of bills for discussion in the House of Representatives. According to the Rules Committee website, "bills are scheduled by means of special rules from the Rules Committee that bestow upon legislation priority status for consideration in the House and establish procedures for their debate and amendment." (See <http://www.rules.house.gov/>)

² Claude D. Pepper (1900-1989), a Democrat, represented the state of Florida in the U.S. Senate from 1935 to 1950, then represented Florida's Miami-area congressional district in the House of Representatives from 1963 until his death. He served as chairman of the House Rules Committee from 1983 to 1986.

a job promise with Pepco, the local power company, to do environmental work with them. When things didn't quite work out as we planned there, Senator Pepper said, "Well, why don't you come and work for me?" So I took him up on that.

Working on the Rules Committee staff, I met Mr. Moakley then.³ I was always impressed by his mannerisms and his sense of humor. That was probably one of the main things. I always thought he was a pleasant man to be around, and a funny man to be around. And he'd always keep you relaxed. There were various ways that he could do that. He would tell a good joke or something.

KALARITES: What was the relationship like between Claude Pepper and Joe Moakley?

DANIEL: Well, they were good friends. You see that in—if you look back at the transcripts, that's probably about one of the only records—written record of conversations—you'll see that they were very good friends, and had a lot in common. They thought very much alike. They were very much men of the people. They came from similar backgrounds, even though one was urban and one was rural. They both came from working class neighborhoods, working class backgrounds. So they knew what people had gone through, and what people's lives were like. And their goal was to make them better.

I know Joe Moakley always said, "If someone comes and asks me to help them get a job, I'll do everything I can to help them get a job." You probably noticed from talking to different ones that there are a lot of people here on the Hill [Capitol Hill] that owe their employment to Joe Moakley. You know, for instance, we used to have a folding room here. Almost everyone in there worked for Joe Moakley, or had gotten jobs through Joe Moakley.

One thing that ties in really to his whole thing on human rights, there were a number of Cambodian refugees that were coming to America, the time when Pol Pot was doing all his massacres in Cambodia. And there was a small group of them, when they made it here to

³ Congressman Moakley was a member of the House Rules Committee from 1975 to 2001 and served as its chairman from 1989 to 1995.

Washington, Joe Moakley gave them jobs. And they were willing to work. And they thought that he was the greatest man in the world because he'd given them an opportunity to come to America and work hard and make something out of themselves and provide for their families. A number of them still live in the area who are good upstanding citizens.

But if you look back at the relationship between Claude Pepper and Joe Moakley, when Claude Pepper passed away, Joe Moakley took the lead on making sure that Claude Pepper received the recognition that he deserved for his long and distinguished career as a senator and as a member of the House.

One thing that he did too, he sponsored an amendment that funded the Claude Pepper Foundation. He really pushed hard to make sure that that money got through. And then various other things along the way of unveiling a portrait. He was the master of ceremonies for that. And just a number of things that—he looked up to Claude Pepper, he respected him, and they were good friends.

KALARITES: What other kind of relationships did he have? The Rules Committee is the Speaker's committee, and I know that Joe had a good relationship with Tip.⁴

DANIEL: Right. I came in at the very end of Tip O'Neill's time here on the Hill, the very end of it. They were just—you could tell they were good friends. It's like if Tip had his inner circle, and Joe Moakley was part of that inner circle, the people that he went to for advice. And if he wanted to find out what was kind of going on and kind of the temperature of things around, he would send Joe Moakley out to talk to people and find out what was going on.

There was—don't know all the details, maybe someone else has mentioned it—but Joe Moakley used to tell a story about Tip sending him out to find space for the—I think it was the spouses holding room, or something like that. And it was a very difficult task (laughs), only because Joe Moakley—it was because of Joe Moakley that he gave it to him, you know, that he gave him that

⁴ Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill (1912-1994), a Democrat, represented Massachusetts' Eleventh and, after redistricting, Eighth Congressional Districts in the United States House of Representatives from 1953 to 1987. He served as Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1977 to 1987.

task. I want to say that because of that, that also helped increase the space the Rules Committee had also as part of the deal. It's like you get more space for Rules Committee, you take care of this kind of issue for me.

