

**EDWARD E. (TED) KAUFMAN**  
**United States Senator from Delaware and Chief of Staff to Senator Joe Biden**

Oral History Interviews  
August 17 - 24, 2011, September 27, 2012

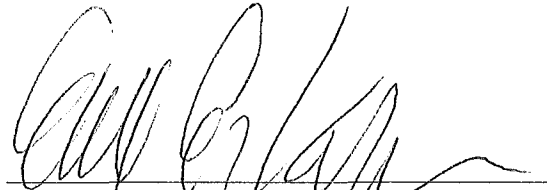
Senate Historical Office  
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**Deed of Gift**

I, Edward E. Kaufman, do hereby give to the Senate Historical Office the recordings and transcripts of my interviews between August 17 and 24, 2011 and on September 27, 2012.

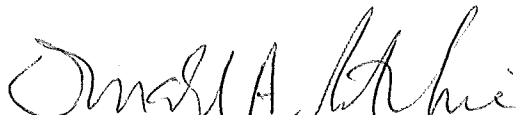
I authorize the Senate Historical Office to use the recordings and transcripts in such a manner as may best serve the educational and historical objectives of their oral history program. I also approve the deposit of the transcripts at the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Senate Library, and any other institution which the Senate Historical Office may deem appropriate.

In making this gift, I voluntarily convey ownership of the tapes and transcripts to the public domain.

  
Edward E. Kaufman

9/3/13  
[date]

Accepted on behalf of the  
Senate Historical Office by:

  
Donald A. Ritchie

September 3, 2013



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## Dedication

To Lynne, who is the love of my life, my best friend and has made all this possible.

To Mom, who taught me to fight for what I believe in, and Dad, who was the greatest man I have ever known.

To my daughters, Kelly, Murry, and Meg, who have taught me so much about life and married Fritz, Matt and Tom whom I love.

To my wonderful grandchildren, Ginna, Kirsten, Natalie, Liam, Calvin, Martha, and Lincoln, the joys of my life.

To my sisters, Lee Jane, Helene, and Suzy, so like our parents—smart and principled—and their partners David, John, and Peter, and their children.

To the Mayos, Ned, Janet, Robb, and Susan, and their children—no one has had better in-laws.

To the Biden family,

To Joe, a great leader, example, and friend who has been a constant source of support and counsel.

To Jill, Valerie, and Ashley, they are the embodiment of strength, character, and grace.

To Beau and Hunter who are like my own.

To my Senate Staff, and the Biden Senate Staffs, smart, accomplished, and great friends on this wonderful journey.

To Chris Schroeder, Jeff Peck, and the Law, Sanford, and Fuqua students at Duke University, from whom I have learned so much.

To the United States Senate, which I love, and the Senators and Staff who work there.

## Preface

“Mr. President, I love the Senate,” Senator Edward E. (Ted) Kaufman began his farewell address on the Senate floor. “It is not always a beautiful thing, and surely it is not a picture of a well-oiled machine, but years ago I found a home here.” Kaufman had a long and unusual career with the Senate, having served for 22 years on the staff of Senator Joseph Biden—19 of those years as chief of staff—and then succeeding him to spend two years as a United States senator from Delaware. Those experiences as staff and as a member gave him a unique perspective on the Senate as an institution.

Ted Kaufman was born in Philadelphia on March 15, 1939, the son of Manuel and Helen Carroll Kaufman. He attended school in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., and graduated with a degree in engineering from Duke University. In 1960 he married a fellow student, Lynne Mayo, and took a job with American Standard Industrial Division, working in North Carolina. Then he attended the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned an M.B.A. in 1966. A job with the DuPont Company brought him to Wilmington, Delaware.

In 1970 he became involved in Delaware Democratic politics to manage the campaign for a candidate for county executive. He soon met county council member Joseph R. Biden, Jr., who, although not yet 30 years old, was planning to run for the U.S. Senate in 1972. Biden’s sister Valerie served as his campaign manager and recruited Kaufman to work in their uphill fight against the incumbent Republican senator J. Caleb Boggs. Biden proved to be an extraordinary campaigner. Going against the tide of Richard Nixon’s landslide reelection that November, Biden upset Boggs to win the Senate seat. A month later, the senator-elect suffered a devastating blow when his wife and infant daughter were killed and his two sons injured in an automobile accident. At first uncertain about whether or not to enter the Senate, Biden eventually took his oath as a senator in a hospital room in Delaware. From then on he commuted almost daily between Washington and Delaware to spend as much time as he could with his sons.

