

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Susan Catania

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Project Name Oral History project

Interview # ISE-A-L-2020-041

Susan Catania, an Illinois state representative and House sponsor for the Equal Rights Amendment during the effort to pass ERA during the late 1970s and early 1980s, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – ERA Fight in Illinois* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Aug 3, 2020 Location: Telephonic interview while Rep. Catania was at her residence near Eagle River, Wisconsin

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Jan Grimes, ALPL volunteer and former director of the IL Historic Preservation Agency

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:07 / 1.12 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on July 6, 2021.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Susan Catania, *Illinois Statecraft - ERA*, ISE-A-L-2020-041

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Susan Catania was born in December 1941 in Chicago, Illinois. She grew up in a neighborhood of the south side of Chicago and earned a bachelor's degree from Saint Xavier College in chemistry. Her experiences with inequality in the workforce inspired her to become involved in feminist causes and politics. Inspired by the women who were promoting passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, Catania ran for and was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives as a Republican. She served the state in this capacity from 1973 to 1983.

While serving in the House of Representatives, Susan Catania became a strong proponent of the Equal Rights Amendment. She served as the Chairwoman of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Public Institutions and Social Services Committee. She also took on the role of Regional Director for the National Order of Women Legislators and was a chairwoman of the Illinois Women's Political Caucus, the Independent Voters of Illinois' Women's Rights Commission, and was a 1977 delegate to the Houston National Women's Conference. She discussed the women's movement since 1982, and the status of the Equal Rights Amendment at the time of the interview in 2020

Subject Headings/Key Words: 19th Amendment; Illinois Commission on the Status of Women; Equal Rights Amendment; equal pay for women; Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault; Vitullo Rape Evidence Collection Kit; Houston Women's Conference; Independent Voters of Illinois; Phyllis Schlafly; Black Panthers; Fred Hampton; Me Too movement;

Notes to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word; and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal; conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir; nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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