I know they played golf. I know Joe Moakley—I always heard that he wasn't that great a golfer, but he did like to play golf, though. Tip was—we always have this golf tournament around now that's the Tip O'Neill Golf Tournament that the Democratic Club here sponsors. And I think they had the twenty-sixth, I believe, this year. So golf was always kind of an important social side of things for him.

One thing that Joe Moakley always had told me that is one of the things that I think is just so true—he told me, “If you want to get to know and make friends with members here,” —he was using his own experience with members—he said, “Get to know something that they really have a passion for, that they're really interested in.” And it would be something like, Congressman So-and-so really likes cars. So he'd say to him, “Well hey, how's that,” whatever kind of car he's driving to make conversation. Or a baseball team; if so-and so is from Chicago, they're a White Sox fan, ask him how the team is doing. But always find out something that that person is interested in. And that way you'll always have something to say to them, and then you can always keep that relationship going.

Joe Moakley was the most popular guy around here. I mean, even people that disagreed with him on ideology and as far as a 180 difference always respected his opinion, and always respected him as a human being. I don't know of anyone else around here that I could say that about, anyone else that I could say that about, that every member—.

One instance, a Republican member of the Rules Committee, I won't call his name, was always on the opposite side of issues with Joe Moakley. You could see it on the look on his face during hearings that he just thought that Joe Moakley was an enemy. He had probably always heard all these things: “He's so liberal, he's so” this—and this member was a conservative Republican from out west.

Well, Joe Moakley's motioned for a staff person one day in a hearing to come over—and this was when we were in the minority, after he was a ranking Democrat on the committee. And said, “Go downstairs and get me a photo and bring me one of those autograph pens.” So the staffer goes down, brings it up. And he says, “To Congressman So-and-so. Your friend, Joe,” and sends it over to him. They were the best of buddies from then on. It was just like it broke the ice. He realized that Joe Moakley wasn't his enemy. That he wanted to be friends. And it was like—it was just changed night and day between the relationship.

He always knew how to—he always looked for ways to get to know people and to find out what they were like, and how I can be friends with them, how I can talk to them. And he didn't like having enemies. I'm sure he had some. You can't be in public service for as long as he was without having a few. But, he always looked for that in people: what can I do to connect with that person? And he did it so much with the staff; it was like a family.

KALARITES: That's interesting because as a member of the Rules Committee, it's a very important committee. You shape legislation that's going to go to the floor. And, obviously, you can make a lot of enemies. And especially in '89 when he became chairman and he becomes an extremely powerful member of Congress, but yet he still—I believe *Roll Call*⁵ a few years said that he was the most popular, as you said, congressman. And that's very important that this man that could easily offend so many, brought everyone together.

DANIEL: Right. Well, he always had a way of—one time with Gerry Solomon.⁶ Gerry Solomon was chairman of the Rules Committee at the time. And I've forgotten what the issue was—I guess it really doesn't make a difference what the issue is. And Solomon was just—I mean Solomon was like a fist banger, a table banger. He would bang on the table, always had to have the last word. And there was something one day that he got so angry—I mean, his face was red. And Joe Moakley just makes a comment, “Well, I hope you don't take me off your

⁵ *Roll Call* is a newspaper that publishes congressional news and information.

⁶ Gerald Brooks Hunt Solomon (1930-2001), a Republican, represented New York's Twenty-ninth, Twenty-fifth and Twenty-second Congressional Districts in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1979 to 1999. (The area he represented was redistricted twice during his tenure.) He was chairman of the House Rules Committee from 1995 to 1998.

Christmas card list.” (laughter) And Solomon didn’t know what to say. It just stopped everything. Everybody laughed. And he just kind of broke off that edge that was in the room at the time. Like I said, he just had a way of looking for a way to kind of, “Let’s don’t get angry. Let’s don’t get mad. Let’s just work together.” And he just always had a great sense of humor.