Ted Kaufman took a one-year leave of absence from DuPont to join Biden’s staff in the home state office—which turned into a 22-year career on the staff. In 1976 Kaufman became Senator Biden’s chief of staff, commuting regularly with the senator, both by car and train. Over the years, as Biden advanced in seniority on the Senate Judiciary and Foreign Relations Committees, Kaufman became immersed in a multitude of issues relating to these committees, from Supreme Court nominations to matters of war and peace. In 1987 Kaufman took a role in Senator Biden’s campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. When that campaign ended in controversy, Senator Biden returned to chair the hearings on the nomination of Robert Bork to be a justice of the Supreme Court. In 1988 Biden underwent surgery for two brain aneurysms that temporarily sidelined him from the Senate, with Kaufman keeping his office in operation.

At the end of December 1994 Ted Kaufman retired from the Senate staff and took a variety of positions, including appointment to the Broadcasting Board of Governors and teaching a course on Congress at the Duke Law School. He returned to work on Senator Biden's campaigns for reelection, and in 2008 once again joined Biden's presidential campaign. Although Biden withdrew from the race after the Iowa caucuses, he was tapped to run for vice president on the ticket headed by Illinois senator Barack Obama. Kaufman once again became part of the campaign, and after the Obama-Biden ticket was elected, he served on the transition team.

On November 24, 2008, Delaware governor Ruth Ann Minner announced that she was appointing Ted Kaufman to fill the vacancy created by Senator Biden's resignation. He took the oath of office on January 15, 2009, and made it clear that he would not run in the special election scheduled for November 2010. Instead of campaigning, he devoted himself to Senate service.

Opening during the "great recession," the 111th Congress faced critical issues of restoring the economy, regulating the financial excesses that had caused the collapse, and reforming the nation's healthcare system. Democrats held a large majority in the House of Representatives and 60 seats in the Senate, which enabled them to invoke cloture and limit debate. The Republican minority opposed the president's initiatives, making it essential for the Democrats to remain united, which promoted debate and compromise within the Senate's Democratic Conference. In January 2010 Republican Scott Brown won a special election to fill the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy's seat, costing the Democrats their 60th vote.

In this dramatic setting, Ted Kaufman combined a brief career as a senator with a long Senate perspective. In his oral history, conducted in the offices of a law firm in Wilmington, Delaware, he recounts the ways in which the Senate operates, the relationships between senators, and the influence of civility and partisanship on the institution. He also discusses the rules and procedures of the Senate that were so much in contention during the 111th Congress. In his farewell address he described the history of the Senate as "a struggle between compromise and intransigence." Senators were often frustrated by the Senate's slower pace and when good bills were blocked for the wrong reasons, but he pointed out that the Senate served a different constitutional purpose from the majority-rule House, for the Senate was designed to insure that the "fast train of majority" did not overrun the minority. "I love the Senate," he concluded, "and I will always cherish the unlikely opportunity I had to serve Delaware as its Senator."

*About the Interviewer:* Donald A. Ritchie is Historian of the Senate. A graduate of the City College of New York, he received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Maryland. His books include *James M. Landis: Dean of the Regulators* (Harvard University Press, 1980), *Press Gallery: Congress and the Washington Correspondents* (Harvard, 1991), *The Oxford Guide to the United States Government* (Oxford University Press, 2001), *Reporting from Washington: The History of the Washington Press Corps* (Oxford, 2005), *Electing FDR: The New Deal Campaign of 1932* (University Press of Kansas, 2007); and *The U.S. Congress: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford 2010). He served as president of the Oral History Association and of Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region (OHMAR), and received OHMAR's Forrest C. Pogue Award for distinguished contributions to the field of oral history.