But I think, though, just hearing him just refer to how he dealt with people back in his district, walking down the street and speaking to everyone. He knew so many people. You go to his funeral and see the turnout was just amazing. I was just amazed at how many people came out and gave their respects. But just of growing up in a neighborhood where everybody knew each other, you were kind of accountable to everybody, because everybody knew who you were. They knew your parents. And you knew how to treat people with respect. And always looking to see how you could help people out. Whether it would be going down to the bakery or the local place to eat, or whatever, the local restaurant.

For instance, when I was up at—we went up for the court house dedication⁷ and we had a lunch at one of the restaurants there in South Boston. And we come in as a group. We’ve got like a big table, staff. And he comes over and just kind of speaks to everybody and then he goes and works the room. He’s from table to table to table, because he knows just about everybody that’s in the restaurant. And, “How you doing?” And he’s probably working the room for fifteen minutes, and then he comes over to have lunch with everybody else, with all the staff. It just showed you how—here he was the few months before he passed away, and he was still Joe Moakley. What you saw was what you got with him. He could have come over and said, “To heck with these people. I don’t really care about these people anymore.” But that wasn’t him. Those were his friends. That’s how he saw everybody.

KALARITES: Who were some of the—you said the staff—and it was like a family, and that’s one of the themes that we—as we’ve done more interviews with staff members, they’ve all said he’s like a grandfather, like a father. The staff became a family. What was it about Joe? Because a lot of staffs, I think, you see a lot of turnover, you know; two years it changes. But

⁷ The John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse in Boston was dedicated on April 18, 2001.

everyone I've talked to stayed with Joe for quite some time. I mean was it just that great a working environment, or was it just because of Joe, or both?

DANIEL: Well, I think in any office here on the Hill, the member sets the tone. You can—there are difficult personalities here. But with him—and the reason I think people say he's like a grandfather, like an uncle, or like a father, or whatever, is because the way that he dealt with you. If you messed up, he wasn't going to embarrass you in front of anybody. He might look at you with a look that said, "Don't do it again." Or, he might even actually tell you, "Don't do it again." But he would never rail at you. I have never heard him yell at anyone. And that's kind of rare up here, because of the pressure of the jobs and everything. And members are—like I say, there are various personalities, and they're used to things turning around now. But he just—I don't know, he just wasn't that way.

KALARITES: How did the staff change? Because in '94 the House shifted and he became a ranking member and was no longer chairman. Obviously, if I understand, usually you have to lose a few staff members. How did that affect him?

DANIEL: He didn't like it at all. He tried everything he could. They tried to crunch the budget. All of us actually took a cut in pay to try to keep as many people on as we could. One thing about working on the Rules Committee is that you work long hours, and we worked a lot of late nights, so we spent a lot of time together. And it's a high pressure job, because the decisions that we made were the decisions that went to the floor. That's what the determination is—the type of determinations we made.

You know, it's kind of like—it is like a big family where you're kind of in a tight space, you have to spend a lot of time with each other; you have to figure out how to get along. And people didn't leave. We didn't have people quit and go to other jobs. And so many of those people that worked for him are still here. A few have gone back to Boston. A few people that worked in his congressional office went back. A few people that worked on the Rules Committee staff have gone back to Boston. But, all the people that were either inherited staff or went to work for him during the Rules Committee time, pretty much are still here on the Hill working. And we're still

all pretty much together. There are four of us right now that are on the Democratic leader's staff. One is still with the Rules Committee.

Even after Joe Moakley passed away, we were thought well enough of by the member that took over as ranking Democrat to keep us on the staff. And I think part of that too was the respect that Joe Moakley had for us as staff, and that's the reason he treated us that way too. I think he knew that if he told us to do a job, we had the integrity, one, to do the right thing. And that he knew we'd do it to the best of our abilities. And it wasn't—it was almost like, you know, we wanted to please him. I think that's another one of the family traits is that having a nice thank you. He wasn't—he thanked us for the work that we did. And we would have dinners at Christmas and sometimes for birthdays, his birthday and stuff like that. We'd have birthday parties. We used to always make a thing of having cake for every staff person and have a birthday party. And he was always—made sure that we had it in his office. Those types of things, the personal touch, it just builds the closeness to where he trusts us and we trust him.

KALARITES: There's also an aspect of Joe Moakley that he was a professional politician. He really was a creature of the House and really understood politics. And that I think explains a lot why he was a good chairman of the Rules Committee. Could you explain a little bit how his political savvy made for such a good chairman? Because I don't think everyone is made for that position.

DANIEL: Right. Well, first off, I think also it's a credit to him that, like I say, that four of us are working in the leader's office. One is still at Rules Committee. That we learned our way of doing things from him. He was our example. He was the one that taught us politics, essentially. So I think that's a credit to him and his abilities as a politician that we learn from— that is the reason that we're valued around here now. It is a legacy.

People still make the comments like, There's still the Joe Moakley people around. How many Moakley people you got up there? (laughter) Well, another thing, he used to always point out that the number of interns who were in high level positions, either in Boston or in companies or whatever, as the type of people that he attracted or whatever, I guess you could say.

But back to your question on the chairmanship, I mean he had to—when the Rules Committee—in devising a rule for debate on a bill, you had to look at all the political angles. You had different groups of members, coalitions of members that you had to put together. The Democratic party, we had a fairly large majority, but we were still kind of a disparate caucus because we had such a large majority. You had the whole political spectrum there. We had conservative Democrats, we had liberal Democrats, and we had people who were moderates. And the biggest group were the more moderate members.

But crafting a rule where you could hold your conservatives, we didn't quite have—we barely had enough to have a majority if you lost one of those, either the liberal coalition on one hand, or the conservatives on the other. So it's always a very delicate balance of trying to develop a rule for the bill that would keep all those people in line. Because they knew that if they weren't satisfied and they voted against it, we couldn't pass the rule. So he was always having to do the balancing act. And that also was part of the reason we worked a lot of hours, because sometimes it took a lot of negotiating to work out those deals. And sometimes it did come down to meeting either in the Speaker's office with the principals, or meeting in the Rules Committee office, in Joe Moakley's office, with the principals to hash these things out and figure out what they could do.

One particular bill that we worked on was an energy bill. In that particular bill you had John Dingell⁸ as the chairman of Energy and Commerce, and you had George Miller⁹ as the Interior Committee chairman. And they were both pretty aggressive individuals when it came to their jurisdiction, and there was quit a bit of disagreement over whose jurisdiction—who had the primary jurisdiction over this bill. And so it fell on the Rules Committee to make that—to really divide things up and try to craft this compromised bill. And you knew you had a pretty good bill because they both weren't satisfied, and they both didn't really feel like they won, but they both got most of what they wanted. But it was a delicate thing. We sat in on staff negotiations first,

⁸ John Dingell, Jr. (1926-), a Democrat, has represented Michigan's Fifteenth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1955.

⁹ George Miller III (1945-), a Democrat, has represented California's Seventh Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1975.

but then you had to bring in the chairman of the committees to finalize the agreement. That was his hand in that of sitting down and saying, “Okay, John, what do you want? Okay, George, what do you want? Well, this is what I’ve decided. You’re going to get this part; you’re going to get that part. You’re going to get this part; you’re going to get that part.”

KALARITES: Now, obviously, as time has gone on, the bipartisan efforts seemed to have kind of changed a little bit. The days of Joe Moakley kind of bringing Democrats, Republicans together on issues, and finding those relationships seems to be a little different. I mean, how different is it today from the days when Joe Moakley was here?

DANIEL: Well, I don’t think that necessarily the issues are that much more difficult. There’s always, through the years, been a lot of difficult issues they’ve had to work out that divide parties. The friendship side of things is different now. I think the—the one thing that I see really that’s changed in the way the House operates is that we’re not here as long. Members tend to not move their families here like they used to, so they don’t spend quite as much time here in D.C. They tend to leave their families home. They get here in time for votes, say like, whatever, if they’re on Tuesday afternoon at 6:30, they get here at six o’clock, or maybe a little before that. And if we finish business today a little before six, members are on their way to the airport now to go back to their districts.

There’s not that time to—where they can develop friendships, go out to dinner together and—which used to be much more common now across party. They’d get together and play cards, Wednesday night card game. A lot of the times—I don’t recall the House staying in quite as late for late votes on a regular basis like we do now. There might be a Rules Committee—Rules Committee we had to stay and work out things, because we were preparing the business the following day. So we were here. A lot of times, though, for members, they weren’t voting that night, so they had time to take their wives to go out with another member, and it would be a Republican, to go to dinner, or go to the movies together, or go down to the Kennedy Center together. And you just don’t see that now. There’s such a—kind of a division there that I don’t think existed back then that is [there] now. And it makes things much more partisan. And it makes people much more suspicious of each other’s motives and why they’re doing things. So

that you don't have—I don't think you have that connection on a personal level that you used to have.

KALARITES: What issues specifically do you think were most important to Congressman Moakley? He's known as the bread and butter politician.

DANIEL: I think if you get right down to the bare bones, it was what was good for Boston and what was good for his district and constituents back there. Because you look around Boston, there are so many things. There are buildings, freeways, whatever, that have revitalized and has helped Boston to become a world class city just because of Joe Moakley, and things that he did, making sure that Boston got its share of public works projects. Those were jobs. His kind of blue collar guys, those were jobs; his union guys, those were jobs.

He's always known for his work in El Salvador.¹⁰ But it wasn't only El Salvador. He's gotten a lot of awards and great accomplishments associated with El Salvador. But Central America in general. Cuba. He went to visit [Fidel] Castro. He didn't particularly like Castro very much, but he had sponsored amendments to send medical aid in, and tried to—I don't think he agreed with the embargo. I think he felt that it's the whole suspicion thing. If you don't have any contact with them, how can you change them? It wasn't confrontational. He said, "If you can go in and Americans can go visit and Cubans can come visit America, they find out what we're about, and then we can influence things down there. When we don't do that, when we isolate them, we just place them in Castro's hands."

But also on the medical supplies, during the debates on that, he pointed out how there was a young child that he saw when he was down there that needed some simple piece of surgical apparatus. It was like a tube some sort of—it was something that we would consider pretty much common here in a hospital. They couldn't get them there. And he was like, "This child's life

¹⁰ Starting in 1983, Congressman Moakley introduced legislation to protect Salvadorans in the U.S. using the "Extended Voluntary Departure" provision that allowed a temporary stay of deportation and work authorization. Moakley was finally able to pass legislation that granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Salvadorans in the Immigration Act of 1990 (PL. 101-649). Also, in December of 1989, Speaker of the House Thomas S. Foley appointed Moakley as chairman of a committee to investigate violence in El Salvador, specifically the November 16, 1989, murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America in San Salvador.

could have been saved if it had this little plastic piece of something, but they couldn't get it. We could have sent it down there to save his life." And he says, "I just don't understand why you wouldn't want to do that, why you would want to prevent that. " So he was always thinking of people who were a lot less fortunate.

Another issue probably—another situation that I worked on personally—it's probably not anywhere in your archives or anything like that, because so much of it was under the radar. We got this call from, I think it was called America's Watch, I think, it's a human rights group, that said that Haitians were being essentially kidnapped and taken into the Dominican Republic and forced to work in these sugar fields, on these sugar plantations. They were paid just enough—they couldn't leave. They were paid just enough to buy food from the cane operators.

So we said, Okay, what we're going to do is we're going to threaten to bring some trade sanctions against the Dominican Republic if they don't correct this. I mean, the documents we saw—it was very well-documented. We talked to the chairman of the International Relations Committee and told him what we wanted to do.

Well, they managed to relay the fact that he was doing these things to a representative of the Dominican government. So we get this call from an attorney who was representing the Dominican government, the Dominican Republic government. And wanted to know what they could do to alleviate this. Would it be okay if the vice president of the Dominican Republic paid a visit to Joe Moakley to see if we could work something out here and talk about this?

So they came in and he visited with Joe Moakley. And Joe Moakley just essentially told him, he says, "You've got to correct these problems. This is not right. These people—this should not be happening in the Dominican Republic. I've been there." He says, "I've vacationed there. I know—I'm familiar with the Dominican Republic, myself and my wife have been down there. It should not be going on."

So we get a communication that says, "Okay, what we'll do is we'll investigate it and we'll find out for sure what's going on and we'll correct it." So the Dominican Republic's government set

up a blue ribbon commission to investigate it. And they came back and said, Yes, you're right, these things have been happening. And he brought in the laws where they had instituted the changes to make sure that these people weren't exploited anymore.

And so after it's over—it's like they come in—the Dominican Republic's lawyers come in, and after they presented us all this, after they leave Joe Moakley says, "Well, we'll just leave it at this right now, but we'll keep an eye on what they're doing." He told them, "We'll keep an eye on what you're doing. Just keep up what you're doing. We'll keep an eye on it. And if you don't do what you say you're going to do, I will push this bill through." We never introduced it. We had it drafted—we had it in draft form. I thought we had actually introduced it, but I went back and did some research yesterday and I couldn't find it. So I realized now that we probably—we had it ready to drop in the hopper on the House floor. So that was where he used some of his Rules Committee chairman clout, "If I want to move this bill—" this was about in 1990, I think.

KALARITES: So this was about the same time that El Salvador—that he was investigating.

DANIEL: Right.

KALARITES: Because I've always been intrigued by that aspect of it. A gentleman that everyone refers to as the guy that brought jobs to Boston, jobs for people across Massachusetts, really bringing public works programs back to his district—district, district, district. And yet he always—El Salvador work, Cuba, Haiti.

DANIEL: But he was the type of guy, though, that he wasn't looking for all the recognition of those things. He just thought it was the right thing to do. He was brought up that way. It was like he would tell a story about how his father and he were driving down, when he was a kid, driving down the street, and some other kid was beating up this other kid that was a lot smaller than him. And he says—he [Moakley's father] stopped the car and said, "Get out and go take care of that. That shouldn't be happening." And so he said at an early age he was taught to take up for people that were smaller or weaker or whatever. And that always stuck with him. And he was a pretty big guy. Big fist, big hand, very stout man.

KALARITES: You also mentioned at the beginning that you were involved in a lot of environmental issues. And I've heard from a few people that Joe Moakley was one of the first, I think, members of Congress to go to Earth Day. I'm just wondering if you had worked on any environmental stuff, or is that—

DANIEL: Well, he was heavily involved in the bay cleanup [Boston Harbor cleanup]. I didn't work on that particular thing with him. I think Leanita [Shelby] did. I think you spoke with Leanita earlier.¹¹ But the whole dredging of the harbor, where they were going to put the sludge. It was kind of a big mess, and it took a lot of negotiating to try to work all that out. I know it all worked out.

One thing that we worked on for him, not necessarily in the environmental area, but it was in the parks area, was the Boston Public Library that I was somewhat involved in. There was a problem with matching funds. I think Speaker Bulger¹² had contacted him and said, "This is the deal here we've worked out. We'll have a certain amount of state matching funds, and we'll have certain—I think we can raise"—for some reason five million dollars seems to come to mind, in private donations. "What we need is a federal share."

So he tells us now, "Go see if you can find a way we can do this." So we went and we kind of talked to some of the experts in that area. And we told them about what we wanted to do, you know, the whole preservation—they need to put a new climate control system in, new roof, windows, the whole thing to try to preserve all the books and stuff in the library. But the problem was that since it wasn't a federal library it was very hard to get federal funds for. But we had some friends—as I say, as being chairman of the Rules Committee you do have friends. People are willing to do things, and put a little extra effort into finding ways to do things.

¹¹ Leanita Shelby was a member of Congressman John Joseph Moakley's congressional committee staff from 1989 through 2001. OH-037 in the Moakley Oral History Project is an interview with Ms. Shelby.

¹² William M. Bulger (1934-), a Democrat, served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1962 to 1970, in the Massachusetts State Senate from 1970 to 1978 and as State Senate President from 1978 to 1996.

The Parks Subcommittee staff came up with an idea that—they said, We think this will work. There's this obsolete antiquities law or something back there. It had been on the books for sixty years, and probably hadn't been used in forty. And they say, We think that very well we can get this money maybe under this. And we knew that there would be a lot of opposition from Republicans. So we took this new funding mechanism to the floor and one of the appropriation bills that would set aside certain amounts of money—I don't know how many millions of dollars, but it was a nice little sum of money for the library preservation.

And a Republican stood up and tried to strike it out. Because we already had kind of done our research, we knew kind of what angle that they would come at it. And the parliamentarian, the chair, ruled that he couldn't strike it out. That it was a perfectly legal way to go about getting the money. So we got that money.

Well, because people around here, they're always looking for angles, it's like all of a sudden all these other members started saying, Well, if Joe Moakley can do it that way, why can't we? So the committee changed—passed another—some legislation (laughter) that kind of stopped that from—closed the door on that little loophole that we found.

But it was always one of those kind of things like you found a way—when people were saying there's no way you're going to get this money, we found a way to get it. Joe Moakley was always—you know, the Old South Meeting House and the [New England] Conservatory, looking to find ways to preserve these historic buildings. The Conservatory—Joe Moakley was always into the—wasn't so much a musician himself, but he would like to crank up the volume on his tape player in his car.

I remember once he had this Cadillac convertible, and he'd park it out here on the lot out front here most of the time. And one night, it was like ten o'clock or whatever, he calls me and says, "Can you come and get my car and drive it over and park it in the garage?" It was this huge car. It was like driving a ship. But I go out and the first thing, it's raining outside. I'm not familiar with the car at all. It's the first time I'd ever been in it, to drive it. And I started it up and he had the tape deck turned all the way up. And I didn't know how to turn it off. (laughter) I didn't

know how to turn it off. So it took me like five minutes to try to find—because he had it mounted in there. It wasn't one that came in it. It was like a 1973 Cadillac or something convertible that he left the top down on a lot. It was hidden underneath the dash so that people wouldn't be able to find it so easily and steal it or turn it off. He liked his music. So he really got involved in promoting music and promoting youth music programs at the Conservatory and so forth. He was just a multi-faceted man.

KALARITES: Well John, it's getting late in the day and you're extremely busy.

DANIEL: We could talk for hours.

KALARITES: We'll start winding down. I just have a few more questions. How would you like to see Congressman Joe Moakley remembered by his colleagues and people—

DANIEL: Wow. Well, whenever they named the courthouse after him,¹³ it was like—it was the grandest thing that had ever happened to him. It would be nice if there was something where they could name something after him down here, like the—but that's probably the greatest memorial to him. And that's the place it probably should be, in Boston. That's where his heart was. It wasn't here in Washington.

KALARITES: I'd like to see something down here. But I think the courthouse is—everyone from Boston talks about the courthouse and what a beautiful building.

DANIEL: However many million bricks, as he pointed out, ten million bricks or something like that. More bricks than any other building.

KALARITES: Bricklayers' union is very fond of Joe Moakley. The last thing would be the mission of the Moakley Archive and Institute is to preserve the legacy of Congressman Moakley, and also to encourage young people to pursue a life in public service. So what advice would you

¹³ On March 13, 2001, President George W. Bush signed Public Law No. 107-2 naming the U.S. courthouse on South Boston's Fan Pier the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse.

have for a high school student, or beginning college student, someone that is looking to get into public service? What can they take away from Congressman Moakley's career? What should they get into to be successful?

DANIEL: He's just a model public servant. I would always encourage any young person to check in and see if they're interested in pursuing a job of public service. It's very rewarding, and it may not pay as much money as you might make in private industry, but the rewards are different. And I would just say that he's the perfect model. If you care about people, you work hard for them. And the thank you's you get, the nods, the smiles you get from them when you see them on the street, that's worth a lot. It may not put a lot of money in your pocket, but it makes you feel good, makes your heart big. If they look at him from that standpoint—and the idea that if you do things right, people recognize those things. And you'll be remembered for it. There are lasting rewards for that type of service. I think that he's a good model. He's the model we've chosen.

KALARITES: I think that's an appropriate place to end. And John, we thank you for your time. You've been great. This has been a pleasure.

DANIEL: Thank you. It's been a pleasure.

END OF INTERVIEW